Castle Hedingham Parish Council and Burial Board

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David Powell
Competition Authorisation Office
Motorsport UK
By email to David.Powell@motorsportuk.org

10th November 2026

Dear Mr Powell

Road Traffic Act 1988 Section 12(1A)
Chelmsford Motor Club Hed-TEC Stages 11th July 2027: Consultation response

Thank you for consulting with Castle Hedingham Parish Council about this proposed rally which will affect our village and the surrounding area. We have no previous experience of an event of this kind or scale in our small parish or on our rural roads. As a result of the initial approach by Motorsport UK and Chelmsford Motor Club members, we decided to hold a public meeting which took place in Castle Hedingham on Thursday 15th October. It was attended by representatives from Chelmsford Motor Club, Great Maplestead PC, Little Maplestead PC, Gestingthorpe PC, Sible Hedingham PC and residents from our own and neighbouring parishes. This response takes into account local feedback and was approved unanimously at the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 9th November 2026.

Social media posts about our public meeting generated mainly positive responses about the prospect of a stages rally. However we are aware that concerned residents are less vocal in public because they fear being accused of "nimbyism" and being unreasonably negative about a fun event which would bring trade into local businesses and fundraising for local charities. The advantages of local business benefits and charity fundraising are appreciated by the Parish Council but the extent of this is unproven and with the various changes of competitive route, access routes and spectator area arrangements we are currently finding it difficult to see how Castle Hedingham hospitality and retail businesses would benefit directly. We take note of the statement in your guidance document "Assuming agreement of the majority of affected parties is obtained and the balanced view is to proceed", but Castle Hedingham Parish Council cannot unanimously support this event without more detailed local risk assessments and improved communication of the final plans.

Communication and Planning
We understand the organisers have been in contact with some residents and various local, district and county organisations while formulating plans for this event. At Castle Hedingham Parish Council we have been concerned there is not a consistent approach to communicating with all

interested parties and we have gathered different information piecemeal from various sources. We have shared maps for public information only to be corrected by the organisers because that version has been superseded. We have not seen any risk assessments specific to our local area and have only verbal assurances that a similar event was held in Clacton and Tendring with great success. Castle Hedingham itself is a mediaeval village and as such is not built for cars, with many old and listed properties fronting directly onto narrow roads. Parking in the village is a daily challenge without an event of this scale. In this respect we believe the location differs from much of Clacton and Tendring. It also differs hugely from other popular rally locations such as MOD land and race circuits.

From what we learned at the public meeting in October, the competitive route is now pretty much decided but the non-competitive route from start to finish points will be through Castle Hedingham and will be one of two options, or possibly both. We also learned that crews will be driving and checking the route on the Saturday, which means considerable vehicle movement around the village all weekend, not just on the day of the rally. We believe the impact of this on our residents has not been fully considered, risk assessed or explained. Rally HQ, service area and ambulance point were initially planned to be in Castle Hedingham but that has since changed and at the public meeting we were told these major details are not yet decided. While it is appreciated that the organisers will be adapting their plans in response to local feedback, it is very difficult for the Parish Council to submit a consultation response to something that changes so frequently, is still not fully scoped out and lacks site-specific risk-assessments.

Non-competitive route through Castle Hedingham

We understand that the rally will consist of 4 runs in the morning in one direction from start to finish points, then 4 runs in the opposite direction in the afternoon. If this involves all 60 competitor vehicles returning via the non-competitive route from one end to the other at least 3 times in the morning and 3 times in the afternoon, this would mean an additional 360–480 vehicle journeys, on top of normal traffic. Both routes through Castle Hedingham have narrow sections of road:

Route a) St James Street including parked resident and tennis club vehicles, a narrow bend with overhanging buildings at the Wheatsheaf corner, and give way markings at the traffic calming section at the Queen Street/Sheepcot Road junction.

Route b) Narrow section at Pye Corner (Nunnery Street/ Bayley Street/Crown Street junction), parked resident vehicles along Nunnery Street and give way markings at Nunnery Street bridge.

We are told by the organisers that they may use either or both routes. We are left with the impression that they are focused on safety of the competitive route with a lot less concern for the impact on Castle Hedingham roads. It should also be noted that many of the concerns listed below about the competitive route would also apply to traffic congestion along the non-competitive route.

Competitive route from Castle Hedingham through the Maplesteads

The following concerns have been raised by members of the public:

- Lack of information including some residents on the route not being contacted at all.
- Details of traffic management for 60 competitor vehicles at the start point in Castle Hedingham
- Noise impact on residents at start and finish points. We have also had concerns reported about local residents with noise sensitivities related to autism.

- Noise impact along route including loss of bookings for a sound studio business and holiday cottages at their peak time of year.
- Impact on wildlife and death or injury of animals
- Impact on use of around 50 footpaths and bridleways crossing points and measures for redirecting people from closed road sections
- Damage to traditional hedgerows which have been planted and restored by local farmers for the benefit of wildlife
- Impact on farming community at a critical time of year when harvest activity needs to take place when weather conditions are favourable
- Risks from spectators of trespass on private property, blocked gateways and obstructed farm machinery
- Management of access arrangements for elderly and housebound residents who rely on carers or family for their daily needs.
- Concern about the precedent this could set for future events on our rural roads (the organisers have said they would repeat the event if they could in future years)
- The possibility of encouraging future road users to use the route as a racetrack

Spectator management, Rally HQ, Service area and Ambulance point
Castle Hedingham Parish Council requests more evidence about the planning of the location of the spectator area, rally HQ, service area and ambulance point. From the perspective of the immediate Castle Hedingham village area, the concerns of the Parish Council include:

- Narrow single track road to the initial proposed service area at Rosemary Lane. We are told this choice of location has changed but the alternative is unknown
- Increased vehicle movement through the village including competitor vehicles, marshals, spectators, residents trying to leave and return home and visitors including families and carers. This could apply to the Saturday when the course is driven by competitors as well as the Sunday of the event itself.
- Reliance on the promise of increased business opportunities to encourage local support, when if the spectators are located elsewhere as currently proposed there may be little business benefit to the village itself.

Until the final routes, operational locations and site-specific assessments are available, the Parish Council does not consider that it has sufficient information to support the proposal. If the final decision is to go ahead, members of Castle Hedingham Parish Council will welcome further discussions with the organisers with a view to minimising unnecessary disruption and maximising the benefits to our local communities while hosting a safe and enjoyable event.

Claire Waters

Claire Waters
Parish Clerk
On behalf of Castle Hedingham Parish Council