

WPC NEWS

Having just watched a comprehensive England victory over Italy, the Euro Champions, after coming back from one down and winning three-one, I feel fairly up beat. It is great that the men's team is also seeking football glory after the successes of the Lionesses!

Judging by the huge numbers of people who have objected to the Moto application for a 24/7, highly illuminated, 200 HGV truck stop on the A20 in Wrotham, this is of great concern to all.

WPC heads a Parish Alliance of six parish councils and have submitted comprehensive objections on planning, landscape, highways, and legal grounds from a team of experts led by our barrister Dr Askley Bowes.

It was surprising that the second Moto application was not objected to by Highways England (HE) and KCC Highways, which was directly opposed by the view of our own Highways Consultants.

To get to the bottom of this we requested the junction modelling data generated by Moto's consultants and given to HE, but not released with the application reports. TMBC rejected the request, so we issued Freedom of Information requests (FOIs) to HE, TMBC and KCC. HE admits to possessing the data but has found repeated excuses to delay release over the last 3 months.

We have now threatened HE with instructing our barrister to complain to the ICO governing body and TMBC with the consequences of a failure to consult with a statutory consultee.

I fully realise that the previous four paragraphs are BORING, but it is what your parish council does to slowly breakdown the

obstinacy and arrogance of huge corporations like Moto, and BIG government like TMBC, KCC and Highways England.

In the last twenty years WPC has prevented all significant planning applications that threatened Wrotham, and we don't propose to stop now. This is always a DAVID V GOLIATH tussle, and they assume there is no need for concern about a mere parish council.

It is now a fact that St Georges Court has been demolished. I personally strongly opposed the forced 'decant' of all our elderly residents at that time, and WPC successfully stopped the covenant removal and a planning application that would have imposed 3-storey blocks of flats in that area, with the blessing of TMBC Planners.

All of that was around 8 years ago and now is time to move on. TMBC granted consent to a new development of 2-storey flats and houses in 2021 and Clarion state they will build it out and 9 flats will be prioritised for elderly residents first, and that priority will be maintained for ongoing tenancies. Given everything, I think that is not a bad outcome, along with the much scaled down development.

Currently the age covenant is still in place, and this is now holding up the development, as the Lands Tribunal have delayed the hearing, or so I hear.

Completion of the replacement street lights are still held up by UK Power Networks or UK Power No-Works as I prefer to call them.

Since TMBC returned the public toilets building to WPC, we have completed the refurbishment. The toilets will now be available for public events, most recently the very successful Festival of Lights organised by Libby and St George's School last Friday and soon the fireworks.

Cllr Pete Gillin