

Families don't relish being 'doomed to drown'

MORE than 500 families in the Lydd-on-Sea and Greatstone areas would live in fear for their lives and property if proposals to open up new gravel pits were allowed to go ahead, it was claimed on Friday.

A 19-point report drawn up by Mr. Paul Jarvis, secretary of the Lydd, Greatstone, New Romney and district Ratepayers' Association lists the dangers of excavating gravel along a two-mile coastal stretch, bounded by Kerton Road and Baldwin Road.

The report, which warns that residents could be "doomed to drown" in a flood-tide, had the unanimous backing of the ratepayers' association at their meeting at Maddieson's holiday camp. It will be sent to the Minister of the Environment, Mr. Anthony Crosland.

In addition the report warned that children would be at continuous risk from heavy lorry traffic, property faced the risk from flooding and water reservoirs would be endangered.

The report stresses that the Marsh environment "is

probably unique in the world" and should not be destroyed.

The issue arises because of an application by Hall Aggregates Ltd., to extract a million tons of gravel over four years from an 89 acre site behind Maddieson's holiday camp.

AN APPEAL has been lodged and an inquiry will be held.

The report expresses particular concern about the implications of the 1,000-year flood tide.

It states: "This condition could happen at practically any time and would be catastrophic to the whole area.

"Due to excavation of a long pit there would be no possible retreat for those—probably many people—finding themselves cut off. They do not relish the thought of being doomed to drown."

The report goes on to say that some homes are built on what would become a relatively narrow strip of shingle between the pits and sea if the development went ahead.

This strip would be relatively weak and there were fears that the excavations could result in a movement

of the shingle beneath the houses.

THE INFLUX of heavy lorry traffic would cause vibrations, which could damage property and would also be a danger in residential areas.

"The proposed erection of a 65-foot high shingle treatment plant off Kerton Road would be seriously detrimental to the visual amenity of the area," according to the report.

"Any noise and dust it may produce will be carried by the prevailing winds to the residential area, affecting it adversely."

The ratepayers are also concerned that some excavations, 33-feet deep, would be only 40-feet away from homes.

The meeting welcomed the report and agreed all points.

GENERAL manager of Hall Aggregates Ltd., on Monday offered to meet the ratepayers to discuss the proposed development.

He pointed out that gravel developments were a lot better than most other kinds of industrial developments.

"There is a wealth of technical information about the flood tides.

"We do not think our development would endanger life or property, but that will be for the Minister of the Environment to decide.

"Any change in the landscape in this day and age tends to mean that someone will stand up and say the environment is being desecrated, and you have to balance this argument against the urgent need the nation has for aggregate."

MOTOR GUIDE

SETYRES

FOR
ALL TYRES

can now offer

INSTANT WHEEL BALANCING