Dear Horsham District Council,

**DC/21/2233 - Land North of Glebe Farm**

*Note: Please use this letter when objecting to the Glebe Farm planning application. It is based on the letter circulated by Andrew Griffith but has added relevant information. If you have objected to the planning application previously use Option A as your opening paragraph – if you have not already objected use option B.*

Option A

I have previously written to you on the …………………….raising an objection to the above planning application. As new information has come to light I want this letter to be treated as a new objection and NOT to be included as part of my previous objection.

(Then continue with Option B)

Option B

I am writing to object to the planning application to build 265 houses on land behind Kings Barn Lane on Glebe Farm. My views are formed by the outline plans as on the HDC website, my knowledge of the local area and the views of over 300 residents who met at the Steyning Centre on the 15th May 2024 to raise their concerns over the *building of 265 homes on a greenfield site that was not in the Steyning Neighbourhood plan that was approved by the residents*.

My objection is for the following reasons:

**Unsustainability** - This is an unsustainable volume of housing that amounts to the over-development of Steyning.

This level of building would increase Steyning’s houses by 11% with an expected increase of around 1,000 people which will put an unacceptable strain on the doctors, and schools - the local primary and secondary schools, and the doctors are at capacity now – as well as roads, and the natural environment. (This site is therefore contrary to HDPF Policy 1, and Policy 2: 2.6, 2.8, 2.9, and2.12 and HDPF Policy 39)

**Neighbourhood plan** – The Glebe Farm site was not allocated in the Steyning neighbourhood plan.

Although the Horsham District Local Plan Regulation 19 document under Strategic Policy HA17 has included the Glebe Farm site, there was no consultation with Steyning Residents over its inclusion and in fact, the site, and its intensity of concentrated housing goes against the wishes of residents of Steyning who did not vote for any green field housing sites in the Steyning Neighbourhood Plan.

The Steyning Neighbourhood Plan allowed for a much lower level of housing over the whole plan period, to be evenly spread around the town to maintain balance, and where housing development on brownfield sites at the former school will deliver much of what is needed for the town.

The Steyning neighbourhood plan was made in September 2022 and remains a material document for planning purposes and should not be ignored. The Glebe Farm site had previously been assessed by Horsham District Council and recorded as being un-developable in its most recent Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) in December 2018. (This site is therefore contrary to HDPF Policy 4: 4.1, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5; Policy 16: 16.1 and 16.2; Policy 17: 17.1, 17.2)

**Parking** – Policy 41 of the HDPF clearly states that: “*Adequate parking and facilities must be provided within developments to meet the needs of anticipated users.”*

Steyning is in Parking Behaviour Zone 1 according to the WSCC parking Matrix which will allow between 1.5 – 2.2 parking spaces per dwelling, but because of the parking issues around Kings Barn Lane – these issues are also relevant to Roman Road – it is imperative that there is a *minimum allocation of 2 parking spaces per dwelling and/or communal car parking facilities provided on the site.*

If, taking into consideration the sensitivity of parking in the surrounding area, adequate parking is not provided per dwelling and/or on the site, then this application would be contrary to HDPF Policy 41.

**Flooding** - The fields proposed for development are green fields which already experience frequent flooding.

Steyning is listed as one of the 25 areas in West Sussex most at risk from flooding. Local flood events in recent times has seen the northern part of Kings Barn Lane become impassable. To concrete over this land, which currently provides some natural drainage, will only exacerbate the flood risk and harm the precious chalk streams which run alongside it to the northern section. Surveys have found that the land at Kings Barn Lane is not very permeable, and there will be expected risks to downstream areas.

You should note that the Black Sewer is designated by the Environment Agency as a major tributary of the River Adur. The South Downs is characterised by a spring line along the chalk escarpment where the rain soaks through the shallow chalk soils into the tributary.

The proposed SUDS system would mean runoff into the stream which would overwhelm it, as well as concerns about the impact on wildlife. (This site is therefore contrary to HDPF Policy 38)

**Traffic** – This development will add significant pressure to local roads and there is little by way of public transport services in and out of Steyning and at the time of writing there are limited services on Sundays.

Steyning High Street has, for a small town of 6,000 people, a typical mixture of retail shops in its High Street but major stores are located in Holmbush (6 miles), Brighton (12 miles), Worthing (8.5 miles) and Horsham (17 miles).

There could be an estimated 500 -700 traffic movements entering/exiting the site, from the access/exit directly onto the A283 – already a busy and fast road with a 60mph limit – and poses safety concerns for both road traffic and pedestrians. Steyning is not on a train line, so residents will be reliant on using cars and this will result in a significant increase in the number of vehicles on the A283 and the already busy roads into the town.

Residents are already concerned about the existing access from Cannons Way onto the A283 because of the traffic speed. There have also been a high number of collisions on the A283 adding to concerns about safety. A new roundabout junction onto the road will increase the hazards.

Many of the other roads in Steyning are reduced to single file traffic at busy times of the day and the high street frequently suffers from vehicle congestion, including in the car parks that are usually at capacity.

There is a proposed emergency/cyclist/pedestrian access road onto Kings barn Lane opposite Roman Road. Kings Barn Lane is a narrow Lane with parking on the North side narrowing it to one traffic lane, and if it were to become a full access road then this would add to unacceptable levels of traffic onto Kings Barn Lane, Church Street, Jarvis Lane, all of which are narrow lanes reduced to single lane traffic in parts, and Roman Road – which leads to Castle Lane which is a narrow single lane road unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles.

(This site is therefore contrary to HDPF Policy 40: 40.3, 40.4, 40.5 and 40.6 and HDPF Policy 41: 41.1, 41.2, and 41.3 and particularly Policy 27.2)

**Water neutrality and sewage** - The nearby water treatment works are already over capacity.

This means tanker lorries having to travel up the narrow lane to take away the sewage to other plants – sometimes on a daily basis. Added to this, Steyning is within the Sussex North Water Zone and therefore subject to water neutrality planning restrictions. The proposed SUDS system is not adequate to cope with periods of heavy rainfall, as has been seen recently. The proposal to discharge the SUDS system into the precious chalk streams on the northern section of the land must not be permitted because it will pollute the water up to the Black Stream which is a spawning ground for trout, sea trout and coarse fish. This water way is protected by the Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust.

There are no indications of how the developers intend to overcome the water neutrality issue, but it is clear from the local knowledge that the site has not been farmed for over 20 years. From a rough calculation it has been estimated that if 265 homes are built with an average occupancy of 3 people using 80 litres a day (the target amount) the site will use a *minimum* of 63,600L per day. (

To ‘offset’ against previous usage of water on the site, the field would have needed to have had approximately 467grazing cattle (based on a daily use of 136L per cow and approximately 7,000 sheep (based on a daily use 9.08L per sheep) – numbers that have *never been seen on the site.*)

Therefore, I have assumed that the developer will overcome this usage of water in the development by ‘offsetting’ it by supplying water saving measures into existing homes and/or in the local farming community in accordance with the Sussex North Offsetting Water Scheme (SNOWS).

It seems inconsistent that a major site North of Horsham was halted through the need to maintain ‘water neutrality’ and yet this site appears to be already earmarked for ‘accelerated’ development.

Until I, and others in the community have seen the water mitigation measures proposed by the developer, no further comment can be made.

**Bio-diversity and natural habitats** – The fields on Glebe Farm are home to a rich ecosystem of birds and plants, including storks, green woodpeckers, and swallows, as well as the fish in the chalk streams. Its location as wide-open fields close to the water means it is teeming with wildlife and requires a full assessment.

Glebe Farm is quality agricultural land and should not be developed and the site had previously been assessed by Horsham District Council and recorded as being un-developable in its Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) in December 2018.

(This site is therefore contrary to policy 24, 25, 26 and 27.4

**Lithium storage site** - There are some concerns about the proximity of building next to the existing lithium battery energy storage system and the possible dangers it poses.

For the reasons I have set out, I do not think that planning permission should be granted, and I would be grateful if you could take my views into consideration.

Kind regards,