



# LEST WE FORGET



25 years ago, Lower Halstow (and it's neighbouring villages) united to fight the greatest threat to it's environment since WWII—and won !

In clearing out a cupboard this pile of old documents came to light and we thought you might like a little trip down memory lane and our newer residents might like a short little history lesson about their village.

**This was one of our darkest moments which subsequently became one of our finest.....**



So.. once upon a time back in 1995 the owners of Great Barksore farm applied to excavate all of the Clay from their disused pit as well as the **entire ridge** north of Basser hill. Their intention was to then refill the giant void with all types of waste inc. **Toxic** from across London and the South East and so create one of the biggest landfill tips in Europe. The scale of the operation intended was staggering as you can see from the map and involved an area greater than 160 acres (more than twice the size of Lower Halstow) and equivalent to that required for 1,400 houses.

There would have been up to **60** lorry movements **PER HOUR** for over **30 years!**

Involved the extraction of **4 Million** cubic meters of Clay!

And having removed the ridge entirely, they would have dug a hole the depth of **Big Ben !!**



The Tip would still have been operational today and would have clogged our country lanes, poisoned our waterways, destroyed our countryside and wiped out the abundance of wildlife and breeding grounds.

Not since the war had our village united and mobilised with such force and the Tiptree action group '**TAG**', was formed by Mrs Patricia Carr and together with an army of village volunteers they raised a fighting fund and took the enemy on - head first.

We were very fortunate to have our own planning expert living amongst us, Mr Mick Drury, who turned Gamekeeper for the sake of the village and applied his considerable skill and expertise in Planning law.

But of course, we also had the eminent Mr Bill Davis, chair of our parish council and Independent Ward Councillor. Those who knew Bill will remember him as one of the great gentlemen of our village who deftly show-cased our cause across all corners of the Press, TV & Radio - he was a much loved defender of good.

In October 1998, after a long and weary 3-year battle we finally got the news that we had all strived for - **WE HAD WON** and the Tip had been defeated.

Hopefully this monster will never rear its ugly head again but if it does .....We stand ready.

Please enjoy the collection of press cuttings from back in the day.





Meet the lobby: Protesters hunt for a tip-free Tiptree. Full report: Back page

EKD7298/24a

## Don't saddle hillside with a tip, say riders

A TROOP of riders, horrified by plans for a huge clay extraction pit at Tiptree Farm, trotted to the public inquiry with a petition protesting against the scheme. The 10 grooms and riding instructors from Callum Park Riding Centre arrived at Iwade Village Hall just as the inquiry had broken for lunch on Thursday of last week.

Government inspector Mr Ken Smith would not leave the village hall to receive the 14-signature petition from the girls lined up on horseback outside the building, so Mrs Lulu McGee, co-owner of the riding centre, climbed out of the saddle and took it inside to him.

South Eastern Minerals and Biffa Waste Management's scheme to remove hundred of tons of clay from the site at Funtun and fill the hole with rubbish has angered staff from the riding centre, who believe it will not only jeopardise business at Callum Park, but also ruin

**Horseback protest: Co-owner of Callum Park Riding Centre Mrs Lulu McGee presents the petition to Tiptree appeal inspector Ken Smith.**  
EKD7298c/20



pleasant rides in the area.

Co-owner Mr John McGee said: "According to South Eastern Minerals and Biffa, riders don't use these roads.

"Turning up with the horses was the best evidence to show that we do."

The stunt livened up proceed-

money to pay planning consultant Miss Jeannie Taylor to represent them. She said: "It's disappointing how long the inquiry is taking, particularly considering the group's limited funds."

Miss Taylor will tell the inquiry the 7,000 villagers from the area are extremely concerned the scheme will ruin the beauty of their surroundings, threaten the wildlife and agriculture and spoil the peace and solitude of their rural life.

Lower Halstow villager Peter Mills (62), of Crouch Hill Court, was one of 25 villagers who had turned up hoping to hear the action group speak. He said: "This is one of the very few areas in North Kent with a little bit of beauty. It's terrible that they want to devastate our hillside with this scheme. The feelings of local people haven't been considered. I just hope the inspector sees sense."

The inquiry is expected to continue all week.

nie special? Telephone our Just Good Friends line — 0891 212910

23rd Oct '96

Gi

### RIDING SCHOOL SAYS NAY TO TIPTREE SCHEME



Horse sense: Callum Park Riding School owners John and Lulu McGee (holding two-year-old Megan) believe the Tiptree tip proposals will ruin beautiful countryside. They are pictured with Roger Truelove (left) and Joanna Nosworthy (holding Flossy). EKB4471/33

## Centre's new angle in tip fight

A RIDING school at Lower Halstow has brought to light a new angle in the fight against the Tiptree tip.

Owners of Callum Park Riding Centre John and Lulu McGee believe countryside around the site should be used for recreation, not industry and feel this has not been fully explored.

They are increasingly alarmed at proposals for the tip and say their livelihood would be seriously affected by it.

The McGees say the proposals show that areas of outstanding natural beauty are not safe from development. They say that a tightening of planning legislation is urgently required.

Mr McGee is confident that the public inquiry in November will affirm Kent County Council's decision to refuse permission for the quarry and tip at Funtun.

Liberal Democrat Tiptree protester Roger Truelove said: "This is an aspect of the campaign which has not previously been highlighted."

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GAZETTE, 15th March 1995.

## Clay pit plans open to public criticism

DETAILED plans for a massive clay quarry in Lower Halstow have been put on public exhibition.

South Eastern Minerals unveiled their plan to excavate London Clay from Tiptree Farm at Lower Halstow village hall on Monday. They were expected to contain changes from the original application, forced by the weight of public opinion to the proposals. But Lower Halstow ward councillor Bill Davis says villagers are not

willing to settle for a compromise.

He said: "I suspect there will be new material as South Eastern Minerals says it has taken local views into account, but no amount of compromise will change our minds. We want this done and."

Mr Davis admitted he would be "impressed" in the context of the exhibition and said villagers had made progress by forcing the company to review its proposals.

Faversham MP Sir Roger Moore has also written to villagers encouraging them to

make their views known to the county council.

The original proposal explained how hundreds of tons of clay would be dug up from the 143-acre site. During the first phase of excavation, the clay would be taken by lorry to a purpose-built jetty at Lower Halstow. This could take up to five years to complete and the 600,000 deep hole would be filled with dogger and rubble.

Future phases would involve clay being taken from the site on to the A1-99 at a rate

of up to 45 lorries an hour.

The decision made with the county council's Planning Committee, although it might not see the revised plans until June. The borough council and those of Lower Halstow, Iwade and Bobbing say they will want another look at the proposal once South Eastern Minerals has taken the least controversial items on board.

"Details will be discussed here open to the public at Bobbing Village Hall today and Iwade Village Hall tomorrow (Thursday).

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Are these eXtraordinary  
sights eXplained? — page 18

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# SABOTAGE!

## Jibe as tip inquiry halted

PROTESTERS at the proposed Tiptree tip have angrily attacked the dramatic halting of its inquiry as a deliberate attempt to sabotage their case.

The inquiry at Inade Village Hall, scheduled to last two weeks, was postponed after one-and-a-half days on Wednesday. Last-minute changes to the proposed mineral site evidence could not be heard.

Chairman of the Tiptree Action Group Mrs Tricia Carr said: "We consider this has been tactically manoeuvred by the appli-

cants, who know that our group is poorly funded. It is David fighting Goliath."

"The inquiry, to investigate a plan by South Eastern Minerals for clay extraction and a landfill site at Tiptree Hill, Farning, has been put back for six months."

Ms Carr went on: "South Eastern Minerals has successfully spent our money, where they still have a holdover pit. We have all made sacrifices which directly affect our livelihood and we will have to make them again. This clever manoeuvring I think is very dirty."

\* Full report: Page five.



TV idol  
wows the  
girls

HUNDREDS of screaming girls gathered to greet their heart-throb at an under-the-party in Sittingbourne on Saturday.  
Paul Heston, who plays disturbed Joe Wicks in EastEnders,

Telephone our Just Good Friends line — 0891 212916 *Gazette 6th Dec. 95*

# Tiptree clay plan is taken to appeal

THE COMPANY refused permission to extract clay from farm land at Lower Halstow has announced its intention to appeal against the decision.

South Eastern Minerals says there are no planning grounds for its application being turned down.

Its decision comes as no surprise to campaigners, who are preparing to fight at a public inquiry.

The county council almost unanimously rejected the plan to dig thousands of tons of London

clay from 160 acres at Tiptree Farm, Farning, in September.

Iwade Ward Cllr Bill Davis, one of the plan's opponents, said campaigners were under no illusions that their fight was over.

He said: "We are not surprised by this at all. Now it is just a matter of waiting for the inquiry."

"We do not believe there is enough demand for the clay, the area is of considerable landscape value and Stickleas Lane should not be opened up. I have high hopes we shall be successful."

Had digging gone ahead, a lorry would have arrived or left the site every minute of a 12-hour working day for 12 years. Improvements would have been made to Stickleas Lane, but drivers could still use alternative routes through villages.

The hole left by digging would have been used as a tip for household, commercial and industrial waste from across Kent.

Although 27 of 29 county councillors voted against the proposals, Kent's planning officer Mr Mike Hare accepted new clay sites had to be found.

South Eastern Minerals has highlighted Mr Hare's belief that the proposal was in accordance with the development plan. The extraction's effect on the countryside and nearby residents were not considered over-riding reasons for objection.

The company also claims there is a need for more clay and landfill sites.

The Department of the Environment inquiry is unlikely to take place before the summer.

our easy ad line — (01795) 424484

*20th Nov. 96*

Gazette and Times 20 No

# Tiptree probe put off after toxic dump news

A CONTROVERSIAL tip scheme could include the dumping of toxic waste, the Tiptree inquiry was told — just hours before it was postponed for six months.

A scheme to deposit treated leachate — a noxious black syrup — into the Swale Estuary was another change to South East Minerals' plans, revealed to the Environment Agency just three days before the inquiry opened.

Councils at Inade village hall are poised to argue for and against the proposal for clay extraction and a landfill site at Tiptree Hill, Farning, which was refused permission by the county council last year.

But the inquiry was put on hold after the Environment Agency said it had objections to lodge but had not had time to fully investigate them.

Solicitor Kevin Leigh, for the Agency, said he had learned of the changes just three days before the inquiry, and these raised "serious concerns".

They included a proposal to dump toxic waste at the 55-hectare site.

Government inspector Ken Smith said he could proceed without hearing evidence about protecting water supplies or the need for London clay. He said delaying some evidence until next year would be a waste of time and money.

But Jeanne Taylor, the expert witness brought in by Tiptree Action Group to represent local residents, said: "The residents feel very strongly that the inquiry cannot proceed without the question of need being looked at first."

"It therefore seems a gross waste of time and residents' money in having to consider all the other issues as there would be a similar amount of expense in six months."

David Platt QC, for Kent County Council, and Nicholas Nardocchia, for Swale Council, were both unwilling to proceed — Mr Platt branded South Eastern Minerals' behaviour "shambolic".

The company was represented by John Taylor QC, who said his clients would object to adjourning if residents felt hard done-by, but warned there was no way they would back down and withdraw.

The inquiry has been re-scheduled for 17 June. It will last three weeks.

## Firm will not let tip drop

BIFFA Waste Management hopes the six-month adjournment will give it time to persuade campaigners that the plans aren't as bad as they seem. There is no chance of the application being dropped, said a spokesman.

John Dresser, from Biffa, which is working alongside South Eastern Minerals in the Tiptree proposals, said: "It might give us more time to explain things to them in more detail, so hopefully they can accept more what we are trying to do."

He admitted changes were made to the scheme, but these were to make it more acceptable, and said the Environment Agency was informed immediately of any new findings made while Biffa and South Eastern Minerals examined the site.

Mr Dresser added the postponement shouldn't be too

much of a burden to local opponents.

"Residents are not necessarily going to have to spend more money because the inquiry didn't go ahead and the expenses that were anticipated were not incurred," he said.

"We don't like disturbing people and we accept that this does cause people concern," he went on. "But at the end of the day, there's a need, and if we weren't confident that there was a need, we would not be proceeding with the inquiry."

"We would much rather have been able to proceed, but fully accept the reasons for the adjournment."

South Eastern Minerals was set up just for this proposal, said Mr Dresser, and specialises in the clay extraction side of the plan. Biffa, owned by Severn Trent Water, hopes to manage the land-fill element.

## 'Time on our side'

THE SIX-month delay could be to the advantage of anti-tip campaigners, reckons Cllr Bill Davis.

The Swale councillor and chairman of Lower Halstow parish council said: "The Environment Agency has come on our side and their objections are so strong, they will put the appellants to some trouble to overcome them."

He added he hoped the extra time would build the action group's confidence and cause South Eastern Minerals to back down.

"Obviously it's dragging it out and it's a bit of a disappointment," he said, "but I think we stand a very fair chance."

## MP SAYS PUT WAIT TO A GOOD USE

SWALE MP Sir Roger Munte labelled the postponement of the Tiptree inquiry "infuriating" and "outrageous".

He said: "It confirms our worst fears about the environmental damage — perhaps it's worse than we thought. It's drawing out the agony in an alarming way and the action campaign has to continue for another six months."

"It's an infuriating application and it's outrageous of them to change it at the last minute."

And although many residents may feel discouraged by the move, he stressed the intermittent period can be put to good use.

"We can use this time to prove two things," he said. "First, that there's no need for clay, and second — which is a bigger challenge — that we do not want or need any more land-fill facilities in the county."

He went on: "This is going to put great pressure on the parish and the action group and if we win, which I'm sure we will, serious consideration must be given to the company paying some of the costs."

## Dismay at more delay

A SPOKESMAN for Tiptree Action Group, which raised £7,000 for an expert witness at the inquiry, said most campaigners were taken aback by the decision to put the inquiry on hold.

Mr Will Ransley said: "People were so dismayed and shocked. This has been going on for a couple of years and now it's going into its third year."

But TAG was thankful the inquiry wasn't split in two, which would have run up another hefty bill for an expert witness at the later half.

A crisis meeting of senior TAG members was held last week to discuss the way forward. It is thought the group will use the extra time to consolidate its case.

30/10/96.

# Campaigners plead for support now

CAMPAIGNERS fighting plans for a land-fill site near Lower Halstow are appealing for public support in the run-up to the government inquiry.

An inspector is set to decide whether South Eastern Minerals can dig a huge hole on Tiptree Hill at Panton to extract clay and fill it with rubbish.

The plan was turned down by Kent County Council and the campaigners, who have formed the Tiptree Action Group — known as TAG — are desperate to repeat that victory.

The group's treasurer, Will Ramsley, of Cumberland Drive, Lower Halstow, said the more help villagers can give to the campaign the better chance they have of beating the developers.

"If this wins, what legacy are we leaving for the children?" he asked.

TAG has launched a fighting fund, with a target of £7,000, to pay for an expert witness to fight its case at the appeal next month.

The group hopes Joanna Taylor, of BSP Consultants, will represent it for the whole of the inquiry — eight hours a day for two weeks — but her expertise comes at the hefty cost of £65 an hour.

TAG would like to see as many people at the inquiry as possible to give the inspector an idea of the level of opposition — but there are other ways of supporting the campaign.

Mr Ramsley said: "We need to let the inspector know that a lot of people want to object but can't turn up at the inquiry because of work commitments."

"They can show their support by putting a leaflet in their window or car or writing a letter," he said.



The latest boost to Tiptree Action Group's fighting fund came from Brookerparks, a fruit-packing business near Lower Halstow. Manager and director of the business David Gregory is pictured (left) presenting a cheque for £1,000 to Tricia Carr and Phil Wison of the action group. EKB4503/9

Yellow posters have been delivered to most houses in the surrounding villages and TAG urges residents to put

them up in case the inspector makes a site visit. Letters are a good way of lodging objections, Mr Ramsley went on, and parents are urged to encourage children to send one, or a drawing.

"If it goes ahead, all you'll see is a tip."

## USEFUL INFORMATION

★ THE inquiry is at Iwade Village Hall and starts on 12 November. It continues from 10am to 4pm Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and 10am to 1pm Friday. It is expected to last two weeks.

★ ANYONE needing transport to get to the inquiry should call 521733 during office hours or 843871 evenings.

★ LETTERS of objection should be sent to: The Inspector, Mr KG Smith,

Room 1203C, Tollgate House, Houlton Street, Bristol BS2 9DJ. Quote Tiptree Appeal Ref: APP/42200/A/95/259578.

★ DONATIONS to the fighting fund can be made by sending a cheque, made out to The Tiptree Action Group, to TAG, 16 Cumberland Drive, Lower Halstow, Sittingbourne, ME9 7AJ. Alternatively, you can go into the Midland Bank and pay directly into TAG's account, number 41280635.

inquiry will add more clout to the case, he continued.

"We hope to stagger people's attendance so they are not all there on the first or last day," said Mr Ramsley, "and the idea is please don't absent. The inspector is doing his job and it won't help if people get up and start making a noise."

Mr Ramsley said TAG was "very confident" of winning.

"Our expert witness has gone through all the policies — and they seem to say this shouldn't go ahead at all," he said.

"People living in Sittingbourne should not ignore the implications of this plan going ahead as it affects them too," he warned.

"Lozies will be coming through Sittingbourne and I have been assured that there are places in Sittingbourne where you can see the hill," he said.

"If it goes ahead, all you'll see is a tip."

Gazette 25th Sept. 96.

# Has MP acted against tip?

I LEFT the Iwade Village Hall meeting about the Tiptree tip last Friday with some anger and frustration.

The scheme itself, as we all acknowledge, is an abomination. There is, though, a worse abomination. Last year, the parish councils, Swale Council, and Kent County Council opposed this scheme.

It would be useful if Sir Roger Moate could place into the public domain all the correspondence he undertook to oppose both the Tiptree and Brambledown developments between himself and the secretary of State for the Environment. The voters of the new constituency need to know that he was there fighting for them.

Last Friday, at Iwade, and the week before, at Lower Halstow, the leading members of the Tiptree Action Group sought to make the campaign against the tip non political. They are naive. We have an MP. His job is to fight both backstage and front stage both within Whitehall, within the government and with Severn Water, the ultimate company behind this action.

Other than attending two public meetings, what has he done to stop the Tiptree development?

I hope he will do us the courtesy of also placing into the public domain all the correspondence he has undertaken since the appeal was allowed either now or at the public inquiry.

After the Lower Halstow meeting, I sent a briefing document to the Shadow Environment team led by Frank Dobson. If the appeal is allowed, it will be sent to the Secretary of State by which time there will be a Labour Government.

DEREK WYATT, Sittingbourne and Sheppey Constituency Labour Party.

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Write to 29 High Street, Sittingbourne, or send by Fax on 421359

who recorded that registration number. It's a shame no further action can be taken.

ANGRY RESIDENT, Newington, full name and address supplied to the editor.

## Jump-start Samaritan

MAY I be allowed to thank the young woman who offered the use of her jump leads to start my car in Sainsbury's car park? The weather was atrocious yet she stopped, laden with shopping and a small child, to offer help.

One of Sainsbury's security officers, Mr Justin Logan, used her leads and got the car going immediately with great courtesy and good humour. I was sorry I did not inquire the lady's name, as she drove off quite happily, even though by that time she was soaked, too.

I only hope, should she ever find herself in similar circumstances, a Good Samaritan will come to her aid, too.

Mrs S DINNALE, Wentworth Drive, Sittingbourne.

## Definitions for dumping

THOSE who attended the public meeting into the Tiptree tip proposals, held in the Wyvern Hall in Sittingbourne at the end of July, may not now recall a question put by Mrs Straight on behalf of the Ramblers' Association.

After pointing out the threats to the Saxon Shore Way by the proposed tip, she asked: "What type of waste would be used for its infilling?"

On the first morning of the inquiry at Iwade Village Hall, on 12 November, she may have received a reply, though not necessarily a clear one. Was it to be category F1 — toxic waste, or F2 — special waste, the latter awaiting definition from the Control of Pollution, Special Waste Regulations?

As a result of this being mentioned for the first time, the Environment Agency (formerly the NRA) announced its official rejection of that application by the South East Minerals Company, a rejection forwarded by representatives of KCC, Swale Council and Tiptree Action Group at the inquiry.

Due to what were called a "series of refinements" by the QC representing the appellant, the fact that the appellant's claim regarding the need for clay is still under dispute and that some controversy now surrounds the hydro-geological implications of forwarding this application, the inquiry was adjourned at the end of Wednesday morning, after three hearings.

It would probably have gone on longer disrupting procedural matters — but for the intervention of the TAG representative who argued tersely: "If there is no need for clay, there is no need for the hole. If no

hole, then there will be no space for land infilling and that is the end of the matter!"

The inquiry will resume, after all the details of the revised application have been studied, on Tuesday, 17 June.

One important event will take place in the New Year. Appeals are to be considered, presumably one by the South East Minerals Company, against the attempt by Swale Council ever its local plan to provide landscape status to the hills between Iwade and Newington to include the Tiptree site. You can hear the debate by being in the public gallery at Swale House, at 10am on Thursday, 9 January. In case the date changes, ring 417355 during that week to confirm the date.

NOEL BOULTING, Crocker Court, Upchurch.

## Fund-holding differences

SEVEN days ago, my doctor recommended that I see a consultant about a condition that was causing me concern. I agreed, of course, and asked him to find out if he could, how long I might have to wait for a consultation.

He telephoned Midway Hospital and came back to me, saying it would be quite some time before I could be seen. He then asked whether I would consider a private consultation. I agreed and asked him again how long I might have to wait. He telephoned a private hospital and, while on the phone, asked me whether the next afternoon would be convenient!

It was, I saw the consultant, had an examination and was told that the condition I feared did, in fact, exist and arranged for me to have a scan 10 days later.

Today, a woman friend told me that, having been seen by a consultant at Midway Hospital, he had told her that if the pain she was experiencing did not clear up, she should telephone his secretary, who would try to fit her in quickly.

My friend did this, only to be told by the secretary that my friend would have to get a letter from her doctor, otherwise the hospital would not be paid.

The difference? Her doctor is a fund-holder, mine isn't!

A W CATCHESIDES, Keycol Hill, Sittingbourne.

## Gratitude in road battle

MAY WE thank the 163 residents who signed the petition opposing the Middlestone Avenue request for an access road joining Middlestone Avenue with Volant Drive.

This road would have meant that our part of Volant Drive would have no longer been a cul-de-sac and that several of the residents would have lost a large part of their gardens.

2nd Oct 96

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# LETTERS

Write to 29 High Street,  
Sittingbourne, or send by  
Fax on 428359

## Holey roads: An empire

AS I turned into Avenue of Remembrance from Bell Lane today, I was immediately confronted by a hole being dug into the newly-renovated road. My only reaction to this was surprise that it had taken so long to dig the road up again.

I am convinced that Sittingbourne has been designated the Hole-in-Road Centre of the UK and my personal feeling to be trained in this art is sent here to acquire the necessary expertise.

It will not be long before there are enough holes for every fully paid-up council tax member to be allocated one on a long-term lease. These will be tastefully decorated with potted plants and shrubs and those fortunate enough to have a leak-resistant hole will fill them with water, to which they will add a variety of water plants and goldfish.

There will, naturally, be the obligatory gnomes complete with fishing rod adorning these "aquas holes", whereas of Queensborough doing a roaring trade in this line.

Sittingbourne will rapidly gain fame as the Holey centre of England, tourists coming from far-and-wide to gawp at them, attracted by the tourist office slogan "there's a hole lot going on in Sittingbourne". Passenger traffic on the Channel tunnel and ferries will rocket, putting paid to fears of any ferry company going out of business.

There will be a Hole of the Year competition, first prize being an all-expenses-paid trip to see the big hole at Kimberly, South Africa.

The mayor's title will be changed from His Worship the Mayor to His Holyness the Mayor and a bishop will be appointed, thus enabling Sittingbourne to become a Holey See. It will also be declared a site of scientific interest, so preserving these holes for posterity, being listed as the centre of the Hole universe, of course all this will mean the roads of Sittingbourne will become a motorist's nightmare. But this will be a small price to pay for such fame.

M. DIDDAMS, Vincent Road, Sittingbourne.

## Devaluation of a valid fight

AS chairman of the Tiptree Action Group, I feel I must respond to Derek Wyatt's letter (*East Kent Gazette* 25 September).

He states that our group is naive. Well, we are residents of the villages nearest Tiptree, working together to fight a planning application which we feel will ruin the future for us and our children environmentally and every respect.

It is the fact that some of us — me included — have been involved in an action group. So some of us may well be naive. We have, however, had the benefit

of many people with experience and various expertise working behind the scenes, for well over a year now, to inform us and assist our cause.

I am saddened, therefore, that Derek should write publicly, initially supporting our view that the plan is an abomination, then later devaluing the vast amount of voluntary time and effort we are making.

We have been in constant touch with elected representatives at parish, borough, county and Parliamentary level — all of whom have actively supported our cause.

I understand Derek has experience in media and public relations and am therefore most disappointed that he felt it necessary to criticise through the Press, rather than to contact us. We are not interested in scoring political points. Our only aim is to fight the Tiptree Tip plan.

Mrs TRICIA CARR, chairman, Tiptree Action Group.

## The place for complaint

THE battle to protect Tiptree and the surrounding villages has been a genuinely united, non-party campaign. Your readers will, therefore, have been very surprised to read the aggressive, and ill-founded letter from the Prospective Labour Candidate rather spoiling this united front by attacking me personally.

His asked what I done in the campaign. Let me emphasise that many people have done superb job, particularly members of the action group, strongly supported by local parishes and Swale Council. For my own part, I am quite happy to summarise, for his benefit, my own activities on this matter.

Early in February 1995, I set out my extensive objections to this proposal to the Kent County Council. A copy of my letter of objection was sent with 189 letters I wrote to constituents in that period. In the following months I had a lot of correspondence with Ministers urging that the application be called-in and with the KCC (nearly 60 letters in all) — quite apart from verbal representations to ministers and to county councillors, urging that the application should be rejected — which it was.

After meetings with Tiptree Action Group, I have also made more representations to English Nature, Kent Trust for Nature Conservation and, again, to ministers.

Perhaps Mr Wyatt will learn that here in Swale, we can genuinely unite on a non-party basis, particularly when our environment is seriously threatened.

He goes on to refer to the Brambledowns planning application. I attended a meeting arranged by Eastchurch Parish Council in January, 1996, and urged that the Parish, and others, should ask the Minister to call-in this planning application. I then strongly supported their letters, when applying to the secretary of state, but, to my regret, the department could not call in the application for the same reasons already given.

The real point, however, is that approval was given by the county council, controlled by its Labour and Liberal colleagues. It was their decision and it is to them he should direct his complaint.

Sir ROGER MOATE MP, House of Commons, London SW1.

## Sly innuendo on directors

I AGREE with Cllr Mrs Jean Newman that Swale Council should be grateful to its retiring directors for their many years' work which has served the borough so well.

However, the sly innuendo, with which she seeks to blame their departure on what she calls a left-wing council, is dishonest.

All three parties (and the Independents) contribute to all the decisions of the council and I think the public would be surprised to know how often the Labour and Conservative parties vote together to defeat Liberal Democrat initiatives. An example recently was our attempt to give the public a right to speak at meetings. Hardly the stuff of revolution, is it?

Once again, our thanks to the retiring directors, Ken Chalmers, Roger Collins, Dick Harman Alan Sabin and David Thomas.

Cllr R. CALVERT, deputy leader, Liberal Democrat group, Swale Council.

## Success story for Berpul

THE STORY of the forthcoming sale at the Berpul factory site (*East Kent Gazette*, 18 September), gave an incorrect impression. May I put the record straight?

The industrial contamination to which you refer was caused by the previous owners and occupants of the site, Bugges Isenclades.

On the demise of Bugges, the site was acquired by the Cordon and Sator Partnership, on whose behalf it is now being marketed.

Berpul Products leased the site from the Partnership from 1979 to 1990, manufacturing natural product adhesives. These are environmentally totally green, and so land contamination whatsoever was, or could have been, caused by Berpul Products. In fact, in 1987, Kent County Council gave Berpul Products an Environmental Award for its success in improving the appearance of the London Road site.

Berpul Products successfully moved to a purpose-built factory on the Euroflink Estate in 1990 and has since consolidated its position as the country's leading supplier of natural product adhesives to the building products, paper and packaging industries.

PETER MORRIS, Berpul Products, Benham Drive, Euroflink Industrial Estate, Sittingbourne.

# JUBILATION AS PLAN IS DUMPED

FROM FRONT PAGE  
doubt of the strength of opposition to the plan. She said: "We are euphoric. We are very pleased that 27 out of 29 councillors voted against the application."

Another protester, Mr Will Ramsley, said: "It has been a battle, but it is a battle we have won."

The decision to reject the plan comes after the council received 189 letters and a 402-signature petition objecting to the plan. Swale, Robbing, Lower Hatfield parish councils, Swale Council, the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England and the Ramblers Association also opposed it.

Several councillors, including Kevin O'Daly, Peter Morgan, Eble Lowe, who represent the Sittingbourne area, spoke against the plan at yesterday's meeting.

Cllr Barrie Clarke said: "We would be guilty of an act of vandalism against the county of Kent if we approve this plan. There is a time when we must say 'Enough is enough'. This plan would have tremendous impact on the local community. There has been no proven need for this clay."

However, there were no objections in principle from English Nature, the RSPB, county archaeologist, national Rivers Authority, Ministry of Agriculture and other county council departments.

In a 49-page report to councillors, planning officer Mr Mike Hare said: "I consider that there is a need for clay in north Kent which cannot be met from existing sources in the area."

"Having considered the environmental, nature conservation, agri-

## Victory in the fight against 'vandalism of county'

cultural, traffic and other effects of the proposal, I am of the view that it is in line with current policy."

In the report, Mr Hare outlined the demand for clay in Kent and the demand for a waste disposal site.

He said: "There would appear to be a continuing need for clay in north Kent for engineering purposes."

"The largest element in the potential requirement is the development at Lappel Bank on Sheppey, but there is also a demand for clay for National Rivers Authority sea defence work and from Kemble Mill."

Mr Hare said there was likely to be demand for up to 2.5 million cubic metres of clay in north Kent in the next five years and that the Tiptree site would have been able to provide more than half this.

On the issue of waste disposal sites, Mr Hare said all dumps for industrial, commercial and household waste in Kent would be full within two years.

Although the county council is looking at other ways of disposing of such waste, Mr Hare said two years was not enough time to set them up and this site would help ease the problem.

Many protesters had been particularly upset at the potential loss of the local landscape.

In response, Mr Hare said: "The site is not an area that has been formally designated for its landscape quality, but it is next to and can be said to be part of the north Kent marshes special landscape area."

To cope with the additional traffic created by the clay extraction, improvements would need to be made to Stickfast Lane, although Mr Hare points out that the county council cannot force the drivers of lorries visiting the site to use the road and some may choose alternative routes through nearby villages.

Although the plan has been turned down, South Eastern Minerals can now appeal against the decision to the Environment Secretary Mr John Gummer.

MP Sir Roger Moate said: "The only possible case for this vast excavation would have been the need for clay, but this has just not been proved and I find it remarkable that county council planners should have recommended acceptance on the basis of an alleged need, which has been shot to pieces by the objectors."

**PICK UP YOUR FREE  
HEATHER PLANTS! PAGE SEVEN**

## Jubilation as Tiptree rubbish plan dumped



Some of the angry Tiptree protesters who travelled to County Hall yesterday.

EKA23279

**CONTROVERSIAL** plans to extract clay and create a dump for household waste at Lower Halstow were thrown out yesterday.

South Eastern Minerals have been told they cannot extract thousands of tons of clay from 160 acres at Tiptree Farm, Funtun, near Lower Halstow.

The hole created by the extraction of the clay was to have been used as a dump for household, commercial and industrial waste from across the

county. More than 200 protesters from the Tiptree Action Group (TAG) made the journey to County Hall, Maidstone, to hear county councillors almost unanimously reject the plan, which would have meant one lorry leaving or entering the site every minute of a 10-hour working day for 12 years.

A delighted action group chairman Mrs Tricia Carr was one of the protesters, who left councillors in no

TO PAGE 13

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**EAST KENT  
Gazette**

★ **WE'RE** giving away a Royal Mail pen for the letter of the week. The winning star letter will be one chosen by the Editor. So keep your views coming in to Postings and make sure you include your name, address and day-time telephone number, even where this is requested not for publication. The award would not normally be made to an anonymous letter. *Don't forget your Post Code*

ency that is here to stay. The council's officers are much less permanent. Within the limits of Parliamentary statute, it is surely the prerogative of the public and their elected representatives to say which rules are here to stay.

Mr O'Connell should ensure that his minions understood that.

ROY EMBLETON, East Street, Sittingbourne.

★ This week's star letter.

### Are YOU aware of this threat?

AS A resident of the Grove Park Estate I received a notice of a special meeting from Bobbing Parish Council.

At this meeting I was appalled to discover that the Staplehurst link road to the A249 is to be elevated, that approximately 1,000 houses are to be built from the railway line abutting the Grove Park Estate to Quenton Estate and included in it will be light industrial premises.

I also discovered that the new A249 lying to the West of Grove Park Estate is also to be elevated.

All this adversely affects Grove Park and yet at the meeting there were no more than about 10 residents from this estate. Indeed, I understood some residents even tore up the notices from Bobbing Parish Council without bothering to read them. While it is probably too late to do anything about the roads it may not be too late with regard to the housing and industrial development. However, study rules at the Grove Park Estate... OK?

M R WILLIAMS, Clive Road, Sittingbourne.

### Rubbish dump plan stinks

MAY I thank the East Kent Gazette for its superb coverage of the public meeting held at Wyvern hall on 27 July.

Six hundred people turned up to oppose South Eastern Minerals' application to dig clay from 160 acres of beautiful countryside and then to fill it with rubbish. Swale Council had previously opposed the plan, and the KCC now has a chance to prove to ordinary people that their views do count and that the Government does prevail.

We know the applicant does not NEED the clay, but this is what they WANT the 180th acre to fill unspecified waste.

It is a sad sight to see the faces of recent Oxford graduates, Landfill sites are a thing of the past and we vote for cleaner, safer ways to dispose of our rubbish.

There is still time for any interested parties to make their views known. All letters should be addressed to Mr Hart, planning officer, Springfield, Maidstone.

Let us all hope that our part of Kent is not being seen as a dumping ground by the county's planning committee.

CARINA JACOB, Crouch Hill Court, Lower Halstow.

### Other helpers deserve praise

I REFER to your back-page story (2 August) headlined Doctor goes to the Rescue.

I am most touched that the family of Mr David Davies should wish to inform the East Kent Gazette of the circumstances surrounding Mr Davies' collapse on Selpehill, Sittingbourne.

I feel, however, that I must point out that I was only one of a number of individuals who stopped to help Mr Davies. Indeed, by the time I arrived on the scene, Mr Davies was already being efficiently resuscitated by a number of the public with first aid training and a sarsnet.

Unfortunately, I do not know their names, but I do believe that it is far more important to acknowledge the efforts of these people who did most in the initial stages to keep Mr Davies alive.

Resuscitation is my job and it would be surprising if I had not stopped to help. The members of the public, however, did not need to get involved and I cannot praise them too highly.

M A MASON, FRCS, consultant/clinical director A and E Services, Medway Hospital, Gillingham.

### No need for clay extraction

YOUR report last week on Kent County Council's public meeting highlighted the overwhelming opposition there is from the communities of Lower Halstow, Swale and Bobbing to the clay quarry application at Tiptree Farm.

Based on the estimates of KCC's own experts, there is NO need for the clay to be extracted and what the application is really about is the money to be made from the infill of the site with domestic waste.

This opposition is not simply Nimbys; the area is recognised both nationally and internationally as of strategic importance to migratory birds. The Government's plans for the Thames Gateway, of which the Isle of Sheppey forms the eastern boundary, looks to developments and uses which will enhance the region — not lead to further degradation.

What is important is for residents beyond these communities to realise that this application will affect them. With 45 lorries per hour, 10 hours a day for an estimated 12 to 15 years, this site would become a major rubbish dump for the county of Kent and beyond. It will have a detrimental affect on the whole area.

16th Aug 1995

Looking for someone special? Telephone our Just Good Friends line

There's already a view that north Kent is general and Swale in particular is the "backside" of the county. It's regarded as less affluent and seen as less appealing than other areas of the county which cosmetically appear more attractive.

Becoming its dumping ground would confirm this view beyond doubt. I would urge you all to write to the planning officer at Maidstone objecting to these proposals.

PHILIP WISSON, secretary, Tiptree Action Group, address supplied to the Editor.

### Do you know a suitable nutter?

BBC TV's BAFTA-winning series *How's Your Party* is back — and Noel Edmonds needs your help.

Are you lively outgoing and a complete nutter — or do you know someone that is? We are looking for suitable candidates for *NTV* and *Trip Round the Great House*. Do you know someone who is a total extrovert and would thrive on the attention?

Let us know as much about the person you want to set up — the more information you give us on why you want to set them up, the more likely that they'll be a star.

There are loads of other opportunities for outgoing people on the show — if you're interested in being part of it, please call:

STEVE HAVERS, *How's Your Party* Room 3304, BBC Television Centre, London, W12 7RJ. Telephone: 0181 574 8239.

★ WE SHOULD like to thank all the staff of Merston Junior School for teaching us and preparing us for secondary school.

We would like to say an extra big thank to Mrs A Carey and Mr M Mann for organising and devoting their time to sports at our school.

Goodbye — we'll miss you.

THE FOURTH YEARS, Merston Junior School, names and addresses supplied to the Editor.

# DECISION DAY FOR CLAY PLAN AT TIPTREE

CAMPAIGNERS aiming to sink plans to extract thousands of tons of clay from the Tiptree Farm site at Lower Halstow will learn their fate next Tuesday.

Kent County Council's Planning Committee meets in Maidstone on 12 September to discuss the application. County planning officers are recommending it be approved, but councillors will get the final say.

Action group chairman Mrs Tricia Carr has decided not to take any chances and is urging villagers from

Upchurch, Lower Halstow, Newington, Iwade and Bobbing to attend the meeting to ensure councillors know the strength of local feeling.

She hopes as many as 600 people will attend and is laying on coaches to transport residents from the villages to Maidstone.

"We know we have to remain silent during the meeting so all villagers attending will be issued with a yellow protest posters. It is vital we get a large number coming along," Mrs Carr explained.

## Clay dig protest

AN ACTION group set up to fight plans to extract clay from 160 acres of farmland near Lower Halstow will hold a public meeting tomorrow (Thursday).

The protest group, led by Mrs Patricia Carr, represents Lower Halstow, Upchurch, Newington, Bobbing and Iwade and already has the backing of Sir Roger Moate MP and the Council for the Protection of Rural England.

Campaigners hope they will get a large turn-out at the Wyvern Hall at 7.30pm impress councillors of level of opposition.

The scheme intends extract thousands of ton clay from Tiptree Farm, Funton, over 15 years.

9th Oct 96.  
cial? Telephone our Just Good  
ite to 19 High Street,  
ingbourne, or send  
ax 08 22389

cles are in the text. It is ironic though that a councillor advises fighting his own organisation — and indulges perhaps, in lecturing his own supporters. But at least give him some credit — he does not indulge in vilification.

Throughout the consultation process, we made it abundantly clear that, whatever the shortcomings or otherwise of the proposed by-pass, final delivery depended entirely on the willingness of the Government to provide the money. The route was publicised as one that had "the best chance of attracting funds". There is written evidence to support that statement. If Mr Fernin had come along to the public meetings, he would have heard that. He could have made his "criteria" challenges then. But no! He prefers to use second-hand misleading and subjective phrases.

Whether his Government provides the funds for the by-pass is indeed questionable. However, apart from their willingness, it is pretty much on the cards that by then, the power to do so, will not be in their hands!

Clr KEVIN O'DALY, Liberal Democrat county councillor for Swale West.

## Hijacked for political gain

I REFER to the letter (Gazette, 25 September) from Derek Wyatt (Labour party candidate for Sittingbourne and Sheppey) querying Sir Roger Moate's involvement in the fight against the Tiptree Tip.

I, too, like Mr Wyatt, was at the Iwade Village Hall for the Tiptree Action Group's fund-raising evening. It was a superb example of an interest group which chose to ignore the political divides because it sought to fight for the good of all residents in the area. You can imagine how amazed the meeting was then, when Mr Wyatt attempted to use it for his own political purposes. Those present almost applauded when the chairman asked him to sit down. No wonder Mr Wyatt left the meeting "with some anger and frustration".

Having made a political fool of himself on the night, he now carries on by writing letters to you.

A simple message from one politician to another, Mr Wyatt — firstly, that people do not always want politics in local issues and, secondly, that you will not be thanked by anyone fighting the Tiptree Tip with your feeble attempts to hijack it for your own political purposes.

Clr GERRY LEWIN, Conservative member for Hartlip and Upchurch.

We win only if  
tip case is lost

9th Oct 96.  
Friends line — 0891 212910  
EAST KENT  
Gazette

will be sent so, he hopes, a Labour Secretary of State. Is he a complete fool? If the appeal is allowed it will be too late. He should be helping make sure the appeal is lost, rather than sending ally letters attacking the MP. As one who was at the last public meeting, I am very encouraged by the way everyone is working together — except, apparently, Mr Wyatt.

Mrs SUE GENT, Musgrave Road, Milton.

16th Oct 96.  
cial? Telephone our Just Good  
ite to 19 High Street,  
ingbourne, or send  
ax 08 22389

## Thanks due to TAG fighters

AS A resident of Lower Halstow I feel I should write to you regarding the matter of Tiptree.

I was one of the 200-plus people who attended the public meeting on 13 September when Derek Wyatt offered his services to the Tiptree Action Group. He made particular reference to his experience in media and public relations. Therefore I too was very surprised to read his letter published in your paper of 25 September and can only wonder at his motives. I fully understand Tricia Carr, chairman of the Tiptree Action Group, and Sir Roger Moate, MP, responding in such a fashion in your paper last week.

I would, therefore, like to thank Tricia Carr and other members of the Tiptree Action Group, Bill Davis, Sir Roger Moate, and all those behind the scenes, who are devoting so much time and most probably expense in fighting South Eastern Minerals' application. Naïve or not, I can only be grateful for all they are doing on my family's behalf in trying to save this rural area from destruction.

They won the battle for us last year when the original application was refused by Kent County Council, but the war still goes on and this time the decision will be final.

We were advised at the public meeting that South Eastern Minerals were putting in a six-figure sum to fight the appeal and therefore I hope sufficient funds will be raised in order that TAG can appoint a planning expert to work on our behalf at the inquiry next month.

Mrs BOORMAN, Heron Close, Lower Halstow.



CONSULTANT UNDER FIRE OVER LORRY CLAIM

CAMPAIGNERS opposing a major scheme to dig three miles of clay from a quarry near Lower Halstow...

Protesters' fury erupts at meeting on clay plan

The county's Planning Sub-Committee stated the 100 acres of land which would be dug up if permission is granted...



Chairman of the Planning Sub-Committee Cllr Cyril Butten (left) and vice-chairman of the county council Cllr Gerry Thomsen (right) led a group of more than 100 villagers and councillors across the site where South Eastern Minerals plan to spend the next 12 1/2 years digging clay.

Chairman Cllr Cyril Butten found himself being kept under a spotlight as he tried to explain the plan...

After viewing the beautiful panoramic views from the summit of the South Kent Way...

When this was pointed out to him, Mr Butten said he was sorry that the plan had been proposed...

Mr Butten said the changes had been proposed following lobbying by English Nature and villagers...

MP Moate backs quarry battle

MP Moate backs quarry battle. The county's Planning Sub-Committee...

MUSEUM BOSS IN FIRE RESCUE

MUSEUM BOSS IN FIRE RESCUE. A volunteer at the Galyria Sailing Boat Museum...

If you are in Shropshire, Staffordshire, Tyneside or Devonshire...



TEA for

Looking for someone special? Telephone our Just Good Friends line

Clay pit plans open to public criticism

DETAILED plans for a massive clay quarry in Lower Halstow have been put on public exhibition. South Eastern Minerals unveiled their plan to extract London Clay from Tiptree Farm...

willing to settle for a compromise. He said: "I respect there will be new material as South Eastern Minerals says it has taken local views into account...

make their views known to the county council. The original proposal explained how hundreds of tons of clay would be dug up from the 140-acre site...

of up to 45 lorries an hour. The decision sits with the county council's Planning Committee, although it might not see the revised plans until June...

GAZETTE, 15th March 1995.

LETT

No need for clay extraction

NO to TIPTREE TIP

Dear neighbour, Please send a letter of objection NOW to:-

Mr. M. Hare, County Planning Officer, Kent County Council, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ

The NUMBER of letters is important. Letters must arrive by 12 August.

Persuade your friends and family to write individually.

Democracy is judged by NUMBERS.

Your biggest enemy is APATHY.

To protect your quality of life and environment and that of your children, write NOW.

Yours sincerely,

TRICIA CARR CHAIRMAN TIPTREE ACTION GROUP

YOUR report on Kent County Council's public meeting highlighted the overwhelming opposition there is from the communities of Lower Halstow, Iwade and Bobbing to the clay quarry application at Tiptree Farm.

Based on the estimates of KCC's own experts, there is NO need for the clay to be extracted and what the application is really about is the money to be made from the infill of the site with domestic waste.

This opposition is not simply Nimbysism; the area is recognised both nationally and internationally as of strategic importance to migratory birds. The Government's plans for the Thames Gateway, of which the Isle of Sheppey forms the eastern boundary, looks to developments and uses which will enhance the region — not lead to further degradation.

What is important is for residents beyond these communities to realise that this application will affect them. With 45 lorries per hour, 10 hours a day for an estimated 12 to 15 years, this site would become a major rubbish dump for the county of Kent and beyond. It will have a detrimental affect on the whole area.

There's already a view that north Kent in general and Swale in particular is the "backside" of the county. It's regarded as less affluent and seen as less appealing than other areas of the county which cosmetically appear more attractive.

Becoming its dumping ground would confirm this view beyond doubt. I would urge you all to write to the planning officer at Maidstone objecting to these proposals.

PHILIP WISSON, secretary, Tiptree Action Group, address supplied to the Editor.

# 'Rape' of Tiptree Farm is attacked

ALLOWING plans to dig out thousands of tons of clay at Tiptree Farm would be nothing short of raping the countryside for short-term financial gain, according to Sittingbourne's three county councillors.

The trio of Liberal Democrat councillors have issued a joint statement opposing plans to extract clay at the site near Lower Halstow.

Elvie Lowe, Kevin O'Daly and Peter Morgan all believe that if the project went ahead it would cause "many years of visual intrusion combined with dust noise and danger from lorry movements."

Cllr Mrs Lowe said that to even contemplate additional lorry movements every few minutes would be seen as asking for trouble. There would also be wider ramifications for adjacent villages. The knock-on effect would be felt by Lower Halstow, Newington, Upchurch, Bobbing Swade and far beyond," she said.

Cllr O'Daly said he fully supported her comments and said: "I also feel that the demand for the type of clay to be extracted has not been proved. My information is that it has very little or no market value. This leads to the conclusion that the main objective is for refuse dumping."

"Future generations would never forgive us if we allowed this proposed desecration of the Kentish countryside," Cllr Morgan added.

He said from the top of the hill on the Tiptree site you could see beautiful views in every direction. "The view of this rising land is charming. The abundance of wild life (including several owl species) is a precious inheritance which would be destroyed if the applicants were allowed to dig out huge quantities of clay and replace that with a piled refuse from outside the county."

"This proposal is an application to rape the countryside for the sake of short term financial gain and must be resisted at all costs."

# Opponents of claypit make more ground

MEMBERS of the public look set to be given another chance to voice their opinions about the massive clay quarry plan at Lower Halstow.

More than 150 protesters met county council Planning Committee members at the proposed quarry site at Tiptree Farm, High Oak Hill, to express their anger three weeks ago.

A representative of South East Minerals — the company planning to dig five million tons of clay from the 160-acre site — attended the meeting and was left in no doubt as to the strength of the protesters' opinion.

In a report to councillors, Swale Council's legal services director Mr Kenneth Chalmers says a public meeting is likely before the county council's Planning Sub-Committee meets to discuss the plan.

The public meeting would allow protesters to quiz South Eastern Minerals on amendments to the proposals submitted last week.

Mr Chalmers says: "The chairman of the county council's Planning Sub-Committee will recommend a decision is deferred to allow amendments to the plan to be properly considered, reconsultations take place and a public meeting held."

Swale councillors attending tomorrow night's Planning Sub-Committee meeting will be asked to note the report.

Gazette - 14/6/95

# REVISED PLAN FOR CLAY PIT SCHEME

REVISED plans for the controversial clay extraction scheme at Tiptree Farm, Funton, are to be submitted today (Wednesday).

Applicants South Eastern Minerals claim they amended the plans to address many of the complaints voiced by parish councillors and villagers — including a different site entrance, reducing the area of extraction and withdrawing a proposal to use a jetty.

Adviser Cliff Thurlow said yesterday: "The revised proposals take into account as many of the comments and objections as possible."

16th Oct 96.  
212910  
Gazette and  
**Water waste worry**

A PROPOSED waste disposal area at Tiptree Farm, Funton, could lead to water contamination, councillors have been told.

Cllr Mrs Jennie Roman told Swale Council's development services committee at its last meeting: "We need to know whether the water under Tiptree is being analysed and what is in it for the sake of future generations."

Cllr Bill Davis added: "The clay

is not impervious and water will penetrate it eventually."

He added: "The water at Funton is drinkable at the moment — but if there was waste on the site it is only a matter of time before it gets into the water."

The committee was plans to extract clay from near Lower Halstow at the hole with rubbish.

Gazette 7th June 1995

Gazette 22nd Feb 1995.  
**Clay pit plan set to be opposed from outset**

A HUGE plan to extract clay at Lower Halstow has been heavily criticised by a council official.

Swale planning officer Steve Bessant says the proposal fails to adequately explain its impact on the site and its surroundings.

The county council has shelved the application while more information is made available, but Mr Bessant recommends borough councillors oppose the plan in its present form.

South Eastern Minerals wants to extract London clay from Tiptree Farm, Funton, for the next 15 years. Over the first four years clay would be taken to a new jetty

at Lower Halstow creek, where it would be transported by barge. The 180ft deep extraction hole would be filled with domestic rubbish.

Further extracted clay would be transported on to the A249 via Suckfast Lane at a rate of about 45 lorries per hour.

In a report to Swale Council's Planning Sub-Committee, Mr Bessant says the environmental statement is "inadequately brief" in several respects and calls the highway evaluation "particularly poor". He said councillors were likely to oppose the use of Suckfast Lane as pri-

mary access to the site and the possibility of lorries using Lower Road or Breach Lane had not been addressed.

The company had severely underestimated various wildlife issues and the probability of noise and nuisance to neighbours. He added, no details of the temporary jetty had been included and that this, together with the large anticipated number of lorries, would have severe consequences on landscape and nature conservation.

The draft Kent Minerals Local Plan says there is no case for overlooking environmental con-

straints in order to extract clay.

Planning councillors will discuss the report tomorrow (Thursday).

Councillors have been alerted to the prospect of toxic waste being dumped outside Minster.

The council has received an application to continue dumping furnace flue dirt at Brambledown Clay Pit. But a variation in condition means toxic dirt could be deposited. Planning officer Steve Bessant has asked county council officials to clarify the situation and will also report to Planning Sub-Committee members tomorrow.

# DUMP THIS PLAN NOW!

## Villagers in fight to block clay quarry project

MORE than 200 angry villagers packed the municipal hall in Lower Halstow to discuss the tactics which they hope will block a major project in dig tons of clay from a quarry near the village.

Members of the tiny hamlet were joined with a will to the hall last Tuesday night to hear parish council chairman and borough councillor Bill Davis speak on the details of his investigation into the scheme.

Villagers were told that because of the site's closeness to the north Kent coast, which are internationally recognised for their variety of European bird and wildlife, there was little doubt that construction projects would fight the scheme all the way to the European Parliament in Brussels.

Mr Davis said it was vital villagers did something quickly to obstruct the quarry licence's planning committee to oppose the plan.

He was supported by Mr Michael Doney, of Ward Hamlets, who admitted he would normally be in the district every two weeks but this time he had to be in the village and his company had significant development interests in the area he would also be opposing the extraction licence.

This "puncher-styled" plan, known as the "nightmare" plan, set out individual sections to be extracted in order to construct and planing officials pushing forward things they believed were important and special about the village.

He said that South Eastern Minerals had already had to pay £10,000 just to lodge the application on the land to which the quarry would fight at the very to the appeal.

Mr Davis explained to the meeting...



A villager asks the panel of Lower Halstow parish councillors how residents can help the campaign to stop the quarry extraction scheme.

Mr Davis said it was vital villagers did something quickly to obstruct the quarry licence's planning committee to oppose the plan.

London Clay from the 180 acre site and taking it by lorry to a new quarry that would have to be built at Lower Halstow itself.

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# Swale officer fires warning shots



Steve Bennett, "Daisy eye" extraction plan.

A TOP council officer says he is very concerned at the plans to extract London Clay at Upper Farm in Lower Halstow and believes South Eastern Minerals has failed to show there is a need for the plan.

Chief planning officer at Swale Council, Steve Bennett, has written to the planning committee as county hall in Maidstone regarding his serious reservations about the scheme.

The plan will be decided by Kent County Council, with Swale only allowed to give its view and having no real say over the final decision.

Mr Bennett's brief has been to draw warning shots in what could develop into a bitter war between the two councils as Swale tries to prevent an environmentally important part of the borough.

The letter gives the initial view of Swale planners - the project has not yet come before Swale's committee to hear its views.

Mr Bennett says: "The proposed is likely to have very significant effects on local residents generally - in particular the noise and vibration associated with the extraction of the clay." He also does not believe that a sufficiently detailed value has been made to show that there is a need for the extraction project.

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## 'This is just a scam to get a rubbish site'

THE plans to extract hundreds of tons of clay from a quarry at Lower Halstow have been criticised as a wild attempt to create a rubbish tip before it.

At Wednesday's (Stratford) and Swale Waste Authority committee meeting, Cllr John Knight accused the county council and South Eastern Minerals, from Eastling, near Faversham, of plotting to create a rubbish tip before it.

Cllr Knight said: "The plan is to extract hundreds of tons of clay from a quarry at Lower Halstow and we do not want it."

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# Fury mounts over village quarry plans

Gazette 1/2/95

## PUBLIC anger is mounting against plans to dig tons of clay from a quarry at Lower Halstow.

Parish councillors at Lower Halstow were due to meet last night (Tuesday) and a public meeting is being held at Bobbing Village Hall at 7.30pm tonight (Wednesday) to discuss ways to fight the plan which proposes to dig London Clay from 180 acres over a 15-year period.

Iwade Parish Council is also holding an emergency public meeting, in the village hall at 8pm on Thursday, to examine the scheme.

But some villagers are looking at increasingly desperate measures to stop the proposals.

Mr Gary Stevens of Stickfast Lane says the scheme risks his family's safety because the lorry route serving the quarry is just feet from his home.

He says he is prepared to take drastic action to stop the extraction scheme in his tracks if county councillors do approve the plan.

South Eastern Minerals from Eastling near Faversham has applied for permission to extend its clay quarry at Tipree Farm, High Oak Hill, Fenton, to 235 acres. Quarrying would be carried out on 180 acres to a depth of 60 yards with a lorry leaving the site every minute.

The excavation would be filled with domestic waste and eventually returned to agricultural land.

Mr Stevens says the application states that Stickfast Lane would be widened and levelled to such a high standard that the trucks serving the quarry would travel on the road at 60 mph.

"The section outside my house is next to a dip which the plans show would need to be levelled to allow the lorries to travel at speed," Mr Stevens explained.

"They propose building up the road level to achieve this which would mean the cab of these trucks would be level with my bedroom window. Having a lorry pass just feet from my window every minute for 10 hours a day can only be described as a nightmare."

Mr Stevens said the scheme would totally brighten my property and make it valueless. He also believes that it would only be a matter of time before his home is hit by one of the speeding lorries.



Mr Gary Stevens examines the "nightmare" plans to extract London Clay close to his home at Stickfast Lane, watched by his wife Natalie and two-year-old daughter Hayley.

Mr Stevens said the scheme would totally brighten my property and make it valueless. He also believes that it would only be a matter of time before his home is hit by one of the speeding lorries.

"I really don't think people understand the full implications of the plan. The whole site is next to an extensive area of outstanding natural beauty and having this scale of operation next to it would destroy its use in protecting wildlife."

"I feel that this is just going to be bulldozed through the council despite local opposition, so to protect my home and family I am prepared to take any action necessary," Mr Stevens added.

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# EAST KENT Gazette

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## Moate adds voice to clay plan protest

MP Sir Roger Moate has joined a campaign opposing a massive plan to extend a clay quarry north west of Shringbourne.

He has written to the county council's planning officer, expressing his disgust at the plan to dig London Clay 60 yards deep from a 180-acre site, at Tiptree Farm, High Oak Hill, Faversham. He describes the plan as environmentally disastrous.

Villagers at Lower Halstow and Bobbing were furious in January, when it was revealed that South Eastern Minerals, of Easting, planned the clay extraction, which could take up to 15 years to complete.

It has been estimated there would be 45 lorry movements an hour at the site while the clay is extracted.

In his letter to the county council, Sir Roger says: "I am disappointed to note that initial observations do not give any indication of the views of the county council and I reiterate my strongly-held view that this proposal ought to be rejected, particularly because of the very serious environmental damage that would be inflicted on this part of my constituency."

"I presume that full recognition will be taken of the tremendous local opposition to this proposal and in particular to a number of considerations.

These considerations include the national policy of discouraging the disposal of waste through landfills, the appalling effect on local roads of 45 vehicle movements per hour, the destruction of agricultural land, the scale of the proposals and the conflict of this proposal with local conservation interests.

"I hope that the county council will not only reject the proposal, but will make it abundantly clear that any subsequent proposal of this kind would be totally opposed, so that any further applications would be discouraged."

Sir Roger has also made his feelings about the plan known to Environment

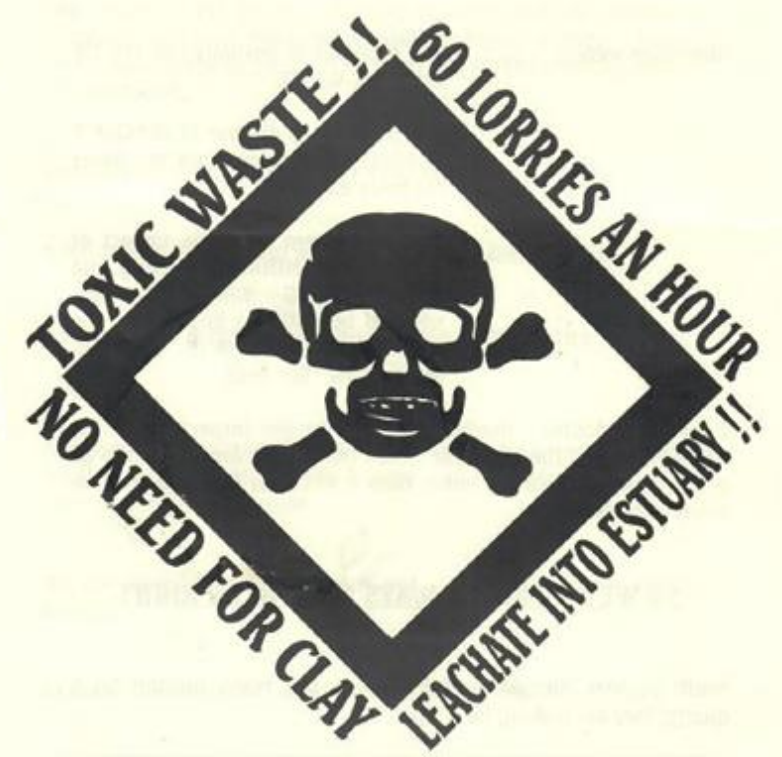
Secretary John Gummer.

The MP is not the only one angry at the plan. The county planning officer has received more than 100 letters and two petitions, one with 150 signatures and one with 32.

Swale councillors are due to discuss the plan at tomorrow's Planning Sub-Committee meeting, but they have no power to turn down the plan. A decision can be made only by county councillors, who will visit the site on Monday.

At the site meeting, which starts at 10am, members will listen to views and gather information about the plan, but make no decision on the issue.

# TIPTREE UPDATE



Just Imagine



### Desirable Semi-detached residence For Sale

This modern home has wonderful views over the polluted Estuary and the Toxic Tip.

Situated in an area ideal for walkers who can enjoy the Saxon Shoreway and the local countryside which is criss-crossed with Public Footpaths. Gas masks and protective clothing are available at local shops and post offices.

Despite the dangers and noise of between 40 and 60 heavy lorries per hour during the day (Mondays - Saturdays only), at nighttime and on Sundays the area is very peaceful. Most birds and wildlife have either been frightened away or poisoned.

Price was £90,000.00 Now reduced to £45,000.00 for quick Sale (offers eagerly considered)

.... It could be your house.

ST. MARGARET'S

OCTOBER 1996

## NEWSLETTER

FIRST AND FOREMOST ON OUR MINDS THIS MONTH IS THE PROPOSED CLAY EXTRACTION AND TIP SITE AT TIPTRÉE WHICH WILL AFFECT ALL OUR LIVES IN SOME WAY OR ANOTHER. The first item this month in the Press Release from Phil Wisson, secretary of the Tiptree Action Group. The Editor obviously has her own views on the issue, but wishes to emphasise that the Newsletter remains impartial and unbiased, and she can only print matter which is supplied to her. The Newsletter will not become a vehicle for debate. It only serves to inform villagers of what is going on.

### TIPTREE TIP SITE LARGER THAN LOCAL VILLAGES COMBINED!

Over 200 local residents packed a public meeting at Lower Halstow on Friday (13th. Sept.) evening to be reminded that the site planned for clay extraction and subsequent rubbish dumping at Tiptree Farm was bigger than the villages of Lower Halstow, Iwade and Newington put together. The 179 acre site would be one of the largest holes in Europe - a quarter of the size of the City of London - and excavation of Tiptree Hill would be to a depth which would swallow the Houses of Parliament. The hole would take thirteen years to excavate and re-fill with rubbish involving at least 40 lorry movements a day five days a week to and from the site through local country lanes.

The meeting was called by the Tiptree Action Group (TAG) who are fighting the plans put forward by South Eastern Minerals Ltd. These were rejected by Kent County Council in September last year but were now set out to an appeal which would be considered by Public Inquiry beginning at Iwade Village Hall on the 12th November. The purpose of the meeting was to keep local people up to date with current developments and launch an appeal to enable the group to appoint its own planning expert to represent local residents at the Inquiry.

Sir Roger Moate MP described the proposal as an "abomination" and completely against plans to maintain and improve the local environment. He was pressing the Secretary of State for the Environment to decide the matter personally after the Inquiry was complete. He also believed the fact that KCC, Swale Borough Council, the five local parishes and TAG were strongly united in their opposition gave good grounds for optimism despite the large sums of money South Eastern Minerals were spending on the appeal. Elvie Lowe, Co-chair of KCC's Planning Committee which originally rejected the application restated that the plans were contrary to the County and Borough's emerging development plans and conflicted with numerous individual policies. Local Councillor Bill Davis rubbished South Eastern's statements that the clay excavated is either needed or suitable for civil engineering and construction projects. The real reason for the application was the value of the site as a major landfill site - despite the fact that government policy is to move away from this type of waste disposal.

Despite the strength of opposition, it was still important that the local communities and residents made their opposition known to the Inspector who holds the Inquiry. This would be done by appointing a planning expert which would cost at least £7000. Tricia Carr, Chairman of TAG launched the appeal for funds. The proposal had to be stopped at all costs, she said, or otherwise its size and proximity to the local villages would seriously affect the value of people's properties and have a devastating effect on the local environment.

People can also help by sending written objections to the Inspector who will hold the Inquiry. He is: K.G. Smith Esq., The Planning Inspectorate, Room 1203C, Tollgate House, Eoulton Street, Bristol, BS2 9DJ. Quote Reference APP/12200/A95/299578. and by attending the Inquiry itself at Iwade in November. Further details on this will be given in due course. Phil Wisson, Secretary TAG, 01795 8446886.