

PARISH COUNCIL OF HAWKHURST CHAIRMANS LETTER – JULY 2019



Hello!

I am writing following the public meeting about the proposed development of Hawkhurst Golf Course. I am really grateful to Fr. Rodney for allowing us to hold the meeting at the church. I would also like to thank David Warman and the Campaign to Protect Hawkhurst Village for sharing their detailed analysis. It was good to see so many of you at the meeting, and I am sure that the TWBC planners who were present were left in no doubt about the strength of feeling in the village in relation to this application.

For those of you who were unable to attend, Hawkhurst Parish Council voted unanimously to object to this planning application. I realise that not everyone will agree with this decision, but we had very good planning reasons for voting the way that we did. Our response to this application can be found on the Hawkhurst Parish Council website.

In addition to the traffic congestion, the impact on wildlife, the loss of green space, and the fact that our village's infrastructure simply cannot cope with a development on this scale, one of our particular concerns is that Hawkhurst's sewage treatment plants are over capacity. I'm sure many of you will recall the spill in Little Switzerland last November and the subsequent disruption to Moor Hill while Southern Water had to clean this up. We have been trying to arrange a meeting to discuss our concerns with Southern Water for months, with little success to date. Our Borough Councillors have also been actively trying to get these sewage issues resolved.

However, we are optimistic this may change thanks to a video showing the treatment tanks overflowing and running across the footpath and into a stream. I'd like to thank Cllr Ros Cory and her husband for their quick thinking in videoing this and for contacting the Environment Agency who are now investigating this incident. Southern Water are now returning our calls! We are continuing to push for a meeting and for action to be taken to address this lack of capacity. We'll keep you updated.

Please don't forget that now is your opportunity to respond to the consultation on Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's Draft Local Plan, which will run from the 20th September until 1st November. I cannot emphasise enough how important this document is to the future of Hawkhurst and the rest of the borough. Once a new Local Plan is approved, it will be used to determine planning decisions for the foreseeable future. Please do take this opportunity to let TWBC know your views.

Clare Escombe

Chairman, Hawkhurst Parish Council

September 2019