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RN19

Policy S60

Chairman, Tenterden and District Residents Association

Policy S60 St. Michaels, Land at Pope House Farm

This policy is misnamed since the Pope House Farm site lies within the Parish of High Halden, not St. Michaels. It should therefore properly be identified as High Halden in the Policy heading.

In the same way as policies for Tenterden are different from those applicable to Ashford, so policies for High Halden should be different from those for Tenterden/St Michaels. This site should be judged on the basis of its true location – that is High Halden.

The proposed new allocation (Policy S60) is located in open countryside and does not comprise a sustainable location. It is located some 2.7 km from the shops, school etc. in the centre of High Halden. There are many other sites located adjacent to the A28 road much closer to the centre of the High Halden settlement that could more appropriately be selected in preference to Pope House Farm. The new allocation (Policy S60) conflicts with Policy HOU5 which recognises that, whilst sites on the edges of existing settlements are generally acceptable as locations for further development sites beyond existing settlements are not sustainable, nor suitable. This site is well beyond the edge of the existing settlement of High Halden and as such, the proposed allocation defined in Policy S60 is not sustainable as a location.

Development of this site in High Halden would extend the built up confines of High Halden and would set a precedent for possible future development of the entire road frontage between St. Michaels and High Halden - a most undesirable outcome.

In Para 3.187 the Local Plan states *“The Council is concerned that unplanned erosion of countryside between built up areas would have a serious and significant adverse impact on the character and individual identity of villages through loss of their setting or, more seriously, through coalescence. This could occur in a variety of locations across the borough, for example by the large scale expansion of villages to encompass nearby hamlets; through progressive ‘ribbon’ or linear development along roads that joins up settlements, or through the expansion of Ashford itself.”*

POLICY SP7 - Separation of Settlements states *“Proposals for built development on non-allocated sites outside the built up confines of settlements shall be permitted only where its impact, individually or cumulatively, would not result in the coalescence or merging of two (or more) separate settlements, or the significant*

erosion of a gap between settlements resulting in the loss of individual identity or character.”

The Pope House Farm allocation (Policy S60) would have all of the adverse impacts that the Council suggests in Para 3.187 and Policy SP7 that they are seeking to avoid.

Policy S60 attempts to justify the selection of this site by reference to the distance to the shops, school and other services in St Michaels. But to approve development of this site would create the injustice that future residents of the Pope House Farm development would be dependent on the services in St Michaels but would not contribute to the local taxes for Tenterden Town Council which is responsible for some of these services, since Pope House Farm site lies in a different Parish. The future residents would not be able to participate in local elections for St. Michaels, but would instead have voting rights in High Halden. Planning of new housing should not ignore such administrative boundaries.

This policy should be rejected as it is not sound.