Matter No: 2 and 3 / Elisabeth Serpell

Wealden District Council

Local Development Framework

Submission Core Strategy

Elisabeth Serpell

Spatial Strategy

Paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4

In the classification of settlement types East Hoathly is included under the category of **Neighbourhood** Centres. However a Neighbourhood Centre is defined as

> *"As a settlement with limited basic or no facilities but with access to another centre, or a settlement with facilities but poor accessibility or access only to a service or local centre "*

East Hoathly has a primary school, local church, several shops and other businesses, a doctor's surgery, several public houses and a substantial nursing home. It has a range of private and social housing and sufficient available land to accommodate part of the housing and employment land growth proposed for the District in a sustainable way. Access to the village is from the A22 which until the construction of the by pass went directly through the centre of the village. There are now frequent bus services passing through the village linking to Uckfield, Heathfield, and Hailsham and beyond.

It is therefore not correct to say that it lacks facilities or has poor accessibility and in many re**spects is not dissimilar to Horam, Mayfield, Rotherfield, and Groom bridge all of which are included within the category of Local Service Centres.**

By including East Hoathly in the category of Neighbourhood Centres it implies that under paragraph 3.7 it is to be an area subject to countryside constraints. Thereby imposing an unjustified limitation on further growth.

Paragraph 3.4

The proposed distribution strategy of focusing the future planned growth on the towns and larger villages fails to recognise the existing split of housing which is roughly evenly divided between the towns and the rural areas and which forms an

essential feature of Wealden's charm and character. There are many smaller settlements where a limited number of new homes would help to sustain the rural economy and meet local need in a more environmentally friendly and sustainable way. They would more easily be accepted and would as a result more conveniently be absorbed and integrated within the existing community. It is both wrong and contrary to evidence of need to corral the majority of new housing to large urban extensions such as those proposed for Hailsham where such developments are likely to place undue strain on already overstretched and inadequate infrastructure such as school places, healthcare, jobs, and transport links.

Signed: Elisabeth M. Serpell
16 December 2011