

Sent: 06 February 2024 15:28
To: Amanda.Wilkes
Cc: Josh.Potts; Planning
Subject: CPRH and HoH Objection to DC/23/0189 Sandgate Nurseries

Categories: Comments Received

Dear Ms Wilkes

We note your correspondence of 27 November 2023 about Sandgate Nurseries on the Horsham Planning website (posted 6/12/23). On page 4 you say (without prejudice) that you think the proposals are acceptable in principle and that the Starter Homes would comply with Council policy because Horsham does not currently have a 5-year housing land supply.

Your note was written before the changes to the NPPF which took place on 19 December 2023. We would like to highlight one key change at Paragraph 14 of the NPPF, which now reads:

14. In situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided the following apply:

a) the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan five years or less before the date on which the decision is made; and

b) the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement (see paragraphs 67-68).

Henfield's Neighbourhood Plan fully complies with these requirements and therefore now carries increased weight in the planning decision.

It is important to note that Sandgate Nurseries isn't merely 'not an allocated site' in the Neighbourhood Plan. Development there would undermine the whole purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan which has taken so many years of effort to develop and was supported by over 90% of voters in the referendum. The spatial strategy (Policy 1) of the Neighbourhood Plan is to focus housing development in the more accessible areas to the north and east of the village, while protecting the central Henfield Conservation Area from more traffic and congestion, attracting visitors to the walking trails around the south-west of the village to grow Henfield's tourist economy, and protecting the rich wildlife sustained by the river floodplain. Developing the Sandgate Nurseries site would run counter to all these policies. In implementing the Neighbourhood Plan, we have already launched the Horsham Heritage Trail which passes right by the Sandgate Nurseries site and we are currently developing the accompanying birdwatch trail. These, and many future plans would be ruined by a new housing development at Sandgate Nurseries.

Your note mentioned that Sandgate Nurseries was proposed to be allocated in the Local Plan, which has indeed been published following the Council meeting on 11 December. We consider that the proposed plan has not properly taken into account the weight that should now be given to Neighbourhood Plans and is not 'Consistent with National Policy'. We will therefore be objecting to the additional site allocations proposed, including Sandgate Nurseries, on the basis that the plan is not 'sound'. This reflects the strong views expressed by the community at a public meeting held by Henfield Parish Council on 1st February and the views of our local MP who has publicly opposed development of the Sandgate Nurseries site.

We would therefore ask you to reconsider your position in the light of the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, the adopted status of our Neighbourhood Plan and the harmful impacts this development would have on the Henfield community.

I have copied in our District Councillor, Josh Potts, for information.

Yours sincerely

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on behalf of the Campaign to Protect Rural Henfield (CPRH) and Hands off Henfield (HoH)

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