

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Donna Moles](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]; [Battle Neighbourhood Plan](#)
Subject: BA36 6 June 2019
Date: 06 June 2019 18:56:02

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Ownership.

I own Caldbec House and the Procession Field to the south of it, and would be the developer, and would keep ownership of most of the field, and of my existing home and buildings. I also own Hughs' Field opposite, ESX382280.

Boundary

I'm sole owner of ESX329788. I own to the bottom of the ditch below the hedge along the south boundary, following standard practice for unregistered agricultural land, as this was until recently.

Evidence/location

It is identified very largely as BA36. I will provide a map of the area also showing my Hughs' Field over the road, and the land between the two which was ours, but was taken by CPO to move the road, a plan later abandoned.

Site capacity

I would develop three small parts of the total area, leaving most as green space, agreeing to a covenant that there be no more development, if needed. This has been our home turf for centuries and I want it to stay nice, not ruin existing properties, most of which belong to family, while creating a few homes for locals without over-densification. I know the local vernacular intimately, having spent most of my 63 years on or within a few miles of the site, and partly raised my children there. I have already built or renovated on site using local designers, craftspeople, and materials, in a way which respects or enhances the local vernacular, as my parents as builders have before me, on this site and around the area. I would propose two longhouses, one of the best of the local architectural features, and one larger house modelled on a Sussex barn, to meld into the landscape.

Scale of development

BA 36 was zoned for 10 units, but I'd propose 9, as it simplifies things as a small local developer, keen to remain below the complexities of larger schemes, and their need to overbuild to create profit after the costs of severing land and making affordable housing. I'd build two one and a half storey Sussex longhouses (google Brightling longhouses for an idea of two-storey ones) of four two/three units each, and one four-bedroom detached home, to sell to fund creating one longhouse of rentals. As landowner I am keen to provide affordable housing to people who were often customers of my Battle shop, and as landowner I am in a better position to do so affordably than commercial developers; I have already created several rental units on site and been renting out on site since 1996. I have just created two two-bedroom accessible homes on site - both my parents are 88 - so am well-aware of the need for nice smaller starting and ending homes.

Infrastructure

Very little is needed, as I already have four vehicular entrances to the site, as well as direct private access to five footpaths, from multiple locations. There is also a bus stop and post box almost on site. A much earlier plan to expropriate our home to create a home for the old led to the building of a full-sized sewer in my field, so the most difficult and expensive item is in place, and hardly used, as the scheme was abandoned, as was the road move. All spoil could be dispersed on site, there is already much woodland, the site is also large enough all waste could be dealt with by septic tank if needed, adding no load to existing services. Gas water and electric are already on there, and all is highly suitable for cycling and electric scooters. My Dad drives his electric buggy to Battle daily, as he used to cycle, and the location so close to the high street it means most trips don't need a car, and anyway, traffic is most dispersed this side of Battle, with several routes which don't add traffic to the High Street.

Site constraints

Access is easy from four flat drives, and other paths. Most of the site can't be seen from the road or from elsewhere, and the expropriation in the 70s moved the main public footpath well away from the site, so there isn't foot traffic across the entrances. There is no contamination as we have owned the site for centuries and it has been organic for my lifetime, with cattle and donkeys on the field, all long gone. There are gentle slopes which hide housing from the surroundings, a wooded part that hides the detached house proposed from Westcourt, the soil drains well and there is no flooding, there is a small pond which fills and dries with the seasons, there is a metalled road to the field and tracks throughout it, as it is topped twice-yearly by a neighbour, but is of no real agricultural value. There is a 9ft wide right of way out the north west end of the field, past my siblings' cottages at Bankside. All utilities are on site. The three areas I'd site homes on are all concealed from neighbours by the relief of the land and foliage already there. If I do a bit - 9 - here, it will help avoid pressure to do more in the future once I'm dead. Proof that there *is* pressure comes from expropriations which have over the years affected over six locations, and water, gas, electric, phone, roadways forced buys, etc. Another instance of pressure from BNP is that one of our other fields is so freely available to locals, the Neighbourhood Planners have just written to me asking to zone it as green space, which feels a tad intrusive, and similar to other well-intentioned attempts and compulsory purchases. We have even had people cutting shrubs from it, driving into it, presuming it is council land. We *are* local heritage, so are keen to conserve, and keep livable, and share.

Environmental constraints

None that would affect creating a few homes for locals, and any environmental issues can be addressed in house by [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] e have a long track record on site of supporting heritage and conservation, from [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sustainability.

This would be housing people would want to stay in, with little churn, which is a huge hidden saving; several tenants have lived in existing places for more than a decade. All units would be solar ready, and, with the windmill over the road, there is proof of wind energy availability. All units being new would be super-insulated,

and passive solar is intended, with a south-facing slope. Space means five units could have septic beds so no sewage load. Solar lighting would cope with any non-residential lanes and paths. There is more than sufficient wood on site to fuel a wood stove per unit, which is backup if needed, and there are wells on site if anyone wanted to be off mains water.

Sustainability

With over half an acre per unit, sandy soil which drains well, a mild slope, no other housing close, meadow all around, surface water isn't an issue, and there is a large ditch below the whole site, along the footpath below the length of the field. Compost on site already happens, all have space for allotments and kitchen gardens.

Impact.

I'd expect the 8 2/3 bed units would be mainly for older people, not large families with multiple cars. Most existing residents use their feet, electric scooters, and bikes over cars for most trips; some wouldn't need a car, few would need more than one. There is ample space for parking anyway, and for visitors and carers (apart from the bus stop almost on site), and for berming and planting, so parking areas are hidden from site of existing residents and people on the footpath, which is the only overlook from below. Not that it overlooks, as the land drops off a lot at the bottom of the field. Much of any hardstanding would be gravel rather than tar, allowing drainage, with access for rubbish lorries planned for. Housing here will facilitate use of Whatlington Road and Virgins Lane, reducing stress on the High Street.

Economic Development.

I have always employed locally for any of my building projects, which helps build community, and reduce traffic, and keep money in the town. This would provide work for local designers, builders, gardeners, landscapers, carers, and help keep retail in the High Street. The Stable I am converting on site at present is reusing the bricks from the stable floor for the facing, is being built by a builder from Catsfield, a bricklayer from Ninfield, is designed in Sedlescombe, an electrician from Hastings, a plumber from Bexhill, groundworks from Battle, etc. And any ongoing income and profit would stay, not go to an out-of-town developer who has land costs to recoup.

Vision and objective/Suitability.

Nice housing in the right place with view of the Abbey and sea, without causing pressure, with greater access to one of the nicest parts of Battle for many, with almost all of it still as green space. I'd expect a stable for my neighbours' ponies, and community store/tractor/bike shed, and a shared allotment area. And a mix of old and young families and tenants and owners would blend.

Deliverability/viability.

I would expect to build and sell the single house first, to finance the first longhouse. I attended one meeting at the Almonry which taught me some thought my financial position was that of my aunt, wholly untrue, and important not to assume. I'd be doing this because I think sensitive new housing is needed, and I think I can do it, and need to do it, and in such a way it doesn't make a mess of my own home and views. I have been gradually adding rental units and restoring Caldbec since I took it over long ago, and have a good team all used to getting things done, unrapaciously. I think doing some of it sooner would be better, rather than the idea I think I noticed in your proposals, that it happen after later developments, as if it works well, it argues for this sort of smaller more local less profit-driven way of finding new homes, as required by Rother and central

government. So I'd aim to do one or two first, quite soon, 2021, the next longhouse a year later, the next two years later.

Misc

But I am also about to submit plans for two longhouses and a home in my field over the road, which, as a longterm resident, and owner both sides of the road, think would be better than this site. It was the inclusion of that field in an earlier scheme which has made me do the work and spend the money on it. But, prompted by events, and knowing you need 20 in Battle if the 220 over-dense Blackfriars goes ahead, I think I should do both, as I could do it so in both cases I'd keep ownership of most land, so that one would hardly notice the new homes, and they would all be respectful and useful, and the green entrance to old Battle that exists because of Caldbec, could be preserved, and covenanted. And pressure for so many at Blackfriars with its rat run and High Street choking problems, be reduced.

And if the land taken from us, Caldbec Compulsory Purchase Green (CCPG), could be bought back, it would not only save taxpayers, but redress a serious blight, and it could be covenanted as a green space between two other mainly green spaces, and all the problems caused by the original forced purchase, when we had donated land to improve the road anyway, could be solved at the same time. The whole basis of seizing it from us was that it was thought to be unsafe to have a bend on the crest of the hill, and that is exactly where highways is instituting a forced parking lot, encouraged by the recent disastrous well-intentioned yellow lines, destroying the view of the ex-owners at Caldbec House, and creating danger that Highways will be liable for when the inevitable happens.

I have been trying to help my neighbours down my Dad's Dodo Lane at Caldbec House, whose cottages never had parking (or cars!), to address finding them safe sightly parking since 1995. I meet with the MP on the 14th to have a final go at this before I give up. Since the road-move scheme at the CCPG evaporated with the death of the councillor pushing it, the land has been in limbo, accreting parking, buses, dormobiles, bollards, sodium lamps, five benches overlooking the garden the land was taken from, rubbish bins at my field entrance, plans for electric wires across it, even the wildflower plans upset some who aren't fans of mainly dandelions and the unkempt. It was all much nicer before it was taken, as our photos from 1901 on show, and would be much nicer again if hedged and kept as green space. And I'd be happy to keep the wildflowers, or create allotments, or put back ponies where they used to be.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

