

# The Parishes Opposition Group

SUMMER NEWSLETTER

JULY 2005

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## Dear Resident

Firstly, may I introduce myself as the new Chairman of the Five Parishes' Opposition Group (FPOG), the campaign group objecting to the Kent Science Park's (KSP) expansion plans. I took over from Claire Hutchins in January 2005, having been involved with the FPOG since its inception last year.



As more volunteers are kindly helping FPOG deliver newsletters throughout Swale, this may be the first time some of you have received information from us. We are a campaign group set up by 5 Parish Councils (Bapchild, Bredgar, Milstead, Rodmersham and Tunstall) to oppose the KSP's expansion proposals *outside* its security fence.

The former Shell/Sittingbourne Research Centre, announced a change of name to 'Kent Science Park' in early 2004, together with plans for a major expansion.

These proposals (listed on the right) could not only change the local landscape irreparably but

would have a massive impact on Swale's infrastructure and amenities. Wherever you live you will notice an immense difference if these proposals are granted planning permission.

The planning documents that matter to us - the *South East Plan*, the *Kent & Medway Structure Plan* and the *Swale Local Plan* - are all currently under review and our aim is to prevent these expansion plans being included in any great detail in each document.

FPOG has been busy lobbying County and Borough Councillors, including meeting with Sir Sandy Bruce-Lockhart. To assist and advise us we are delighted that Rosemary Lansdowne, a London-based town planning lawyer, has agreed to work with the Group. Rosemary has taken over from planning consultant Dr Wendy Le-Las, who is now heavily involved with the Planning Inspectorate.

KSP's expansion plans are not just a threat to the five parishes involved. It is a vast scheme covering a huge area on the south of Sittingbourne. We hope this Newsletter is useful and further information can be found on our website -

[www.fiveparishes.org.uk](http://www.fiveparishes.org.uk)

**Andy Hudson,  
Chairman, FPOG**

### The Kent Science Park Expansion Proposals:

- To provide a 'mixed business' development beyond its security fence at Woodstock.
- To build 10,000 houses, the majority sited around Bapchild, in order to fund a new link road.
- To construct a southern relief road from the A2 at Bapchild, linking it to the KSP and providing a new junction off the M2.
- To provide a country park and other infrastructure.

### FPOG Supports:

- Development within KSP's existing boundaries, to provide new employment opportunities for science and technology-based companies in Swale.
- Moving the emphasis on traffic relief from a southern link road to a strategic upgrade of the A249/M2 junction linking to the Northern Relief Road.

### FPOG Objects to:

- KSP developing as a 'business park' as opposed to a science park, particularly as it has no university affiliation.
- The construction of up to 10,000 *new* houses on greenfield sites, the majority around Bapchild, which is in addition to Swale's housing quota detailed in the Swale Local Plan.
- New housing *funding* a link road from the A2 to the M2, a road that would transverse prime agricultural land in Swale and narrow the gaps between parishes.
- The increased demand on roads, schools, medical services, water, power, policing and parking that over 10,000 unnecessary new homes would create.

## Resignation of FPOG Chairman— Claire Hutchins

It was with sadness that the FPOG had to accept Chairman, Claire Hutchin's, resignation at the beginning of this year.

Despite juggling a demanding full-time job, as well as responsibilities as Chairman of Rodmersham Parish Council, Claire took on the Chairmanship of FPOG at its inception in early 2004 and was instrumental in gaining the support of other Parish Councils to help the campaign.

Claire's determination to fight KSP's proposals was relentless and fired up many residents to become involved in volunteering practical help as well as making generous donations to the Fighting Fund. Throughout last year Claire was heavily involved with work for the Examination in Public in respect of the Kent & Medway Structure Plan, lobbying Councillors and keeping residents informed of progress, all of which took up much of her personal time.

The FPOG would like to say how much it appreciated Claire's total commitment to the Group and would like to publicly thank her for all her hard work and enthusiasm during that time.

Andy Hudson, Chairman of Bapchild Parish Council, has now taken over as Chair and the Rodmersham representative on the Group is new Parish Councillor, Monique Bonney.

## New planning consultant - Rosemary Lansdowne

We are delighted that Rosemary Lansdowne has now agreed to take over the role of planning consultant to FPOG. Rosemary's firm of solicitors has long experience in Local Council Law, Administration, Town Planning and Court Hearings, in particular working with residents' groups.

Rosemary was the ideal choice as she is already very familiar with our campaign, having assisted Dr Wendy Le-Las during last year. Rosemary attended the presentation to Parish Councils by KSP in September 2004 and later that month she helped present our case at the Examination in Public (the independent

enquiry for the Kent & Medway Structure Plan) at County Hall.

We are looking forward to working with Rosemary when the second draft of the Swale Local Plan is published in the summer.

## Local Development Document to eventually replace Local Plan

The Local Development Scheme has been prepared by Swale Borough Council (SBC) to present its current proposals for preparing planning policies and highlighting when key consultations will take place. Its preparation is a requirement of the Planning

and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The Planning Act introduces a number of changes to the Development Plan system including the replacement of Local Plans by *Local Development Documents*. However, as SBC, like other

authorities, has progressed to an advanced stage of preparation of the Swale Local Plan review, the Act allows the Local Plan to be completed, adopted and saved for three years, during which time it will be replaced by a *Local Development Document*.

## Fund Raising Events for your Diary

### The Five Parishes' Great Wine & Wisdom Final

Winning Teams from Bapchild, Bredgar, Milstead, Rodmersham and Tunstall go Head-to-Head

Saturday 15 October 2005 at 7:30pm

Tunstall Village Hall

*Please come and support your parish by either:*

- Competing against the finalists with your own team of 6-8 people  
(£5 per person. Team does not have to reside in parishes. Please provide own drinks.)
  - or Reserving a seat to watch  
(£1 per person. Please provide your own drinks.)

To reserve a table or a seat, please call one of the numbers at bottom of this page.

Enjoy a fantastic toe-tapping evening and help raise money for

The Five Parishes' Fighting Fund by joining us for

## Big Band Dance Sounds

from the

## 1940s, 50s and 60s

Played by 20-piece band 'Moonlight Sounds'

\* Excellent cold food buffet \* Licensed Bar \* Dancing until 11pm \* Raffle

Saturday 12 November at 7.30pm

The Abbey School, London Road (on the A2), Faversham

Ticket price £15 per person. Tables available to seat 4 – 8 people.

To book, please call one of the numbers below.

To book for either of the above events, please call:

Andy Goldsmith (Bapchild)	01795 479127	Dick Clack (Bredgar)	01622 884421
David McAleer (Milstead)	01795 830263	Sue Sills (Tunstall)	01795 438939
Sue Wills (Rodmersham/Swale)	01795 427431		

# The Planning Process that Affects our Campaign

## The South East Plan

<b>Produced by:</b>	The South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) which is made up of 112 members - 75 councillors from the region's county, district and unitary councils and 37 members who represent economic, environmental, social and voluntary sectors in the region.
<b>Responsibilities:</b>	Advocacy, accountability and regional planning. On accountability, the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) reports to the Assembly for delivery of the Regional Economic Strategy.
<b>Plan's Objective:</b>	To set out a vision to 2026 focusing on housing, transport, economy and the environment.
<b>Current Status:</b>	Under review by SEERA following recent public consultation.
<b>Timescale:</b>	
Jan-15 April 2005	<i>Public consultation.</i>
Jan-Summer 2005	Residents completed an on-line questionnaire or submitted comments by post.
Summer-Dec 2005	Assembly works on sub-regional policies.
	<i>Public consultation.</i>
	Further work by local authorities on sub-regional detail including housing allocations to district council areas.
Spring 2006	SEERA submits full draft South East Plan to Government for approval and it becomes a legal document that local authorities have to follow.

## The Kent & Medway Structure Plan

<b>Produced by:</b>	Kent County Council and Medway Council.
<b>Plan's Objective:</b>	To set out the strategic planning framework for the protection of the environment, major transport priorities and the scale, pattern and broad location of new development (not individual sites) for new housing and major economic development across Kent and Medway.
<b>Current Status:</b>	KCC and Medway Council are now considering the independent panel's report following the Examination in Public in September 2004 and will report back shortly.
<b>Timescale:</b>	
September 2004	Examination in Public, similar to a public enquiry, held before a panel.
Spring 2005	Councils consider EIP recommendations by panel.
2005	KCC & Medway Councils publish their own report on which recommendations to accept and reject, which residents can appeal against. When the Kent & Medway Structure Plan is finally adopted it is in force for at least three years.

## The Swale Local Plan

<b>Produced by:</b>	Swale Borough Council.
<b>Plan's Objective:</b>	To set out policies and proposals relating to the development and other use of land in the Borough, whilst applying the strategy of the Kent and Medway Structure Plan. To provide a detailed basis for planning decisions by identifying sites for particular purposes and criteria against which development proposals will be assessed.
<b>Current Status:</b>	Following public consultation in spring 2004, the second draft of the Plan is expected in July 2005 when residents can once again support or object to wording of policies.
<b>Timescale:</b>	
July 2005	<i>Public consultation</i> to the second draft Local Plan. Any objections not accepted by the Council will be considered by an Independent Planning Inspector who will decide whether or not the Plan should be changed any further.
2006	New Local Plan adopted and will remain in force for three years, during which time it will be replaced by a Local Development Document.

# The Kent & Medway Structure Plan:

## Were our Objections Successful?

The first hurdle for the campaign last year was to convince an independent Panel that KSP's proposals should not be included in any great detail in the Kent & Medway Structure Plan ('Structure Plan').

FPOG presented its case to the Panel at the Examination in Public (EiP) sessions held in September 2004. The Panel has now published its eagerly awaited report, our first indication as to just how much political support there is for KSP's expansion proposals.

### So did the Panel accept our objections?

Quite frankly, it depends on how you interpret the Panel's report. Our overall feeling was one of disappointment, because the Panel has not made any specific judgements on the information we presented at the EiP. That said, it has not fallen more favourably on the side of KSP either.

### Was expansion beyond KSP's security fence agreed?

No, but then the report refers to KSP in terms of a 'complete package', that is, business expansion including housing and a road, rather than in three separate parts.

KSP's submission said their plans would offer a new image for Sittingbourne based on science and technology, higher education facilities, enhanced skills training and a country park cited on three disused chalk quarries. If no action were to be taken, the site would end up as a distribution centre and

the skills base would be lost.

### What did the panel say about an additional 10,000 homes?

The report refers to 5,000 dwellings although we know the KSP had proposed 10,000 at this time. Swale Borough Council was reported as regarding the assumption of 5,000 houses to fund the road and associated infrastructure to be unsubstantiated, especially given the unknown level of potential public finance for initiatives of this kind.

### And a proposed southern relief road?

This has to be the most frustrating part of the report. The Panel states the provision of access roads is '... currently the subject of feasibility studies' so there could be no comment on it. However, at the time of the EiP, we were all very much aware that a 'traffic census' had been conducted through our villages during the summer 2004. This was part of the 'traffic feasibility study' undertaken by KSP and Kent County Council via money from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to the tune of £300,000. The 'feasibility study' was produced in time for the EiP and is listed as Core Document 2202/01 in the back of the report. How could the Panel not express a view on it?

### Any other anomalies?

Similarly, we have been told time and time again by Borough Councillors that they cannot

comment on KSP's proposals because no planning application has been submitted. Yet the Panel states in its report that it cannot express a view because 'the entire proposal is before Swale Borough Council which, at this time, is not in a position to express a view upon it'.

### So what happens now?

The Panel's recommendations are now with Kent County Council and Medway Council for consideration. We have to await their decisions whether to accept the Panel's findings, although there seems little detail for them to actually digest.

If the two Councils do not take a particular stance on the report, this will leave the Structure Plan showing little detail as to KSP's expansion, with little direction to flow down into the Swale Local Plan. This would be helpful.

Should the two Councils favour the expansion and include more of the proposals within the Structure Plan's policies, this will leave us with a much harder fight on our hands. We therefore await the report from Kent County Council and Medway Council which we believe is due later this year, probably in September.

# The Swale Local Plan – Were objections to Policy B20 successful?



**Swale Borough Council say:**  
“In the longer term and following completion of the northern relief road, it may be necessary to consider more significant road improvements, including a possible new road link between the A2 and M2.”

## Could thousands of houses and a new road destroy this?

You may recall completing numerous forms last April with regard to the Swale Local Plan and, in particular, objecting to Policy B20 which covered the expansion at KSP.

Your comments, together with those from other interested parties, have now been considered by Swale Borough Councillors and discussed at meetings of the Local Plan Boards. Here's progress to date:

### Did residents completing forms actually help the campaign?

Certainly. The volume of responses could not be ignored – for Policy B20 alone, your comments spanned 56 pages!

Your concerns, together with the Group's lobbying of individual Councillors at the end of last year, have certainly been heeded and the Borough Council acknowledges that 'a state of uncertainty exists' with regards to KSP's proposals.

### Did KSP submit objections?

Yes, LaSalle Investment Management via its agent, Paul Sharpe Associates, objected to its proposals not appearing in more detail within the Local Plan. Sharpe's suggested that the following information should appear:

- Recognition of the Council's support for expansion and for designated land at KSP, and on the south-east side of Sittingbourne, being used for mixed use priority development.
- Expansion could not be contemplated without a link to the M2, which in turn could not be fulfilled without connection to a primary road, the A2. Provision of the new road had to be completed first.
- The road's funding would be secured by associated housing.

- Such was the strategic importance of KSP, social, transport and economic benefits outweighed those policies related to greenfield development, landscape and agricultural land protection.
- Inclusion of a new policy and an Area Action Plan for KSP.

Fortunately, the report to Councillors recommended that the references to the KSP within the Local Plan were already at an appropriate level of detail.

### Apart from residents, who else objected?

With regard to Policy B20, as well as the 354 submissions from residents, a number of other parties expressed objections to the Policy's detail, including:

GW Finn & Sons on behalf of HJ Holdstock - objected to land off Ruins Barn Road not being included as part of KSP's expansion within the wording of Policy B20. The land, is sited between KSP and existing residential development, could provide significant job, housing, business and leisure use with frontage on Ruins Barn Road that is no longer required for livestock and farm disposal sales.

KD Atwood - Considered a specific Area Action Plan essential to deliver an expanded KSP for the benefits of residents and the rest of Kent. This required a road linking the M2 to A2, which would transform the transport infrastructure of Sittingbourne and ensure that the M2/A249 junction did not constrain delivery of other policies in the Local Plan.

### Will the second draft support KSP's expansion beyond its security fence?

Not before all development has been undertaken within KSP. However, the draft wording does acknowledge that 'limited expansion outside of the boundary might be acceptable, in accordance with Policy B20.' Draft wording for Policy B20 now says:

*The Borough Council will grant planning permission for the refurbishment, redevelopment and extension of buildings within KSP, as shown on the Proposal Map, provided that:*

- *The use to which the buildings are to be put are compatible with the use of the site as a 'science park' as defined by the UK Science Park Association.*
- *A transport impact assessment is submitted and a travel plan is provided that minimises the impact of the proposed development on the local highway network; and*

- *The impact of the development is acceptable in landscape and visual terms.*

*For any development proposal which would extend development beyond the allocated site boundary, the Borough Council will only grant planning permission if it is satisfied that:*

- *The proposed development is not more appropriately undertaken within the existing boundaries of the site.*

### Will the Plan include additional housing?

No, not in respect of expansion of KSP. Draft wording for Policy B20 says:

*For any development proposal which would extend development beyond the allocated site boundary, the Borough Council will only grant planning permission if it is satisfied that:*

- *The development does not require to be supported by housing development.*

### Will it support the proposed southern link road?

Swale Borough Council has altered wording to say:

*In the longer term and following completion of the northern relief road, it may be necessary to consider more significant road improvements, including a possible new road link between the A2 and M2.*

### What is FPOG's opinion of the latest draft of the Local Plan?

Whilst the wording suggests that the housing proposal is not a possibility, we have grave concerns that the attraction of a southern link road, to alleviate congestion on the Northern Relief Road, may sway Councillors to allow a limited amount of new houses in the area

Expansion beyond the current site could still occur if KSP can prove that it has filled its site to capacity. This would no doubt reinstate the demand for a new road to assist the businesses there. It would appear we will be living under the threat of expansion beyond the security fence for some time yet.

## Other parties objecting to Policy B20 - KSP's expansion

**Countryside Agency** - Whilst broadly supporting expansion, the Agency said it had to be acceptable in landscape terms.

**CPRE (Swale)** - Objected to expansion as the 'development spread' from KSP, if it was promoted as a 'hub', would have a damaging impact. Promotion of the road link and associated development would damage attractive and valued countryside, destroy tranquility and close the option to provide a road off the motorway in any other area.

**Kent County Council** - Stated it would be necessary to resolve the

scale, character and phasing of any expansion of the Park.

**Kent Wildlife Trust** - Objected to lack of assessment of the environmental impact of the proposed new access proposals, including the threat to the protection of Cromers Wood and any sites of Nature Conservation Interest in the area.

**Ospringe Parish Council** - Objected to the effects expansion plans could have on highway networks outside of the 'local' area, such as the A2 in the east of the Borough.

**Ramblers Association** -

Objected to expansion outside the existing site as many public rights of way could be affected or lost. Did not want to see any increase in traffic along Ruins Barn Road where many public rights of way crossed.

**Tonge Parish Council** -

Objected to expansion if it was conditional upon, or as a result of, funding from the provision of homes on greenfield land, in the corridor between Tonge, Bapchild, Rodmersham and the M2.

## Swale Local Plan - Helpful Facts

- The Borough has significant environmental constraints and Sittingbourne in particular has high quality agricultural land on all but its north side, which itself has important nature conservation interests.
- The KCC and Medway Council list three constraints to development in this location:
  1. Impact on high quality agricultural land.
  2. Impact on the North Downs Special Landscape Area.
  3. Impact of housing merging Sittingbourne and Bapchild.
- Both KCC and Medway Council contend that Junction 5 of the M2 where the A249 joins west of Sittingbourne, is close to being under stress, with a poor safety record often due to back queuing.
- The proposal for extensive residential and employment development between KSP campus and Sittingbourne goes far beyond the scale of development contemplated for Technology and Knowledge Clusters and acknowledges that the development would depend on a new junction on the M2, for which Highways Agency have not expressed support or alternatively, a new access from a southern relief road.

## Swale Local Plan - Unhelpful Facts

- The Kent & Medway Structure Plan will revisit housing provision in Swale, which could result in development on green field sites, a fact confirmed by Swale Borough Council. Land subject to at least one environmental constraint would also be included. It is proposed that an additional 2,200 dwellings be added to the housing provision for Swale.
- Highways Agency stated the extent of general development proposed in the Structure Plan should cause no problems and that the network is not under stress.
- KCC and Medway Council gave 'mixed messages' at the Examination in Public, by saying:
  1. Highway Agency's reason for not supporting a new motorway junction – one of distance between junctions – could be met.
  2. Expansion of KSP would require mixed-use development but not necessarily 10,000 dwellings.
  3. Other sources of funding the expansion should be sought but even then they were not convinced that the development should be written into the Structure Plan.

## What more can residents do? Take action this summer!

The second draft of the Swale Local Plan is to be deposited on the 4th July 2005 — we will need you to respond in the same overwhelming way that you did in April last year.

We do not know yet what format we will be asked to comment on the Plan but we will be working with Rosemary Lansdowne to ensure FPOG submits a comprehensive case. In addition we need residents to do the same.

Given the timescale and the holiday period, it is unlikely that the FPOG will be able to deliver notices through your door to advise you of what action to take and by when. However, we hope to provide information to you via the

following:

- Notices in the Parish and Church Magazines (depending on publication dates)
- Village columns in the East Kent Gazette
- Community news columns in the Kent Messenger
- Village notice boards
- FPOG website - [www.fiveparishes.org.uk](http://www.fiveparishes.org.uk) - and the websites of individual parishes
- Messages to those of you registered on our e-mail list
- Parish Council Meetings

It is likely copies of the Plan will be made available to Parish Council Clerks, at the local library and on-line at Swale Borough Council's website - [www.swale.gov.uk](http://www.swale.gov.uk). You can always seek advice from your Parish Council, or for those living outside the villages, please contact FPOG on 01795 470753 and a representative will contact you to help.

## Latest News from the FPOG Communications Team

### All Parishes Represented for Fund Raising Duties!

We are delighted that all five parishes are now represented on the team and welcome new Tunstall representatives, Roger and Sue Sills.

Since September 2004 we have held 8 fundraising events which have contributed £4,660 to the Five Parishes' Fighting Fund.

### Newsletter Delivery Volunteers Urgently Needed!

To ensure everybody knows about our campaign, we are always grateful for offers to help deliver our Newsletter. If you are able to spare some time to deliver along your road, please complete the Volunteer Form in this Newsletter. In particular, we need help along:

- Park Avenue
- Park Drive/Bradley Drive
- Minterne Avenue
- Cranbrook Drive
- Chegworth Gardens
- Sterling Road / Hales Road
- Lyndhurst Close
- Farm Crescent / Haysel / Pond Drive
- Crossways
- Roseleigh Road
- Highsted Road
- Lyndhurst Grove

## Plans for Autumn Raffle - Appeal to Local Businesses and Residents

The Communications Team is keen to organise a wonderful raffle for the Autumn, with prizes that cannot fail to tempt everybody to buy tickets! All money raised will go to The Five Parishes' Fighting Fund.

We would love to hear from anybody who could donate a highly-

attractive and/or original prize.

For example: electrical goods; a 2-course meal for two people; hampers; household items; tickets for events; 'original' trips out; subscriptions; 2-week leisure membership; wine selections. We also welcome donations of smaller 'runners up' prizes from residents.

In return, we can offer maximum publicity for residents and organisations in the lead up to the Raffle, or anonymity if you so wish.

If you can offer a prize that you think will make our raffle a hit, please contact Sue Wills on 01795 427431 to discuss. Many thanks.

## Revised Local Plan out on 4th July 2005 - Your Last chance to act!

The revised draft plan will be Re-deposited on Monday 4th July 2005, when further representations will be invited. **This will be your last chance to comment on the content of the Local Plan.**

Representations made will then be submitted to the Local Plan Inquiry Inspector, who is independent from

Swale Council, for final consideration. The Inquiry Inspector's Report will be binding on the Council, and there will be no later modifications stage.

**Policy B20** (Kent Science Park) has been re-drafted to present more clearly the Council's position for potential expansion and we will

provide our own views on this and other related policies which you might like support or object to.

To find the latest and most up to date news on this please check out our website

[www.fiveparishes.org.uk](http://www.fiveparishes.org.uk)

and [www.bapchild.info](http://www.bapchild.info) for background information.

# Fighting the Southern Relief Road Proposal - Our Concerns Grow

In April this year FPOG, accompanied by our local County Councillor, Keith Ferrin, met with Sir Sandy Bruce-Lockhart to discuss the KSP's expansion. The meeting was useful but not particularly reassuring, in particular where discussion on the Northern Relief Road (NRR) and the likelihood of a southern route were concerned.

We believe a southern bypass is supported, in principle, by both Swale Borough Council and Kent County Council, not as a scheme to benefit KSP's developers, but as a solution to the problems the NRR could create. County and Borough Councillors are certainly concerned that traffic congestion will quickly build up on the NRR.

Whilst the NRR will provide access to further 'open up' development in the north, a southern link road would have to 'service' the NRR by being an attractive alternative to non-commercial traffic. We could easily see a southern road used far more than the NRR, with traffic speeding through our countryside to the M2, whilst the NRR, paid for with public money, simply acts as an access route to businesses on the north of Swale.

As we know from Councillor Keith Ferrin's discussions with KSP at the end of last year, KSP was not interested in public money providing a new link road, only private money funded by the sale of

houses. During discussions Sir Sandy said that in his view 1,000 dwellings might have to be 'allocated' to the area around the KSP to pay for a southern relief road, if public money was used. This rather suggests that KCC and Swale could yet work with the KSP's developers to assist with limited expansion of the site. This would still mean housing on green field sites, albeit a reduced number, and our parishes could still be ruined by construction of a new road.

During our meeting with Sir Sandy we emphasised the following concerns:

- A southern route should not be seen as a solution to potential congestion on the NRR. It would provide no new benefits as the new homes built to fund its construction would simply result in more traffic, leaving a new link as congested as the NRR.
- Wording in the second draft of the Local Plan has been altered to incorporate a possible new road link with the A2 and M2. This wording does not mention any traffic models or studies that might take place and which could show a link road to be inappropriate and unviable.

- FPOG wants decisions made on factual evidence, for example, like the independent study undertaken by the Babbie Group in September 2004. The study concluded a new road would yield only a 1% reduction in Sittingbourne Town Centre traffic movements and then only if the target modal shift of a 32% reduction in the use of the motor car were achieved. As the modal shift has never been achieved anywhere else, it leads FPOG to conclude that a southern link road would actually increase traffic movements and provide anything but relief for central Sittingbourne.

- Priority for highway investment should be focused on the highly-inadequate M2 Junction 5. With the envisaged expansion of commercial areas to the north of Sittingbourne and Sheppey, the Junction will become a bottleneck for access on and off the motorway. Indeed, we believe any new junction from the M2 to the KSP would only add to, rather than alleviate, pressure on roads as traffic 'hops' between two very close motorway junctions.

*"it leads FPOG to conclude that a southern link road would actually increase traffic movements and provide anything but relief for central Sittingbourne."*

We are not the only party concerned about the introduction of a Southern Relief Road. Although with different interests to ours, Boyer Planning, agent for Westbury Homes, Taylor Woodrow and Persimmon Homes, made submissions to Swale Borough Council during the review of the Local Plan. They strongly questioned the potential of the NRR to be delivered and provide additional development within a reasonable period of time. Concerns were raised that proposals had not been advanced for the substantial remaining section from the west of the Creek to bypass Bapchild to the A2. Land ownership and other complex issues meant no substantial land acquisition had been undertaken to enable early delivery of the road

and total funding had not been agreed either. The agent stated that there was no guarantee that the Relief Road could perform a strategic role.

**Sir Sandy's Departure**

Sir Sandy Bruce-Lockhart is due to leave his job at Kent County Council – timing not known – and Councillors Keith Ferrin and Alex King, could be among the contenders for the Leadership of KCC. The result could be interesting given that Keith Ferrin appears to be against and Alex King in favour of the substantive proposals for the KSP. Councillor Alex King appears to be a strong supporter of KSP's expansion – some of you may have read his letter in the East Kent Gazette

months ago, where he gave the impression KSP's expansion could be similar to that at King's Hill, West Malling. FPOG has seen no evidence to suggest that, unlike at King's Hill (which is large enough to have now become a new parish) , the KSP's proposals include a golf club, community halls, supermarkets, cafes, and educational facilities with a university affiliation. We have, however, seen evidence that the KSP wants 10,000 houses, a new road, a country park to compensate for lost green fields and would make a statutory financial contribution towards 'community facilities'.



FPOG Meeting at Wyvern Hall September 2004

**Wormshill expresses interest in Campaign**

Residents in Wormshill don't have a Parish Council but hold an annual meeting, to which they, this year invited FPOG to discuss the possibility of a new motorway junction and the effect this may have on their village.

Residents expressed their concern that the introduction of a junction

as proposed by the Kent Science Park would increase traffic through the village, even without Southbound exits, due to the proximity of connecting roads which lead directly back over the motorway.

We informed residents that this was not only proposed by the Kent

Science Park but also now outlined as a possibility by both KCC and Swale Council in the Local Plan. We strongly encouraged villagers to express their viewpoint to KCC at the earliest opportunit

# FIVE PARISHES' OPPOSITION GROUP – VOLUNTEER FORM

## 1. Staying Informed

If you wish to receive updates and information about the campaign, please provide your contact details below (e-mail means we can provide a more efficient service to you). Your details will not be passed to any other parties:

(Tick relevant box)

By E-mail Name: .....

E-mail address: .....

Which parish do you live in? .....

Deliver to Name (CAPITALS): .....

Address: .....

.....Postcode:.....

## 2. Offering Support

Are you able to help with any of the following and if so, please provide a contact telephone number:

Delivering notices to residents along .....(road name).

Photocopying . Please specify number of notices able to copy at any one time: .....

Helping at a fundraising event (e.g. refreshments, car park help, setting out chairs, DIY jobs)

Providing help where and if I can, depending on what's involved.

Printing  DIY  Finance  Sponsorship/Prizes  Catering  Fundraising

Name:.....Tel. No:.....(day).....(eve).

## 3. Helping Financially

I/We wish to donate £..... and attach a cheque payable to 'The Five Parishes Fighting Fund'.

If you require a written receipt for your donation, please tick here  and ensure your name and address are included in Section 1.

**Please return your completed form and any donation and send to the FPOG at one of the following:**

c/o Waterside, Highsted Valley, ME9 0AD c/o 4 Medlar Close, Bredgar ME9 8EL  
c/o 4 Doves Croft, Tunstall ME9 8LQ c/o 45 Shurland Ave, Sittingbourne ME10 4QT  
c/o 12 St Laurence Close, Bapchild ME9 9NB c/o Rodmersham Stores, Rodmersham Green ME9  
c/o Finches Farmhouse, Frinsted Road, Milstead ME9 0SB