

Patron: The Duke of Norfolk



(CAFÉ)

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Henry Cleary Esq  
Deputy Director  
Housing and Growth Programmes  
Department for Communities and Local Government  
2/H9 Eland House, Bressenden Place  
London, SW1E 5DU

*Dear Henry*

### **Ford Eco-Town: FAVG Final Submission**

Further to my letter dated 1 October 2008 concerning the Ford Airfield Vision Group's report, "Public Consultation for Ford Airfield Eco-Town" ( 30 Jun 08), I now write with details of our concerns about the whole of the FAVG's 800-page package of Final Submission documents.

Though it is much more bulky, the Final Submission is not materially different from the August 2007 proposal which caused so much local concern, and which was rejected by the Arun District Council Ford Eco-Town Select Committee. Of course, in a number of areas it includes additional information, but it is perhaps most striking for what it does not say, and especially for the lack of clear and coherent analysis and argument to support the many assertions that underpin the developers' *Vision*.

We have therefore reviewed the entire package of documents, and concluded that they are dominated by aspirations, ideas, predictions and visions but that, when it comes to any apparently firm proposals, they are invariably hedged with conditional words. Indeed, in many aspects it is difficult to determine exactly what is being proposed and, perhaps more importantly, exactly what will be delivered by whom and when. For instance, no details of costings have been provided, so emphasising the aspirational nature of the Submission, and we have great

concern about the behavioural change model on which the proposals depend. In particular, the model ignores the 40% who will be living in the social housing and who may not choose to follow the assumed pattern.

Our review, which I attach at Annex A, therefore provides a perspective on the overall proposal, and I also enclose specific critiques concerning “Employment” at Appendix 1, “The Water Cycle” at Appendix 2, and “Transport Infrastructure and Traffic Congestion” at Appendix 3.

As you will see, we do not support the FAVG’s proposals, and we are not impressed by the content of the Final Submission. Indeed the more detail that surfaces, the more apparent it becomes that the FAVG’s proposal is simply a wordy and largely superficial attempt to appeal to the eco-gallery, without any firm commitment to any specific actions beyond the fact that the developers wish to build at least 5,000 new houses on mainly greenfield land in an unsustainable location.

Finally, I wish to emphasise that our purpose on this occasion is not to provide comments to be used by the FAVG in order to improve their proposal. Rather, we are submitting them to your Department on the assumption that, when it comes to decision-time, you will seek to balance the one view against the other. Thus we hope that you will agree to pass this critique to your “Technical Assessment Panel” so that they too may consider the counter view before deciding whether or not to take forward the FAVG’s proposal for an Eco-Town at Ford.

I hope that you will find our analysis helpful.

Yours sincerely,

*Vicky Newman*

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Vice-Chairman CAFE