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Sent:

[REDACTED]

18 February 2024 22:35

To:

[REDACTED]

Planning

Categories:

Comments Received

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my opposition to the Planning Application at Sandgate Nursery, West End Lane, Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9RD, submitted under reference DC/23/0189.

I am a resident of Hollands Lane, Henfield, West Sussex and as such I have a vested interest in ensuring that the quality of the local area and the natural beauty of Henfield being nestled in the South Downs are maintained for the current and future generations to cherish.

I am writing to you with the following concerns which encompass the reason for my opposition:

1) Wildlife

The proposed area of the development is an area that has always been bustling with an abundance of wildlife, such as [REDACTED] Hedgehogs, Foxes, Deer, Owls and Bats. The latter of which provides concern of not only a social nature but of a legislative nature as well. I feel I am obliged to remind you that under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, and Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, all UK Bat Species and their roosts are protected under European and UK Legislation.

The approval of such development would certainly result in not only dispersal of wildlife and destruction of their habitats, but also massively impact the natural environment that surrounds Henfield and in turn the South Downs. This, therefore, is completely against the Horsham District Planning Framework, specifically Policy 25 by not protecting or conserving the natural environment and landscape character.

2) Access and Egress

As previously stated, I am a resident within the immediate surrounding area of the proposed development. A strong concern of mine is regarding the increase in carriageway usage in the area. The immediate surrounding already has an abundance of vehicles parked on the street, and the result of this is that HGV's and other larger vehicles often struggle to traverse the region. Notably, there have been multiple occasions where I have personally been made aware of parking that is to the degree that an Emergency Ambulance would be prevented from being able to attend an address.

This is furthered by the quantity and quality of the footpaths within the area, or more specifically the lack thereof. Across Hollands Lane and West End Lane, there are minimal options for pedestrians to safely walk next to the carriageway, and as such animals, adults, and children are forced to walk on the roadway, and with vehicles being driven at such speeds, I fear that this is only going to be worsened and will continue until such a time that a pedestrian is seriously injured or killed as a result. The likelihood of this occurring is greatly increased in the event of the approval of this development.

3) Existing Infrastructure

The current infrastructure held to serve the far west of Henfield is inadequate at present. This is evidenced through the Wastewater Station near Hollands Lane. During 2023, there were repeated occasions where Tankers were required to manually assist in the removal of the Human Waste, as the station is already exceeding its maximum capacity, and subsequently resulted in Sewage overflowing into surrounding farmland and the River Adur. I understand that there is the seemingly simple solution of expanding such infrastructure, however this would, again, be disrupting the habitats of Protected Species and would, in turn, be unlawful.

4) Access to local provisions

The availability of Henfield Medical Centre appointments has already reached a point where individuals are required to wait weeks for conditions and left in pain and in such condition that it has an impact on their daily lives. In the event of this development being approved, the subsequent influx of residents to the local area will overwhelm Henfield Medical Centre to the point where it cannot adequately function in any capacity. This is also true for access to appointments for Dentistry within the village.

5) The quality and suitability of the accommodation

It cannot be ignored that the demographic of Henfield is families and the elderly. The proposal appears to be in the interest of the elderly. However, this does nothing to assist with the ongoing housing crisis and impossibility of owning a property for the youth of today. There is nothing provided in this plan that will sufficiently benefit the youth of Henfield who wish to remain in Henfield into their adult life. With Henfield having nearly double the national average of residents aged 65 and over, it is clear that the required development in the area is not one that caters to the elderly.

Furthermore, the implementation of such a development, as per the application, is almost exclusively for the benefit of the elderly. Given that Henfield is above the national average for Detached and Semi-detached dwellings and privately owned dwellings, and comparatively is below the national average for terraced housing and flats. The current levels of residents in Henfield in social housing either rented from the Council or Rented through a third-party is also above the district average, and the result of this clearly shows that affordable housing such as terraced housing and multi-bedroom flats is much more of a priority than accommodation for the elderly.

6) The Henfield Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017-2031

The HNDP is clearly the framework for the quality and the maintenance for the local area. Yet this development completely contradicts the content of this Plan, and also works to highlight the nature of the concerns listed above.

a) Policy Map 2B

This Policy Map within the HNDP listed above shows the Hollands Lane Industrial Estate. This is a key location within Henfield, and as detailed in point 2 with Access and Egress, already poses an issue for the ongoing suitability of the roadways in the area. Notably, this map does not include the implementation of such a development proposed under DC/23/0189. This further highlights the nature of my concern, and the apparent failure to consider the welfare of the local population and the wellbeing of the surrounding wildlife.

b) Threats and Weaknesses identified

i. This Plan highlights the issues that are prevalent within Henfield. Namely, it has been identified, and residents are acutely aware, that Henfield is vulnerable to the Loss of Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows with an increase of pollution. This proposition is one that will prey on the this weakness.

ii. Additionally, this plan has identified the state of the current infrastructure being unsuitable for the expansion proposed, namely in terms of traffic, health, and waste water.

iii. Henfield is a village that is vulnerable to 'sporadic' development. Developments such as this one that are of minimal benefit to the existing population.

c) The plan further works to identify the objectives of the development plan. These contain some of the most poignant measures that need to be considered regarding the suitability of Henfield for any further developments, and the suitability of such developments on the existing measures, services and infrastructure serving current residents. This plan directly hinders such objectives, namely:

- i. Providing a proportion of affordable housing for people with links to Henfield, contrary to Policy 2.
- ii. Providing more smaller housing for young families, contrary to Policy 2
- iii. Sustaining the high quality of life through the provisions of local health services, education, and recreation facilities, contrary to Policies 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11.
- iv. Sustaining a vibrant village community, contrary to Policy 9.
- v. To ensure that there is sufficient off-street parking, contrary to Policy 4.
- vi. To encourage and enable home-based businesses, contrary to Policy 3.

In summary, I do not believe that the development and expansion proposed under DC/23/0189 is necessary, or in

the best interests of the local community. Furthermore I believe that the impact of the proposal, in the event that it is accepted, will have such impact on the local wildlife to encroach on the habitats protected by law, and as such will be unlawful. Finally, I do not believe that the nature of the development will be beneficial to help preserve Henfield, and will, by nature, impede on the welfare and wellbeing of the present population and the availability of services which are by nature a fundamental right to all residents.

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