

LW/21/0262 Nolands Farm, Plumpton Green

This comment is made by Dr John Kay, Fair Meadow, Rushey Green, Ringmer, BN8 5JB on behalf of the Lewes District branch of CPRE Sussex, Brownings Farm, Blackboys, East Sussex, TN22 5HG.

Stripped of its superficial greenwash and its imaginative but completely implausible transport statement, this is a proposal to create a large new housing estate for commuters at a sensitive and car-dependent countryside location at Plumpton Green, at a time when there are large allocated urban-centre brownfield development sites in Lewes and Newhaven, with and without planning permission, whose construction is stalled by the developer preference for the windfall profits arising from countryside planning permissions such as that sought here.

The national interest and the critical fight against climate change demands that such self-interested and destructive proposals to prioritise greenfield over brownfield development are refused.

Plumpton residents (who have demonstrated through their Neighbourhood Plan that they are willing to accept appropriate development in their village) have unambiguously shown their overwhelming opposition to the disproportionate scale of this proposal, which would be very damaging to Plumpton's sense of place.

Comparison of the transport systems actually used by the real residents of Lewes and Newhaven (available on the East Sussex in Figures website maintained by East Sussex County Council) demonstrates beyond any shadow of a doubt the much higher use of the private car in communities such as Plumpton Green, despite the presence of a railway station, compared to those of the equivalent urban households. Rural residents have no realistic alternative. They not only own far more cars; they also necessarily make much greater use of them. The application notes the presence of a GP surgery in South Chailey, barely 45 minutes' walk away, for Plumpton Green residents to use. It does not mention that there is no footpath along the narrow, busy, country lanes connecting the two, or consider that those needing to access primary care may be unable to walk such a distance.

Lewes District Council has declared a climate change emergency. Any council claiming to care about this issue yet even considering approval of such an inappropriate proposal would be guilty of the absolute hypocrisy.

This application should be refused. To approve it would be completely irresponsible