Dear Chief Planner,

I wish to confirm my objection to the application for planning for a warehousing and distribution depot to be established on the Westerham Road, between Oxted and Westerham. This is the third occasion that this planning consent has been made. On the first occasion it was rejected by the planners. On the second occasion it was tabled and then withdrawn and this is the third occasion it has come forward.

On the first occasion it received some support from local Councillors who emphasised that it would bring employment opportunities to Tandridge. I believe that support on this basis should be rejected since it is reported that our unemployment levels in Tandridge are at the 1% level, and therefore the employees required to service the depot would represent drivers and warehousemen who live outside of the area and necessary have to travel by their own transport to the depot. Secondly, the Titsey Estate and its development partners seem to be highly focused on bringing this depot to an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which has roads which both Kent and Surrey County Council have said are entirely unsuited to the scale and size of vehicles required to work this depot. I would hope that given the eagerness of those seeking planning consent, that Council members and employees will make a specific declaration that they have no conflict of interest arising from any connections that they have had with the applicants. It would be very curious that this third request would now receive planning consent in view of the previous rejections from your own Council. Thirdly, I object to this application on the lack of suitability of the site, in terms of road connections and the ability for both Oxted and Westerham to take even heavier traffic loads which will be significantly increased because of the sheer scale of the development. The Council needs to explain why more suitable sites can not be used, for example the site opposite the intersection of the A22 and A25, which was previously used as a service site for motorway extensions, would be much better in terms of accessibility to A roads and the motorway. Given the need of the Council to find major new housing developments, the site proposed at The Grasshopper would be a much better fit for private houses rather than an industrial warehouse. Finally, I wish to object on the basis of a significant increase in emissions impacting on the air quality along the A25. The Council should seek arrangements that would lesson CO2 emissions and not dramatically increase them, which is evident in this facility proceeding in an infrastructure which is poorly suited to the implicit demands that will be made on it.

Yours
Sir William Castell