

Dear Mr. King,

Planning Application Ref: DM/26/0454

Proposed Erection of 34 New Homes with access from Marwick Close.

I write in **objection** to this planning application by Devine Homes Ltd.

Prematurity

The site is currently a draft allocation DPA17 in the District Plan 2021-2039 which is currently at Regulation 19 Examination. Delays in the District Plan process has meant that some aspects of the District Plan are being revisited, including sites that have already been assessed as suitable and those that have been discounted. The residents have had professional representations at that examination and have submitted evidence to the Inspector to support our view that the council has incorrectly followed its spacial strategy in draft allocating this site for residential development.

We strongly contend that the proposed development does not constitute a sustainable form of development in this location and does not comply with Planning Policies set out within the NPPF and the District Plan.

Ansty is categorized in the councils Settlement Hierarchy as a Category 4 settlement – Small Village with limited services often only serving the settlement itself.

No other Category 4 settlement has been allocated any housing growth, yet Ansty has been allocated a total of 75 dwellings across this site DPA 17 and DPA 16. To put some context around this, that is more development than is proposed for East Grinstead which is a Category 1 settlement and several Category 2 settlements such as Hassocks and Lindfield. This is clearly an anomaly.

The scale of development in this location is a central aspect of the ongoing examination of the District Plan and has not yet been determined as legally sound by the Planning Inspector. The Council has recently published the Post Hearings – Site Selection Methodology Review which is currently out for consultation until 13th March. This will determine the methodology that will be used to re-appraise sites.

Until the Local Plan is further progressed, this planning application is premature and should be refused planning permission on this basis.

Design, Development Density and Layout

The Design and Access Statement incorrectly refers to the application site as 'an allocated site' which is not the case. As set out earlier in this objection, this site is currently a draft allocation, and the sites are due to be re-appraised.

The scheme is more akin to a design suitable for a far more suburban location and does not at all reflect the small village, edge of countryside location within the wider setting of the High Weald National Landscape, the boundary of which is just some 200m to the north west.

The existing development at Marwick Close is approximately 30dph whereas the proposed development is approximately 43dph. This is a considerable uplift in density. The density of the other recent development at Crouch Fields is even lower still. The proposal fails to reflect the character and layout of other housing in this village and is out of keeping with the prevailing density and character of Ansty.

This strongly indicates that the proposed development is an overdevelopment of the site which is not in keeping with the low-density character of Ansty, and is inconsistent with other approved developments at Crouch Fields, and Upton Drive/Marwick Close.

Impact on Residential Amenity

The proposed development would gain access through Upton Drive and Marwick Close, which is an existing small cul-de-sac development. The number of additional vehicles now proposed to access through the existing development, which is in part only a shared surface roadway will substantially increase noise and disturbance and will adversely affect the residential amenities of the current occupiers. Residents purchased their homes in what they thought was a small and quiet development of just 20 homes. The addition of another 34 houses represents a huge 170% increase in development which is clearly going to fundamentally change the environment for existing residents.

Sustainability

Ansty is not a sustainable location with incredibly poor public transport options. All journeys are totally car dependent. That is the reality of life in Ansty.

There is only one irregular bus service within Ansty that runs 4 services per day excluding weekends. This service does not support commuting by public transport to Haywards Heath station or connections to the wider bus network. The start and end times of the limited bus service do not align with commuting patterns. Reference in the applicants Transport Statement is made to multi-modal journeys using the bus to

access the train station because it is too far away to cycle or walk. However, with such a limited bus service trying to align bus times with the train departure times would be incredibly difficult. The site therefore does not present a real choice for sustainable travel and would not be in accordance with NPPF para 110 with developments which can be made sustainable and offering a genuine choice of travel or para 115 where sustainable modes are prioritised.

Ansty has a petrol station with a forecourt min-mart which stocks a limited variety of goods. That is the total extent of the local services.

Only a limited review of cycle opportunities is provided within the supporting Transport Statement and the opportunity for cycling should be considered against LTN 1/20 guidance. Given the recorded vehicle speeds and flows obtained by the residents traffic survey by GTA Civils (submitted to you under separate cover), with circa 13,000 two-way daily flows, Figure 4.1 of LTN 1/10 confirms that Mixed Traffic cycling (i.e. in the carriageway) provision would only be suitable for a few people and will exclude most potential users and/or have safety concerns. A further review of the cycle infrastructure is therefore required. This is therefore not in accordance with NPPF Para 109(e) where a development should identify and pursue opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use. I certainly would not want to take on a commuter bike ride along such an incredibly busy A road without dedicated cycle provision to Haywards Heath nor along the equally busy B road to Burgess Hill. I would feel that I was taking my life in my hands with every journey, especially during the dark winter months.

Highways Access

I have significant concerns that access for both pedestrians and vehicles has not been fully considered and poses serious safety concerns. The Transport Statement identifies the main vehicular access would be through the Upton Drive/Bolney Road existing junction. No review of visibility splays at this junction appears to have been completed as part of the submitted i-Transport Transport Statement. Given the significant increase in unit numbers being served from this access and the associated intensification of use, a full review of vehicle tracking and visibility splays is required. Visibility is restricted particularly to the west. This is confirmed through the review completed by GTA Civils which confirms significant reductions in achievable visibility against the standards based on the recorded vehicle speeds. This presents a serious safety concern and would be in direct conflict with NPPF para 115b in that safe and suitable access cannot be achieved for all users.

A peak commuting times using this junction is already precarious. These issues will be further exacerbated by the significant increase in traffic proposed. When turning left out of the junction at peak times, vehicles travelling west from the roundabout are already accelerating and approaching the Upton Drive junction at speed, often well above the

30mph limit as identified in the GTA Civils report. Due to the bend in the road when looking to the left (east) vehicles appear at only a short distance and often travel far too fast. Again, at peak times, especially in the mornings, traffic is often queued up from the roundabout making it very difficult to turn right (east). One is very often reliant on a motorist making space and letting you out into the traffic queue. You then have to time that with the traffic approaching fast from the roundabout. To coincide, the two events can take a considerable time. This will inevitably lead to queuing back along Upton Drive constraining the efficiency of the junction.

The existing roadway was never intended to serve any more than the 20 properties consented, certainly not an additional 34 properties. Traffic movements using a 5.5m wide shared surface which was designed and intended for use by 10 residential dwellings, as the apartments immediately on the right and the houses immediately on the left do not use the roadway, their access points being directly you enter Upton Drive. The proposed development results in over a tripling of the number of units being served by a shared surface. Such roads should only be used to support a small number of dwellings in the order of 10-15, and not the 44 which would result in the proposals. This is therefore in conflict with NPPF Para 117(c) in that the shared use nature would not minimise conflict between highway users and the increase in unit numbers being served off an existing shared surface would in fact increase conflict.

No's 4, 6 & 7 Marwick Close would have all the new development traffic passing right past their front doors on a shared surface roadway. There is no dedicated pedestrian footpath in this part of the development and there is no space to provide one. Pedestrians would therefore be forced to walk in the roadway when following the natural desire line through the development to Bolney Road and will be put in direct conflict with motor vehicles. This is clearly unsafe.

Pedestrian Access and Safety

Legal rights of access are retained solely for what is the retained land, from when the land was sold for the Upton Drive/Marwick Close development. That is the application site only. Rights of access do not extend to other third parties such as pedestrians coming from the proposed PROW connection to the south nor from the footpath connection being provided to the land to the east DPA16. The applicants need to explain how they will ensure that repeated acts of trespass will be prevented when the natural pedestrian desire line is through Marwick Close & Upton Drive and not via the pedestrian access proposed, directly onto the Bolney Road.

This new pedestrian access onto Bolney Road appears contrived and inherently unsafe. The proposed 2m wide footway between the site and Bolney Road and the associated pedestrian crossing north to south appears substandard. The crossing shows splay lengths of 85m and 64m which would be below that required in accordance with the

recorded vehicle speeds by GTA Civils. This presents a serious safety concern that the proposals do not meet the required necessary standards which are in place to protect highway users' safety. The connection point of this footway internally within the layout is also not clear. It is proposed on the northern side of the carriageway where there is no footway, and no internal crossing point is proposed. This needs to be considered further along with assessing the appropriate visibility splays which are unlikely to be achievable due to the presence of the visitor parking bays immediately to the west of the footway.

The footway that routes through the site and up to the eastern site boundary onto Marwick Close ends abruptly and onto third party land. There is no design, crossing or commentary about how users join onto the Marwick Close shared surface.

Furthermore, with the layout itself having a separated 2m wide footway, this confirms the requirement for such a footway, so why is it then considered acceptable to just end at Marwick Close when pedestrians have a further c 97m walk in the carriageway?

Summary

The application relies heavily on the site being a draft allocation within the emerging District Plan. This is a premature assumption and contrary to paragraph 50(a) and (b) of the NPPF.

Ansty is a Category 4 settlement with limited services and facilities. It is not a sustainable location for development on this scale. There is no choice of sustainable transport modes, making residents solely reliant on the private car for journeys. The very limited amenities in Ansty do not support the further significant development directed at the village. There are simply more sustainable and suitable locations elsewhere within the district for development on this scale. This should have been recognised by the council when undertaking their analysis of the suitability of Ansty for such significant development against their spacial strategy policies, as it now has been by the planning Inspector.

There are serious highway safety concerns arising from the use of the existing access at the junction with Upton Drive and Bolney Road. There is insufficient visibility at the junction to serve the quantum of additional housing proposed.

The new pedestrian crossing proposed on the A272 is contrived and technically flawed and is a danger to pedestrian safety.

This significant additional development will have a seriously adverse effect on the residential amenities and quality of life currently enjoyed by the existing residents.

The quantum of development proposed does not accord with the prevailing character and density of development in the village. The design and layout follows a typically suburban approach to development and does not respect the character and low-density development typical of the village.

For the above reasons, I trust that you will recommend that this application is refused planning permission.

Yours sincerely,

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