

Submitted to Worthing Borough Council Planning by Ferring Parish Council.

Re - Chatsmore Farm proposed development - AWDM/1264/20

This proposed development site abuts **Ferring Village** within the Arun District Council domain. It is one of the last gaps between settlements along this section of coastline, vital for maintaining the identity of villages and the wellbeing of those communities. The site is of such strategic, environmental and social importance that both Arun/Ferring and Adur/Worthing authorities have included specific provisions that the Northern and Southern Gaps will not be allocated for development in their Local Plans. This planned, collaborative approach is a credit to the local authorities who are jointly responsible for maintaining an important landscape for birds and wildlife as well as supporting grade 1 agricultural production. While acknowledging that the Worthing Plan is still an Emerging Plan, the importance to residents and the joint Local Authorities of protecting these valuable sites cannot be denied. This is evidenced through the democratic Localism procedures developed to meet the requirements for a plan led response to housing and other local development needs, as opposed to a developer's profit led approach. It is inevitable that any further erosion of the existing 'Gaps' will place the remaining land at additional risk of aggressive development proposals.

Ferring Parish Council opposes development of the green gaps it shares with neighbouring councils for all the reasons referred to above, with the authority of a significant N.P. referendum result. A development of the size proposed would additionally have a severe adverse highways impact. Potentially, an additional 900/1000 vehicles could be using the immediate road network, already heavily congested at peak times, which Persimmon's own traffic forecasts conclude will be overwhelmed should the development be permitted.

Of particular consideration are the limited options for connecting the proposed estate to the highway network, being limited to the eastern perimeter. This section of highway is already heavily congested at peak times, particularly with students of both the Chatsmore (now being re-named) School and Northbrook College as well as users of the railway station and bus service, many of whom park in the adjacent residential streets (unrestricted). Increased congestion on the approaches to the roundabouts will no doubt create an even greater number of vehicles using Ferring Village, passing another junior school, as an alternative in an attempt to avoid the severe queues at those points. Additional congestion within the narrow village road network will then be inevitable with not only the associated safety issues and noise/ pollution but having an adverse impact on the quality of residential amenity. The railway crossings at Ferring already create queues of cars backing-up through the village centre resulting in pedestrian safety risks, pollution and delays to bus and other services. West Sussex County Council is already aware of these issues within the village and is investing significantly in highway safety measures on the through routes in an attempt to mitigate, at least in part, the existing dangers. This investment includes the build out in Sea Lane to limit passing to single file traffic, additional yellow lines to prevent parking on sections of Langbury Lane, and a further refuge island adjacent to the main crossroad junction (scheduled for installation November 2020). These are welcome measures but cannot overcome the congestion and pollution being created by the number of vehicles which the local highway network is already unable to adequately support.

This proposal is the biggest threat to the environment and voter confidence in the Localism and Planning process seen locally in recent years and we urge Planning Officers to refuse the application.