

Lawfield House

West End Lane

Henfield

BN5 9UH

27th May 2023

HDC Reference Number- DC/23/0189

To whom it may concern,

This is a letter of objection for the planning application on the above reference site.

Henfield is a large village/small town that has residential streets leading off a high street, many of these streets are very narrow in places due to the original structures that were built many years ago. This, like other villages in West Sussex leads to a build-up of traffic and therefore high levels of pollution, both in noise and in the air.

One of the places in Henfield that is particularly narrow is Church Street, especially where it meets the high street. This road has become increasingly busy over the past few years due to the recent Barratt development in West End Lane and increased traffic from the ever popular downs link. Subsequently, this causes blockages of cars and larger vehicles on Church Street, upper station road and West End lane and can become dangerous for pedestrians as vehicles get close to the narrow pavement. Whilst I appreciate the road structure cannot be changed, an increase in cars from further development will make these issues worse. In addition, building in this area of the village means that people must exit the village by first entering the high street, causing further traffic congestion, therefore pollution.

The Henfield neighbourhood Plan which was voted for by Henfield residents does not recognise this site as being suitable for further housing. The sites that have been allocated until 2030 are sites that are on the edge of the village leading straight onto a main road, this would mean that most of the vehicle traffic would exit the village without having first entered it. Thus, reducing the traffic build up and pollution.

If this site was to be approved for building, the traffic will not only be a problem at the end of Church Street, but also further up the road where Station Road becomes West End Lane. After the Hollands Road turning, moving towards West End Lane there is a pinch point where the road goes from double to single lane, this causes traffic build up outside the properties that has continued to get worse over the last few years. In order for cars to pass they must pull into the front of our drive and on the verge outside our home, this is particularly evident when there are larger vehicles such as tractors, and farming machinery moving up and down the road. The increased traffic from the new builds opposite has caused road and driveway damage that was not seen before the increase of development in this area. If a further development were to go ahead, this would make the issues outlined undoubtedly worse than they are currently. Looking at the plans for this development, the solution that has been put forward is to make the road narrower with a pavement outside our home and priority over oncoming vehicles access. Not only is this going to cause the houses along this route difficulty getting in and out of their driveways but cause even more build-up of traffic

outside the downs link, pub, lower station Road, which in turn will become dangerous for all the cyclists and walkers.

As previously stated, the downs link has seen an extensive increase in use since the first Lockdown, and with the pop ups of the Old Railway Pub and its new out-door Kiosk, Berretts Farm café and the mobile café on the downs link this has continued in its popularity. While this is welcomed in the area by most residents, it has caused the roads to become blocked and dangerous at times due to poor parking, this has extended down the road at busy times to the verges past our home and towards the proposed new development, there are often bikes and pedestrians coming out from behind parked cars to cross the road to the downs link and has made visibility difficult exiting Lower station Road onto Station Road. At busy times this causes some residents to find getting into their driveways challenging. In addition to the downs link, there are lots of walkers, cyclists, horse riders that like to use the lane and it has been noted how this is becoming increasingly dangerous as this is a small country lane with no alternative but to walk on the road. This part of the village has a 30mph speed limit, however although many people do adhere to this law, there has been a noticeable amount of speeding in the area, whilst it cannot be assumed that this is from the Barratt homes housing development, it can be noted that the time frame fits in terms of noise and speeding issues. The points raised above are to highlight the fact that the road structure would struggle with further vehicle usage and parking from the downs link and the Old Railway Pub.

This new proposal has put forward for 72 retirements homes and 10 starter homes, this is a large increase of properties from the previous rejected application. I would assume that given the fact that the developer has applied for retirement homes they feel that this might increase people's advocacy of the site. This would not be the case, retirement homes can be from anyone over the age of 55, many of which will still be out and about on a daily basis and more than likely working. This would indicate that the volume of car ownership from this new site could be exponentially large. If this is not the case and many older residents move in without vehicle access, they will have no access to amenities or public transport being so far out of the village.

This site, (as I am sure you are aware) is a Green Field site that is not currently on the neighbourhood plan for Henfield. This site has had previous rejections for planning and those reasons for rejection still apply. This area has had extensive development in housing over the past 7 years and a further loss of green field space would allow a disproportionate reduction on wildlife habitat in this part of the village. As a resident in the UK I understand why there is a need for further housing; however, a consideration of where that housing is to be placed and how that will affect not only the village structure but also the environment needs to take place; this is clearly why the neighbourhood plan was developed, people who live in the village and understand the structure and daily issues would be able to make decisions about its future planning. Extensive overdevelopment of a particular area has huge environmental impacts; we are in an age where we need to protect natural areas, and this site has been left to rewild with new trees and old fruit trees from the nursery that feed and house the many different species of animals and birds living here. Animals, insects and reptiles have made this area their home such as deer, foxes, hedgehogs, owls, stag beetles, grass snakes and slow worms are seen regularly in this area, along with many different species of butterflies in the summer months. This year we have had the rare Nightingales move in and have heard them every evening for the last few months and have also managed to see them living in this rewilded area, this has been recorded on the iRecord website. To put 82 residential properties on this naturally rewilded land would undoubtedly destroy the habitat for wildlife and the loss of trees would reduce their food and shelter.

A mention needs to be made for the Listed property (Camilla Cottage) currently on the west side of the proposed new development. This property is currently standing alone along the lane, and while it is appreciated that the developers have moved the proposed housing slightly further away from this property, the fact remains that a listed house will be sitting alongside a new estate and will look aesthetically unpleasing.

In addition, I am aware that planning does not need to take into account a loss of view, but currently the South Downs and the naturally rewilded area proposed for development is our view; the property we live in has been here for over 100 years and we have already lost the view from the front of the property that until recently looked out over fields and is now looking out over a housing estate, but to lose the view at the back and be surrounded by housing would be disheartening.

Many thanks