



Response to Ashford Borough Council Local Plan 2030 'Main Changes' public consultation

MC26: Policy S20 - Eureka Park

Sandyhurst Lane Residents' Association (SLRA) has been active for over thirty years representing the collective interests of the residents of Sandyhurst Lane and all adjacent roads which constitute its neighbourhood of 340 dwellings. The mission statement of the Association is *"Protecting the rural character of Sandyhurst Lane and the adjoining area"*.

The proposed development of Eureka Park lies immediately adjacent to properties on Sandyhurst Lane.

The SLRA opposes the proposal to increase the number of dwellings from 300 to "an indicative capacity of 375 dwellings" for the following reasons:

(1) The change represents a 25% increase in the proposed number of dwellings. If the build density is to be proportionately increased to build on the same area as the 300 previously proposed, the plots will be 20% smaller, which implies a much lower quality of housing. This contradicts the statement in paragraph 4.230 that "In general, residential development here [Eureka Park] should be of a lower average density to reflect the wider parkland setting of the whole site...".

Alternatively, if all or part of the additional 75 dwellings is to be built on land previously reserved for communal areas, e.g. for leisure and recreation, this implies a serious reduction in such facilities.

If all or part of the additional houses are to be built on originally zoned employment land then the contribution of the site to the borough economy and jobs creation will be diminished.

(2) Whilst we welcome the change to paragraph 4.230, recognising the proximity of the Kent Downs AONB close to the site's western boundary, the increase in housing density will make it significantly less likely that the development will not "have a significant adverse effect on the AONB" (para. 3.67), the boundary of which lies close to the site.

(3) The 25% increase in the number of dwellings will produce a commensurate increase in vehicle movements. This will put even greater pressure on the local road infrastructure and we would vigorously oppose any temptation to allow any vehicular access from Sandyhurst Lane, contrary to para. 4.232 and to Policy TRA7 in the draft Local Plan.

These concerns again emphasise our expectation for the SLRA to be active participants in any master-planning group (para 4.226).