

PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY

Hassocks & Hurstpierpoint Liberal Democrats

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**HASSOCKS LIBERAL DEMOCRATS OPPOSE MSDC'S
PLANS FOR 500 HOUSES**

Hassocks and Hurstpierpoint Liberal Democrats spoke in opposition to plans for 500¹ houses north of Clayton Mills in Hassocks at a Public Hearing on 5th February. The Lib Dems were represented by Colin Wilsdon and Benedict Dempsey. Lib Dem Councillor Kirsty Lord attended in her capacity as West Sussex County Councillor for Hassocks & Burgess Hill South.

The special hearing had been called by the Planning Inspector after more than 1000 local residents registered their opposition to the proposed modification to the Mid Sussex District Plan. When combined with other new houses that are planned for Hassocks, the village could see approximately 900 new homes over the Plan period to 2031. If these developments go ahead, the village would be set to grow by more than 25%².

When Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) initially voted on the plans in September 2017, Liberal Democrat Sue Hatton (Hassocks Ward) was the only councillor to vote against the them. Hassocks' other two District Councillors, Conservatives Michelle Binks and Gordon Marples - despite acknowledging significant problems with the proposal - voted in favour.

Speaking after the hearing Cllr Kirsty Lord said, "This development puts the village's identity at risk by reducing the gap between Hassocks and Burgess Hill. It is testament to the strength of community opposition to these proposals that the Planning Inspector felt compelled to call this hearing."

Dr Colin Wilsdon (Chair, Hassocks & Hurstpierpoint Liberal Democrats) added, "In the meeting, the Lib Dems argued that the Council had failed in its duty to properly consider the huge implications that this development would have on Hassocks' overstretched schools, roads and infrastructure. The hearing today is the result of MSDC doing a rushed job on just one site in Hassocks last summer."

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FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

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NOTES TO EDITOR:

1. MSDC is proposing 882 homes in Hassocks, of which 500 are on land to the north of Clayton Mills.
2. There were 3342 households in Hassocks in the 2011 census. $882/3342 = 26\%$