



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

10 January 2022

Ms Sarah Richards
Chief Executive
Planning Inspectorate
Room 3Q
Kite Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square, Temple Quay
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Our Ref: TT59865/Kent and Surrey Golf Club

Dear Ms Richards,

In recent weeks I have spoken to many residents in Edenbridge, as well as Edenbridge Town Council, following the decision on 2 November 2021 by the Planning Inspectorate to allow an appeal on the site of the Kent and Surrey Golf and Country Club, Crouch House Road, Edenbridge, Kent, TN8 5LQ by Pacalis Group Companies for the replacement of existing golf clubhouse and hotel following demolition of existing to create a continuing care retirement community (CCRC) for the elderly to be granted, under reference APP/G2245/W/21/3271595. This follows the application being rejected by Sevenoaks District Council, reference 19/02834/OUT, on 25 September 2020.

Within the report, at paragraph 16, there is acknowledgement by the Inspector that the application "*would result in a significant loss of openness both visually and spatially thereby causing significant harm to the Green Belt. Therefore, it would be contrary to the objectives of the Framework.*" In order to overcome this harm to the Green Belt, planning policy dictates that very special circumstances must be proved instead.

Many of the concerns since publication of this decision come about because there is a view that very special circumstances have not been demonstrated to outweigh the harm caused to the Green Belt by this application. Specifically, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015 (SHMA) is used to justify the need for specialist housing, including sheltered and extra care housing for older persons, classed as over 65s.

However, this policy is accepted as being out of date and the SHMA does not chime with this application, which is for over 55s and is not specialist housing or extra care for older persons. Indeed Manor Care Home in Edenbridge has just opened as older persons housing which is not yet fully occupied itself, and is not referenced in the decision.

Furthermore, at paragraph 23 of the decision it states "*it seems to me that the proposed development would contribute 100 residential units*". However these residential units are classed as C2, which means they are exempt from Community Infrastructure Levy contributions. It is difficult to understand how this can be used as a justification for development on the basis of providing affordable housing, when properties will clearly be aimed at older people looking to downsize, and there is absolutely no scope for much needed infrastructure improvements in Edenbridge as a result.

As a result, I would be grateful if the Planning Inspectorate would review the accuracy of the decision made to overturn the decision of Sevenoaks District Council on this site. It is clear there are many concerns about the process which have not been satisfactorily answered by the Inspectors report.

I have copied this letter to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Sevenoaks District Council and Edenbridge Town Council.

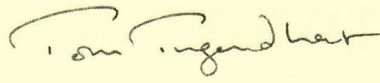
Member of Parliament for Tonbridge and Malling

130 Vale Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1SP

01732 441 563 - tom.tugendhat.mp@parliament.uk - www.tomtugendhat.org.uk

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Tugendhat". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

TOM TUGENDHAT

CC:

The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Richard Morris, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer for Planning and Regulatory Services, Sevenoaks District Council

Caroline Leet, Town Clerk, Edenbridge Town Council