CPRH Representation to Appeal APP/Z3825/W/24/3345055 (DC/24/0367): Use of land for the stationing of 3 gypsy and traveller static caravans, 3 touring caravans for residential purposes, together with the formation of hardstanding and associated landscaping.

The Campaign to Protect Rural Henfield (CPRH) represents the views of local residents who are striving to protect and enhance the rural environment of our village. We support residential development that meets local needs and aligns with the neighbourhood and district planning strategies.

We have objected previously to proposals on this same site, including:

- DC/21/2490 to build a permanent residence;
- DC/23/2100 which is essentially identical to the current application.

The first requirement of the planning system is that development should be genuinely plan-led (NPPF para 15). This requirement is not changed by any presumption in favour of sustainable development (NPPF para 12). Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date neighbourhood plan that forms part of a development plan, permission should not usually be granted.

The community of Henfield has invested hugely in time and effort to create its Neighbourhood Plan which was formally made in 2021 and forms part of the local plan. At referendum, more than 90% of voters were in favour.

The Henfield Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) sets out in Policy 1 a spatial strategy founded on solid physical geography considerations. A steep, visually prominent sandstone ridge runs along the southern and south-western edges of the village. Beyond the sandstone ridge, the River Adur and its floodplain limit accessibility and provide a haven for wildlife. There are glorious scenic views toward the South Downs National Park and the area is criss-crossed by numerous footpaths and tourist trails, including the long-distance Downs Link cycleway. Road access is not possible from south or west of the village.

Access to Stonepit Lane is only possible via one of two lanes (Nep Town Road and Church Street), both of which run through the designated historic Conservation Area in the centre of the village. The lanes are narrow and already congested with parked cars and traffic. It is essential to avoid extra traffic through these lanes in order to limit the damage to heritage and the setting of this area.

Henfield's spatial strategy therefore seeks to protect the south and west of the village. It conserves the rich wildlife and the landscape setting for nature, leisure and tourism, while building the housing we need to the north and east of the village where road access is easier. The Neighbourhood Plan brings forward 280 new homes in these areas. In addition, a site for gypsy caravans has been permitted on Furners Lane, east of the village (DC/21/1796).

The plan seeks to promote further development within the defined built-up area of Henfield, with any development beyond the defined settlement boundary only permitted where it is concordant with local and national policy for the management of development in the countryside.

Work to implement the spatial strategy is now fully underway with many projects in progress including heritage trails and birdwatching walks. They are already attracting hundreds of visitors to the village, boosting our tourist economy.

Development in this location would conflict directly with the aims of the Neighbourhood Plan and would undermine the good work being carried out by the people of Henfield.