

**From:** Chris Stevens  
**Sent:** 11 November 2017 11:13  
**To:** Cheryl Poole  
**Subject:** SRNP Consultation

MS POOLE - PLEASE PROVIDE THE EVIDENTIAL BASIS THAT THESE COMMENTS HAVE BEEN PASSED TO MR SLATER IN THEIR ENTIRETY AND ORIGINAL WORDING FOR ASSESSMENT IN THE SRNP PROCESS. THANK YOU

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1. This document assesses fairly the differing sites offered as developable. This is seen particularly in the colour coded section running from pgs. 30-63. Whilst the Examiner hinted on possible internal bias of choice between Grove Farm sites & the Mill, this was not explicitly or sufficiently detailed to provide evidence of direct bias. These sections cannot be interpreted in any way as objective assessments in terms of the CS & NPPF policies as a whole.

2. The inherent problems of developing closer to the village centre were detailed in responses to the initial consultation process. Mr Slater commented and questioned Stephen Hardy on evidential matters to show why there was support for the Mill site primarily. The problems of alleged misapplication of the sequential test must be determined together when there are sites going forward for planning application. This does not mean one site is to be given stricter protocols than another as was intimated by Mr Slater's meeting. All must be assessed together and the effects must be examined in light of the sequential and exception tests based on the order presented in the NPPF.

3. The concerns of development in the centre of the village, especially when it appears developers balk at s.106 or CIL agreements to fund improvements to minimise the impact of the development. Pathways in Robertsbridge are in poor condition and the SRNP needs to be able to clarify and cement contributions to offset the effects of mass development of which 155 houses, a politically divisive figure, is a large percentage increase. Given the constraints on transport, road and parking access, including failing ESCC controls due to public funding cuts by Tory governments over the last 30 years, this section needs clarity and comprehensive control at the lower tier level.

4. Mr Marlow mentioned that the suggested 180 houses discussed by John Slater as a result of seeing notices around the village, was not true. This has not been clarified in terms of windfall development numbers which increase housing numbers. It is a requirement of the SRNP to include a system which caps government change in policy if they should decide to increase housing numbers because of political expediency. It is of questionable judgement for the government to use divisive terms such as "rural service centres" as a rationale to increase housing numbers away from saturated urban centres such as Hastings or Eastbourne to villages. The need for actual infrastructure improvements to offset increased population growth in older age groups (the young cannot afford housing in this area) is rather woolly to say the least.

5. Clarity on the rather vague concepts found in the NPPF & RDC CS need to be determined further here for this specific area in light of the goals of the Localism Act 2011. Equally, there is little scope of relevant application by central government to address failing policies in light of the EQA 2010. Tightening of the ambiguities in national and local policies of a higher tier level are to be supported. The NPPF, through court action and precedents, has many conflicts detailed which are inherent in the NPPF which started the review processes of Core Strategies around the country. If government refuse to state exactly what sustainable development means and in what type of area they consider such, it falls to the local communities to do this. This is inherent in the ruling in *East Staffordshire Borough Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & Anr.* case number: CO/2856/2016.

6. The NP, albeit with political problems attached, is an important development to give communities the power to shape the areas in which they live and know. Since Mr Slater does not live in the area, nor do many of those who work at RDC, their knowledge is deficient. This is particularly seen in development towards the centre of Robertsbridge whether on George Hill or Station Road. It is hoped

and assumed that if the process embarked, which has cost the tax-payer a considerable amount, is on the level, Mr Slater's ruling will conclude with NP court challenges, the Localism Act 2011, the Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 alongside the EQA 2010.

7. If RDC, central government through Mr Slater's process wishes to scupper the clear wishes of where development is to occur in Robertsbridge, this will damage even further the strained relationship between RDC, ESCC and local communities. It is foolhardy to pretend to respect the wishes of the community then immediately override their wishes at the next available opportunity.

8. Close inspection of Mr Slater's inspection will be noted and detailed for further action.