

18 July 2018

Dr Pav Ramewal  
Chief Executive  
Sevenoaks District Council  
Council Offices  
Argyle Road  
Sevenoaks  
Kent  
TN13 1HG

GJ/SB/78305/Johnson

Dear Dr Ramewal

**Re: Sevenoaks Draft Local Plan 2015-2035 – Site Ref HO162/HO163 MX52/MX53 –  
Corinthians and Banckside, Hartley.**

I would be grateful if you would accept this letter as notification of my formal objection to the proposals to include the above sites in the Local Plan.

I do not believe that very exceptional circumstances have been established to show that development on this part of the green belt is appropriate. Further, I believe that these proposals do not have an adequate regard for the needs of the local community.

I make these objections fully recognising that there is a need for more housing in the Sevenoaks District. It is entirely right that all communities within Sevenoaks should be assessed for their suitability for development. Further, all communities should take their fair share of new homes, where those homes can be provided in a sustainable way and one that adequately protects our green belt. These proposals are neither sustainable nor fair on the people of Hartley and the wider area.

The proposal, of up to 800 new homes, represents an increase of around a third of the existing homes in Hartley. For a village the size of Hartley, the impact of this will be significant and would change the character of the village forever.

The suggestion by DHA planning that Hartley and Longfield should be viewed as an “interconnected community”, thus allowing the proposed development to be viewed against a background of a population of 10,000 plus, rather than 5,600 is flawed.

The quoted population for Longfield, appears to be for the parish, thus including the significantly larger, and more populous area of New Barn, which is some distance from

Hartley. Hartley is a distinct village and its rural location gives it a unique character, entirely distinct from Longfield which lies within a different borough and across a railway line.

I am concerned that the land at Corinthians previously appears to have been deemed unsuitable for development for some 300 residential units, yet is being proposed for inclusion in the local plan, for a significantly increased number. Specifically, the site was found to be "unsuitable for this scale of development given its rural location, encroachment into the countryside and loss of sports facilities". The document also referenced the isolation of the site and "it was not possible to see how the site could be integrated into Hartley."

Turning to the proposal in relation to the Banckside site, it is unclear as to the number of units proposed, based on the amalgamation of both sites for the purposes of the consultation. Whilst I appreciate that this is not a planning application, I believe that clear information needs to be provided to residents about the proposal for this site.

The DHA document suggests this part of the development would provide "up to 230 new dwellings" (page 17), the illustrative layout on the same page, shows only 100 homes, and the number of units is listed as 150 on page 26 of the same document. The approximate yield is estimated at 141-188 residential units, although DHA's documentation appear to suggest the figure is closer to 114. Given that the two sites appear to have been amalgamated for the purposes of this consultation, I would be grateful for any clarification that can be provided on this issue so that my constituents are best able to respond to these proposals.

I have significant concerns for the residents of Banckside, Downs Valley and Parkfield. This proposal not only means an increase in the number of vehicles using Parkfield to access any new development, but, in the event that the development were to exceed 50 units, it is suggested that additional access would be required. In the event that this additional access were to link Ash Road and Fawkham Road, via an extension to Parkfield, this road would become a significant rat run. The change in character for this minor residential road would be substantial.

I am disappointed that DHA, who act on behalf of the Billings Group, did not seek to notify me of their proposals at any stage of the process, had they have done so, I would have had the opportunity to raise my concerns with them directly. I believe that the lack of engagement demonstrates a worrying approach to community enhancement. It is astounding that they claim that the project would enhance the local community but have not consulted community representatives beforehand.

I do not believe the proposed development by Banckside would enhance the local community. Having represented the village of Hartley for over eight years, I have never heard of a single resident express a desire to see a country park built in the village. This aspect of the proposal falls significantly short of the threshold required for development on green belt land and therefore should be rejected.

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I have been contacted by a significant number of local residents who oppose this development. There is a clear view, amongst the people who live in the village, that this development would have a negative impact on the village, its environment and its infrastructure. I therefore request the Local Plan does not include this proposal.

Yours sincerely,

**Gareth Johnson**

cc. Hartley Parish Council  
Fawkham Parish Council  
Rt. Hon Sir Michael Fallon MP  
Cllr. James Gaywood  
Cllr. Lawrence Abraham  
Cllr. John Kelly