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19th May 2015

Dear Mr Freeman,

As a result of the recent extensive National and International publicity generated by Mr Robert Worsley's refusal to grant you an option to purchase his land at OMV (open market value), we are seeking clarity on comments that you and your fellow directors have made on behalf of Mayfield Market Towns (MMT) over the past months.

You are no doubt aware that LAMBS (Locals Against Mayfield Building Sprawl) has many hundreds of registered supporters and a Facebook following of thousands. On that basis we believe we have a mandate to represent the local communities. This was further demonstrated when the LAMBS barrister was asked to support Horsham District Council in opposition to your proposal at the Examination of its District Plan in November.

On behalf of all those affected by your actions please could you answer the following questions:

- 1) In an interview broadcast on BBC Radio Sussex your fellow director, Lee Newlyn said of Mr Worsley, "if he doesn't wish to sell there is not much we can do about it at the moment". Since Mr Worsley's position would appear to be more than clear, please confirm what you mean by "...at the moment" because some would see this as an implicit threat?
- 2) In the same BBC interview Mr Newlyn said, "what we have always said is that that needs to be sorted out through the local plan processes, and that's what we are doing." Yet the Government Inspector charged with examining Horsham's District Plan has stated that "Mayfield Market Towns (MMT) proposal is not required in current circumstances" and that he had "significant concerns" about the sustainability of the location of the MMT site." Despite this, MMT is now endeavouring to promote its scheme against the Inspector's advice and contrary to the District Plan. Please explain why you have chosen to ignore the Inspector's finding?
- 3) Please can you advise how you can reconcile the following actions with the professed ideals behind the Localism Act?
  - (a) Leafleting 8000 residents in North Horsham urging them to support MMT as an alternative to existing plans (you then told the planning inspector that MMT would be in addition to existing proposals)
  - (b) Claiming that you have support based on an opinion poll commissioned by Meeting Place Communications, which unbeknown to MORI shares Directors with MMT. An independent analysis of the same poll shows that in reality most people do NOT support the New Town option – the opposite of your claims.

- (c) Ignoring the Inspector's directions to the council not to pursue MMT's proposal because of his serious concerns about the size, sustainability and location of your proposals.
  - (d) Ignoring the Inspector's findings by objecting to Horsham's revised plan which accommodates all the Inspector's recommendations.
- 4) In line with up to date planning guidelines, our District Councils have carefully considered housing provision, taking into account the needs of other authorities through the 'duty to cooperate.' In the same BBC interview Mr Newlyn states; "Horsham, Crawley and Mid Sussex - and that is a combined area sub-region needing something like 50,000 more homes." This figure of 50,000 is your own. Please could you advise how this was calculated and why you believe your judgement is superior to that of the local authorities and the Planning Inspectorate?
  - 5) Taking into account the comments of Sir Nicholas Soames MP and Nick Herbert MP, would you not agree that there is an unarguable conflict of interest between Lord Matthew Taylor's directorship of MMT and his involvement in the committee which overhauled the NPPF and Localism Act, and if not how do you reconcile this view?
  - 6) In February, Guido Fawkes reported that Lord Matthew Taylor, had published a pamphlet entitled 'Garden Villages – empowering localism to solve the housing crisis.' The pamphlet called for "new local development corporations" to be given the power to seize farmland for so-called "garden villages". Notably, he does not declare his directorship of MMT in the document. Given that the vast majority of land owners here do not want to sell, does this mean that compulsory purchase is your ultimate goal?
  - 7) As was established at the Horsham Examination, compulsory purchase orders (CPOs) are only relevant where no alternative options are available. The District Council has established sustainable well planned alternatives to deliver its housing needs. Accordingly, would you not agree that by the law as it stands, CPOs are emphatically not available to you?
  - 8) How do you reconcile offering Mr Worsley £500,000 per acre against the figure of £30,000-£40,000 per acre, evidenced by MMT at the Examination of the Horsham Plan as the average price per acre you are able to pay in order to be able to finance the enormous infrastructure costs involved?
  - 9) You stated in the Sunday Times, May 10, "My involvement in Mayfield follows my long term belief that new towns can create exceptional, sustainable, accessible and diverse communities..." Given the fact that the only approved new towns, Bicester and Ebbsfleet, are on brownfield sites with good transport links, would you not agree that your plans do not meet any of these criteria?
  - 10) You have said that MMT is "keen to work with the local community to meet local housing needs in the area" and claim you have been communicating with local parish councils, residents, and community groups. Given two years of blanket opposition to your scheme, would you not agree that you have singularly failed in this regard?
  - 11) You have in the past referred to MMT as meeting the principals of a 'Garden City'. Under current legislation such settlements must be locally led and locally supported. Housing Minister Kris Hopkins has said new towns were the right solution in some areas, but told MPs they should have local community support. Could you explain how MMT meets Kris Hopkins' criteria?

- 12) You claim to have options on land in the general area, but have not substantiated this (despite a request from the Horsham Examination Inspector for evidence). Your claims are dwarfed by LAMBS' evidence of more than 200 signatories by land owners, covering about 4,500 acres which is 'not for sale to Mayfields'. Given the near universal opposition to your plans, and its disregard of planning policy, would you accept that having options on some land does not in any conceivable way give you a mandate to blight everyone else indefinitely?
- 13) Mr Newlyn stated in the Daily Mail May 10 "There is a huge shortage of housing in this region and we believe that delivering these new homes in the form of a New town, with all the proper infrastructure and facilities in place, is a much more sustainable alternative to add-on development in and around existing towns and villages". This is contrary to your representations to the Examination Inspector that MMT would be in addition to all the "add-on development in and around existing towns and villages." How do you reconcile these opposing statements?

The MMT proposals have been clearly rejected by District Councils, Parish Councils, MP's, South Downs National Park, the vast majority of local people and beyond. Your actions are causing blight and severe anguish to many hundreds of the residents of this area. For the sake of the many people we represent we do hope that you see fit to withdraw MMT's Plan and remove its website. This will have the combined effect of immediately restoring many thousands of peoples' faith in justice and fairness, as well as your reputation.

Yours sincerely,

LAMBS.