

Steve Ashdown

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk
Sent: 19 June 2025 17:40
To: Steve Ashdown
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application DM/23/2867

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 19/06/2025 5:39 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land East Of Ansty Way Cuckfield Bypass Cuckfield West Sussex
Proposal:	Change of use of farmland and woodland to parkland reserve to include public access and instigation of long-term management and rewilding regime, including establishment of pedestrian and cycle tracks, with new pedestrian and cycle access points off Cuckfield Road to the south and Staplefield Road to the north. Proposals to include the addition of two wooden viewing platforms and two hides. Sports pitches at Beech Farm Field to remain in sports use. (Additional information and amended plans received 27th May 2025).
Case Officer:	Stephen Ashdown

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address:	8 Waterhouse Square Ashburnham Drive Cuckfield
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Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour or general public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	
Comments:	1. This development offers no real benefit to local people - only to the developers. Fairfax claims they are helping meet local housing needs by offering affordable homes. But in reality, they're only providing the bare minimum required. Evidence shows there's no extra effort being made to support the community. This is especially concerning because Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) has already met its housing targets in previous years. So, this is a speculative project that brings harm, with no clear benefit to the area. 2. The site causes a harmful merge between Cuckfield and Ansty.

Although the new estate isn't officially part of either settlement, it sits between them and links them in a way that blurs their separation.

This kind of "creeping coalescence" destroys the distinct identities of the villages and results in a sprawling, disconnected development that belongs to neither place.

3. The promised Country Park doesn't make up for the damage to nature.

Fairfax says their parkland reserve is inspired by the rewilding work at Knepp. But Sir Charles Burrell, who led that project, has rejected this claim and said Fairfax's plan is not credible.

They haven't explained how this park would be funded, managed, or governed. There's also a contradiction - if it's meant for rewilding, public access must be limited, so it can't really be used as a country park for residents.

4. The project will cause major harm to local landscapes and wildlife.

The area is rich in history and nature, including ancient woodlands, ghyll valleys, and many listed buildings that rely on the surrounding historic setting.

The land also includes some of the best farming soil. Any work done to widen or change local roads would destroy hedgerows, trees, and wildlife habitats. Dark skies and scenic views from the High Weald and South Downs would also be affected.

5. The site will bring far more traffic to already congested roads.

Because the development is far from schools, shops, jobs, and public transport, people will have no real choice but to drive everywhere.

Walking or cycling isn't safe or realistic due to distance and dangerous roads. Fairfax claims traffic flow can be managed, but experts, including West Sussex Highways, strongly disagree.

6. The location is simply not sustainable.

This development is not an extension of Ansty or Cuckfield but a remote housing estate disconnected from key services like schools, GP surgeries, shops, jobs, and public transport.

Fairfax has promised to provide some of these services, but they can't guarantee delivery. Most of these are outside their control, and no supporting organisations have committed to helping. Even retail services are unlikely to be viable due to low footfall, at best, a small corner shop might survive.

Kind regards