Waldringfield

Parish Council

24th March 2020

Re. DC/20/0902/OUT Outline Application (Some Matters Reserved) Suffolk Constabulary Force Headquarters, Portal Avenue, Martlesham Heath
Demolition and removal of all necessary existing buildings and structures to enable the residential development for up to 300 new dwellings, with access from Portal Avenue, associated open space and landscaping, draining and infrastructure.

Dear Katherine Scott,

Waldringfield Parish Council **OBJECTS** to the application for the following reasons:

Scale of the Development

1.   In the first version of the Local Plan (July 2018), it stated: "The Brightwell Lakes site is significant in terms of infrastructure provision and housing delivery and therefore it is not currently considered appropriate to direct any further large scale development to this part of the District" (§3.19) and this is confirmed in Table 3.3 (§3.35). Nothing of significance has changed since July 2018 to suggest a need for 300 extra dwellings in the area. This represents 15% of the current allocation of 2,000 properties for Brightwell Lakes, a significant increase for which there is no justification. It will result in overdevelopment of an area which has already been burdened with the lion's share of the district's housing allocations.

2.   No extra facilities are proposed to cater for the increased population. For example, local schools and medical facilities are oversubscribed, but nothing new is proposed to alleviate the situation.

Conflict with Local Plans

3.   This allocation has been inserted into the Local Plan without any consultation. There was no mention of it in the July 2018 draft of the Local Plan. There was therefore no opportunity for the public to comment on the final draft (January 2019) from a planning perspective before it went before the Planning Inspector. There is a legal obligation for the Local Planning Authority to consult the public and other bodies on their plan, and this has not been done for Policy SCLP12.25.

4.   There is nothing in the Martlesham Neighbourhood Plan (July 2018) that supports a development of 300 dwellings at the Suffolk Police HQ site. What is the point of having a Neighbourhood Plan if it is going to be ignored?

Transport

5.   An extra 300 dwellings will inevitably add more traffic to the A1214 and A12, and to the roads and junctions feeding the business and retail parks to the east of the A12. These roads are already severely congested, often gridlocked, not only at peak times but for extended periods throughout the day, and this will get worse when the Brightwell Lakes houses are being built and when they are eventually occupied. When the Orwell Bridge is closed these traffic issues get even worse. The suggestions that "the proposed development will result in a net reduction in traffic flows onto the local highway network, when compared to the existing operation of Suffolk County Constabulary Headquarters at the site" (Transport Assessment, §12.11) and that "the development traffic will have

a negligible net impact on the capacity of junctions on the local highway network" (Transport Assessment, §12.12) simply aren't credible.

COVID-19

6.   All East Suffolk planning meetings have been cancelled until the end of April, but it is unclear if this means that a decision on this application will be postponed. The ES website currently gives the Neighbour Consultation Expiry date as 24th March, and the Determination date as 27th May, which implies it won't. It would be totally unacceptable for a decision to be made without a properly constituted planning meeting, allowing public participation.

Kind regards,

Rebecca Todd
Parish Clerk