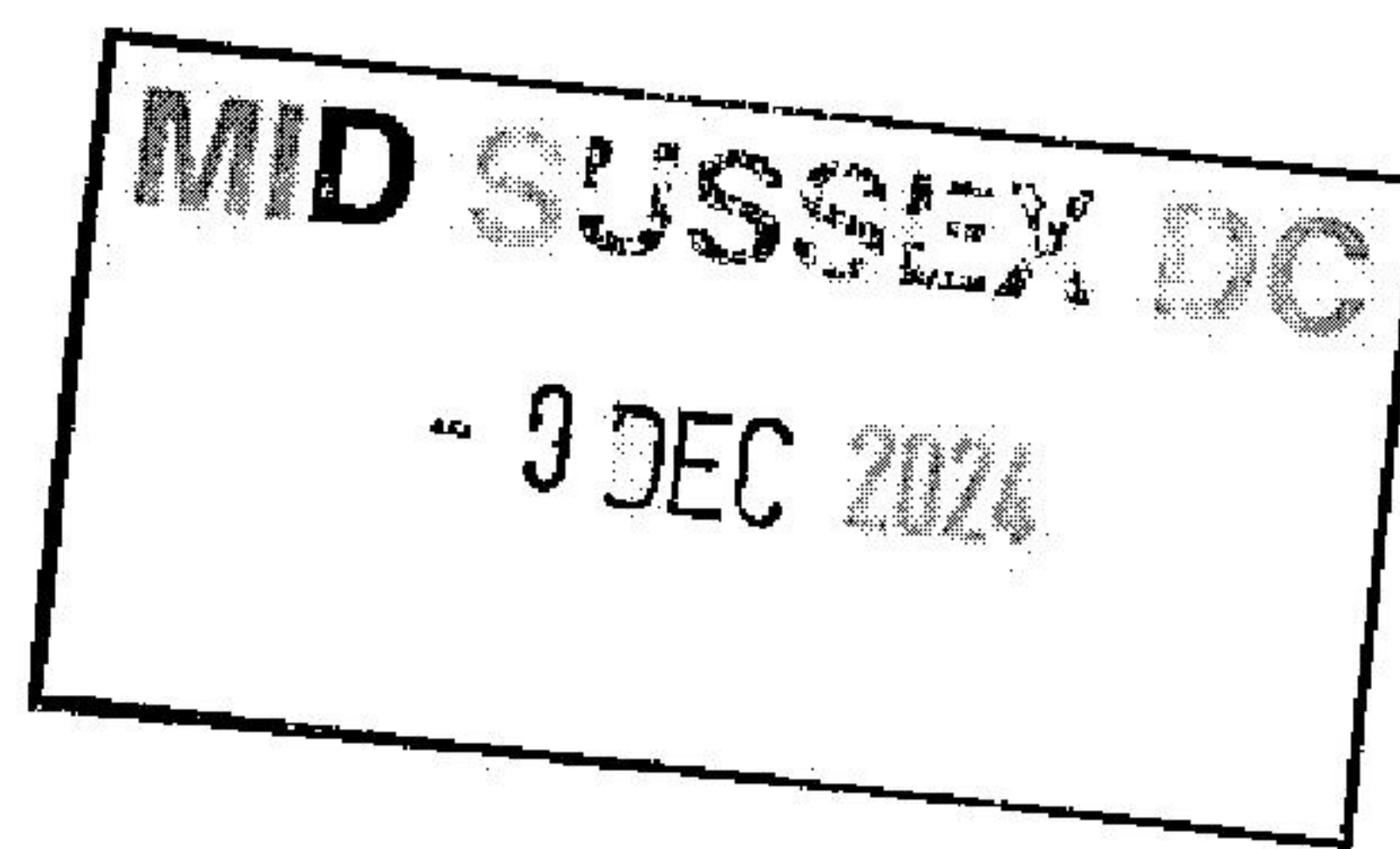




32 Woodhall Close  
Cuckfield  
West Sussex  
RH17 5HJ

4<sup>th</sup> December 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE planning application: DM/23/2866 and DM/23/2867**

**Ansty Farm Site**

Having read the additional information from Fairfax along with an analysis of it, I would like to register my remaining strong objections to the plans for the following reasons.

**Objections for DM/23/2866 Planning and Sustainability Objectives**

**A).** *Mid Sussex District Council assessed the site as being unsuitable and the application therefore is still contrary to the MSDC District Plans process that is currently under examination. In addition, Ansty has already been assessed as a category 4 settlement meaning it has very little scope for development.*

**B)** *The Ansty Farm site is NOT a sustainable site and cannot be made so in spite of all the claims and promises made by Fairfax. It does not meet the definitions of a 20 minute community and the site is too small to provide or sustain all the facilities suggested by Fairfax in the application, in any realistic way.*

1. Retail provision is likely to be limited to a convenience store resulting in residents requiring to visit retail stores off site.
2. There would be too few residents to support a practice of 4 GPs which would become financially unviable. Fairfax is not able to provide the GPs anyway so there is no guarantee any would be available.
3. Additional work/employment not generated by the development would inevitably be off site resulting in more traffic movement.

4. The provision for secondary education will be off site and Warden Park is very unlikely to be able to accommodate further pupils having incorporated other primary schools into its academy.
5. We also already have leisure centre/sports clubs and facilities available in the area etc so I do not believe they will be viable.

In summary, *most daily needs cannot be delivered on a site of this scale and it is not near enough to an existing urban area to be able to share facilities.* The existing population in Ansty is neither near enough or of sufficient volume to make the site sustainable. *The site will be nothing more than a dormitory housing estate.*

**C)** Fairfax promised improvements to reduce car dependency but I believe this is not at all realistic. *The only new onward connections for cyclists and pedestrians from the site are:*

- I. Out on to the A272 by pass where a new shared foot/cycleway has been proposed to run along the busy route.
- II. A new footway along the B2036 towards Burgess Hill with no buffer for any pedestrian walking along a narrow and winding country path.
- III. The distance to the train station is too far to walk and the cycle option is not on a straightforward route on site, making it lengthy and via the busy route when off site, making it potentially dangerous for all age groups.
- IV. The promised bus services are not clearly set out probably because after several years of discussion the site is too small to support and sustain a 20 minute daily service to Haywards Heath unless heavily subsidised which will be economically unviable. A bus service to Burgess Hill isn't even mentioned.
- V. In reality the Fairfax proposals will do little to encourage reduced car usage nor has any evidence been proposed to say otherwise. Car usage will be increased in the area.

**D)** Landscape: *the various harms to the landscape will be significant.*

- I. *The quality and features of the landscape have been recognised as being commensurate with that of AONB/National Landscape that it sits alongside.* The site is adjacent to the Great Wood and Copyhold Hanger LWS. The Cuckfield Conservation Area is nearby and the site is part of the setting to the historic Holy Trinity Church in Cuckfield. A number of

heritage site assets are next to or surrounded by the site and would be badly impacted by the development.

- II. *Trees, hedges, and green spaces support a host of wildlife and are enjoyed by local residents: these would be lost. New homes bring with them family pets, including cats which have an impact on wildlife through predation. Cats are, by nature, hunters. They prey on birds, amphibians, fish, shrews, bats, butterflies and dragonflies, to name some of the obvious. Research has shown cats hunt within an area of 100m from their home, making the effect on wildlife highly concentrated. Pet cats kill 10 times more wildlife than similar sized wild predators.*
- III. *To build homes here would be an act of reckless vandalism in an area that cannot be made sustainable, and which cannot deliver benefits to counteract the harm.*

**E) Traffic and Transport:** *the impact on traffic in the area, in particular the A272 and the B2036 but in addition the surrounding areas. Some of the routed areas are already overloaded and struggle to cope with the current influx of vehicles as I know only too well. The construction of the Northern Arc/Brookleigh site, still to be completed, will increase the problems and exacerbate the congestion already present. The addition of 3 roundabouts and 3 signalised crossing points will only compound the issues. BOTH National Highways AND the West Sussex Highways Authority have raised serious questions with regard to the plan and the questions have not been addressed by Fairfax. Another question, is how traffic will access the A23. The route goes through Ansty and a bottle neck of traffic hold ups will occur.*

**F) Ansty will not benefit from the proposed development; on the contrary, it will have a negative impact on the small village.**

- I. *Ansty is a ribbon/ linear development and those at the far end would have a walk of at least 20 minutes to the nearest proposed bus stop, even if it came into fruition.*
- II. *The supposed cycle and walking route improvements are cursory, providing nothing new to encourage more cycling or walking.*
- III. *Other on site facilities will either not be delivered, such as a GP surgery, or not required. ( There are very few primary aged children in Ansty.) I question who will pay for the proposed extensive recreational facilities.*

We also already have a significant number of residential care units for the elderly in Haywards Heath so I am wondering who these are intended for.

*Existing Ansty residents will continue to use their cars and would not gain anything from the Ansty Farm site. Instead they would lose the already existing asset of access to walks through a beautiful landscape, contributing to their well being.*

**THE PROPOSED DESIGN OF THE HOUSING IS NOTHING BUT GENERIC AND SUBURBAN IN NATURE.**

### **Objections to DM/23/2867 The Country Park/Parkland Reserve**

**A)** *Fairfax proposes to deliver a biodiversity net gain in order to offset the destruction of biodiversity at the Ansty Farm Site and not to deliver recreational facilities. Fairfax own plans show that public access to the site will be limited to less than a third of the overall site because they propose to close the site during February to August each year for 'ground nesting birds.'*

**B)** *The current district plan (2014 -2031) was adopted in 2018. The policy DP16 states 'Development will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty'. I believe this application does neither.*

**C)** *The ancient woodland on the site will have a cycle path running through it, linking with other rights of way. This will be destructive to the tree roots and smaller plants. Cycling itself will adversely affect wildlife. The cycle path is to consist of a rolled compactable ground cover (known as hoggin) which will have a negative impact.*

**D)** *It has been noted that the High Weald National landscape has a high sensitivity to change even when there have been only slight increases in visitor numbers or slight changes to footpath constructions or parking, resulting in a significant adverse effect on the fabric of the landscape. Fairfax planning application now suggests in one document, there will be no parking facilities BUT in another document refers to endowment fees used to maintain the site, could be reduced by parking income from 100 cars per week, a café or perhaps*

a concession such as a van selling food and drinks – with litter being left on site no doubt. Parking at the football ground does not appear to be prevented in any way. *All in all, the proposals are conflicting and confused with the potential to cause nothing but a destructive impact on the environment, contradictory to the proposal.*

**E)** *The National Landscape (AONB) authorities disapprove of fencing because it disrupts the historic boundaries of fields as well of course, as being visually unattractive. The planning application, however, proposes installing post and wire fencing which will form barriers to wild life.*

**F)** *As someone who has always been interested in the rewilding of the Knepp Estate and has visited it, I am concerned that the Fairfax documentation makes references to the rewilding there to support its plans. The planning application refers to having a 'rewilding' 'light touch management regime' . I am not an expert but I cannot understand how the proposed rewilding can occur on this site. I am therefore not surprised that Sir Charles Burrell, owner of the Knepp Estate has himself submitted an objection, stating that the Fairfax documentation is full of errors as well as the site being too small to even be viable.*

**G)** *New homes bring family pets, in particular cats which have an impact on wildlife through predation. Cats are, by nature, hunters. They prey on birds, shrews, bats, butterflies and dragonflies, to name but a few. Research has shown cats hunt within an area of 100m from their home, making the effect of wildlife highly concentrated. Consequently, biodiversity of animal life will be affected.*

**H)** *The terms Parkland Reserve and Country Park are confusing and contradictory. I believe they are actually mutually incompatible in such a small area; providing a recreational resource to local people and simultaneously limiting access to enhance biodiversity will not work.*

**I)** *The landscape properties of the High Weald are special and the result of interaction between rural people and the natural landscape over centuries. The imposition of a land management, even if affordable and in place, cannot improve the qualities.*

**J)** *National Planning Guidelines state that 'Biodiversity net gain should be achieved ideally at the development itself rather than an alternative one.' The*

two proposed sites are separate, in spite of the shared ownership. The activity of one is not logical compensation for the destructive activity in the other.

**K)** Evidence of Biodiversity Net Gain has been estimated at 18.2%. The figure has been calculated by desk based assessments undertaken by advisers, *NOT by using the objectively assessed statutory biodiversity metric*. I question the knowledge AND experience of these advisers who have no experience of rewilding schemes. The plans have already been dismissed by the country's leading expert in rewilding in this country: Sir Charles Burrell.

**L)** The proposed *cycling paths run close to, and damages the setting of listed buildings in the area, part of the local history: for example Old Mill Cottage and Pondtail Cottage*.

**M)** There is a *strong possibility cyclists could come into conflict with users of existing bridleways, for example horse riders*.

**N)** When *land ceases to be agricultural, it becomes much easier to subsequently develop at a later date as has frequently happened in other areas*. This is another concern and may threaten the site in the future.

*I strongly believe the proposal gives nothing to local people that isn't already available to them in the way of access to the countryside and its enjoyment. It is also difficult to see how Fairfax can improve the current measure of biodiversity in this special area when much will be destroyed.*

I trust you will give my detailed objections due consideration.

