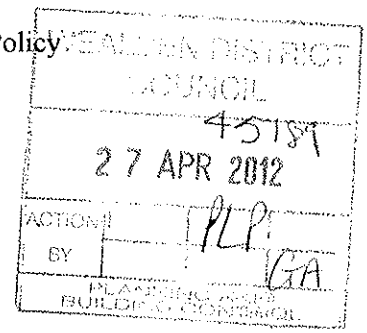
RILEY (Mr & Mrs) [redacted]

(A)

Head of Planning & Environment Policy
Wealden District Council
Freepost SEA 10959
Crowborough
East Sussex
Tn6 1BR



Dear Sir

RE: MODIFICATIONS TO CORE STRATEGY DOCUMENT CONSULTATION– APRIL 2012

Having read your new document with suggested modifications, we wish to comment on these and we have issues which we wish to bring to your attention and require urgent responses from you to all issues we raise.

We are commenting on the soundness of the modifications of the core strategy document.

We consider the core strategy document to be unsound for many reasons which we will outline below.

Although you mention in your document many issues, you do not go into any detail about any of them! We wish to know specifically how far in advance of any suggested ground works starting on the Uckfield site at Ridgewood Farm that you would already have the infrastructure issues addressed (water provision as we are in a water shortage and hose pipe ban, GP services, local hospital provision at Uckfield Hospital, bypass updating) as a document produced by yourselves in 2009 states that the volume of traffic is at a maximum on the Uckfield bypass and now you are proposing access to 1,000 houses straight onto this road). THIS MAKES THIS STRATEGY UNSOUND.

You state you are amending gypsy and traveller provision – to what?? You have provided no details on this and we cannot comment without any detailed information on this.

You state you will be flexible in meeting affordable housing targets – what does this mean?? Could there be huge volumes of 'social housing' with all the demands that accompany this type of housing.

You mention a 7km 'mitigation requirement' regarding the Ashdown Forest - what does this mean?? You have offered no explanations as to what this entails!!! The Uckfield site for 1,000 houses is within the 7km 'zone' so what does this actually mean?

You state you are now supporting brownfield development for housing – how are you doing this? Are you going to delay possibly building on the Uckfield site (Ridgewood Farm) while you look for brownfield sites? Are you approaching owners of such land to see if they are now prepared to sell to developers rather than use beautiful unspoilt agricultural land? LACK OF PERSUING THIS OPTION MAKES THE STRATEGY UNSOUND.

In WS2 22 SP03 'phases' has been deleted – will this result in a 'free for all' in terms of developers rushing in to build houses?

You suggest removing the any chance for communities to adjust to plans and for infrastructure to be in place prior to any building starting – WE FIND TIS UNSOUND AND STRONGLY OBJECT TO THIS CHANGE IN THE STRATEGY DOCUMENT.

WS3 27 5.8 - Brownfield sites must be researched into as a matter of urgency. Land owners must be approached to see if they wish to sell land. Within Uckfield use of the agricultural land at Ridgewood Farm should not be developed.

W54 29 WC54 _ SD1 the land to the west of Uckfield which you have identified for 1,000 houses must be reduced substantially. We find the suggested figure unsound as there is no proposal to have essential infrastructure in place prior to any building work starting to ensure that Uckfield as a town will not grind to a halt for current residents and that our daily life's and movement around our town and access to our essential services does not become impossible. THIS MAKES THIS PROPOSAL UNSOUND.

W55 30 5.16 – What does 'managing delivery of housing with timely provision of infrastructure' mean? This strategy is unsound if infrastructure is not in place prior to any building work starting.

W58 31 Figure 5 - The proposed Uckfield development is within 7km of Ashdown Forest and requires mitigation measures according to your new document – what are these? You cannot ask residents to comment as to whether proposals are sound or not is you do not provide us with information explaining what this means and what impact there could be? Please clarify what this 'mitigation' means. FAILURE TO EXPLAIN THIS MAKES THIS PROPOSAL UNSOUND.

WS9 32 5.16 – Heathfield (SD11) proposals for this town have been cancelled despite your initial document stating it would be providing much needed social housing – why cancel this when the need is clearly present? Where do you propose this housing type is to go? THIS IS NOT A SOUND STRATEGY AND MUST BE REVERSED.

Ws28 57 7.4 – Infrastructure issues – water/sewerage/transport/healthcare – you identify that Uckfield is currently under great pressure regarding infrastructure issues yet you intend to make these issues much worse by intending to allow the building of 1,000 more houses particularly in a drought and on an area of clay soil – THIS MAKES THE STRATEGY UNSOUND.

Ws30 59 7.13 – Which sites are a viability risk for affordable housing? Is the Ridgewood Farm site in Uckfield one of them? If not we do not want more than the minimum legal volume of this type of property as they will inevitably be flats/small houses/high volume of noise/cars etc.

WS54 62 WCS11 – What do you define as an 'unacceptable level of impact' on neighbouring dwellings? Please clarify.

WS33 62 WCS11 – West Uckfield site (Ridgewood Farm) is within the 7km Ashdown Forest 'mitigation' area so this must mean that this cannot be built on and another area of land should be sourced. For this reason we also consider THIS STRATEGY UNSOUND.

WS35 64 WCS12 – What do you mean 'exclusion zone of 400 meters for net increases in dwelling' does this mean less houses or more open space allocation which would result in developers attempting to cram additional blocks of flats and small terrace houses into a smaller area of land to still make their money?! If this is the case then THIS STRATEGY IS UNSOUND.

27 APR 2012
ACTION
BY
PLANNING & BUILDING CONTROL

Ws38 68 7.30 – Not viable option due to clay soil and the water shortage. THEREFORE THIS IS UNSOUND.

We require written responses to all the above raised issues as a matter of urgency.

Yours faithfully

[redacted]

[redacted]

Mr & Mrs Riley

