

Client: Campaign to Protect Rural England Yellow News
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Wildlife threatened by 300-homes scheme next to Pevensy Levels

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A sensitive environment should not be made to pay the price for Hailsham to grow say objectors to a 300-homes scheme on land adjacent to the protected Pevensy Levels. Campaigners, including

Hailsham Town and District councillors, delivered a 796 signature petition to Wealden Leader Cllr Bob Standley at the WDC town offices on Wednesday. They fear pollution, destruction of native species and leeching of foul water into ditches, views backed by Town Council members who unanimously objected to the scheme at

a March 15 meeting. They said there are no transport, environment impact or hydrology assessments, the dead-end lane cannot take extra traffic, number of homes exceeds Wealden's original allocation, schools are full and development is not sustainable. By midweek there were 64 separate letters of objection.

Campaign chief Steve Cross, 58 from Marshfoot Lane, said: "We asked them to rethink the proposal to turn part of the protected Pevensy wetlands into a hard-edged urban sprawl.

The people of Hailsham did a good thing today. This is the only area in the UK where the Ramshorn snail breeds, there are lapwings, barn owls and

rare wildlife species whose habitat will be destroyed if homes are built and foul water contaminates the ditches. The Levels should be accorded the same protection as the Ashdown Forest."

The scheme, adjacent to the Levels' SSSI, drew criticism from environmental groups including the RSPB, Environment Agency and

the CPRE. The meeting was attended by Cllrs Berry, Laxton, O'Rawe, Blake-Coggins, Clarke and van der Geyten. Applicants ECE Architecture on behalf of Welbeck Strategic Land say it is a 'sustainable and deliverable, semi-rural extension to Hailsham that helps to meet local community housing need.'



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Campaigners who handed in the 796-signature petition to Wealden District Council on Wednesday