

COURTYARD HOUSE

London Road Cuckfield West Sussex RH17 5BY



5/6/25

The Planning Office Mid Sussex District Council.

Planning Applications **DM/23/2866 and DM/23/2867**

MID SUSSEX DC

27 JUN 2025

Dear Sirs, I set out my comments and observation on the above noted applications for your consideration.

Strategic matters.

1.The proposal is located in an area of development constraint between Cuckfield and the northern sector housing at Burgess Hill, which is currently under construction.

The extent and closeness in this important strategic gap would be a significant first step in the loss of the distinctive identity and separate character of Cuckfield, Ansty and Burgess Hill, uniting them into one large conurbation.

2.The loss of countryside, farming, recreational and wildlife habitats will fundamentally change the character of the area and significantly compromise the needs of future generations.

3.Existing towns such as Haywards Heath , Burgess Hill and East Grinstead still have significant opportunities for housing by building above surface car parking areas, Combining commercial and housing and in Haywards Heath, building over the main line rail cutting (previously proposed by The Council) . The late Lord Rogers in his report to Government identified such areas should which he said could have higher densities. Additionally, more emphasis on **high density low rise design** should be given to conserve virgin land.....eg.see RTPI National Awards 1999 page 12 .

COURTYARD HOUSE

London Road Cuckfield West Sussex RH17 5BY



Green field sites should never be built on while 'brownfield' sites remain available.

4.The proposal is not sustainable as defined by the 1987 World Commission report on environment and development as *it does not meet the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations to meet their own needs*. It is a wasteful proposal particularly when large numbers of new housing is becoming available in the Burgess Hill northern sector expansion.

5.The proposals are no more than a response to a '**development opportunity**' as opposed to a strategic town planning concept where the needs of existing residents have been properly taken into account.

Traffic.

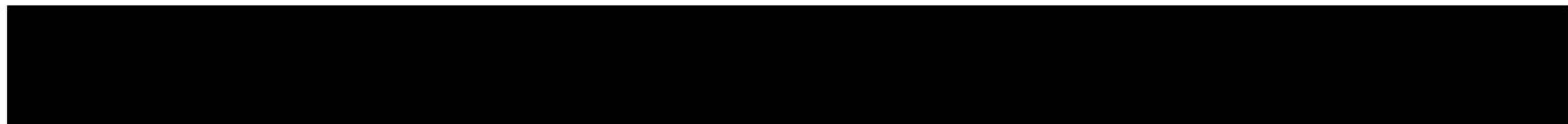
1.Routing of traffic from the proposal towards the high employment areas of Crawley, Gatwick and the M23 / M25 will add to that from the Burgess Hill northern sector new housing. This will further add to the present unsustainable commuter traffic passing through historic Cuckfield village, a designated B road.

2.Proposals to avoid or mitigate this problem are absent or unclear

3.Three access points for entry to the proposal are shown with conventional roundabouts on the A272. With existing traffic volumes it is likely that the introduction of slip roads and even traffic lights will be needed as has happened elsewhere on the A272. This inevitably changes the existing rural environment to an urban one.

COURTYARD HOUSE

London Road Cuckfield West Sussex RH17 5BY



Conservation.

1. Nearby Cuckfield is an historic Conservation Area regarded as the first settlement in the area. It is established conservation law that determines that the views *into and out of a conservation area* need to be taken into account. Part of the special character of Cuckfield is that it is positioned on a ridge with important views towards the South Downs and these are referred to in the council's CA policy document. As these views will be significantly altered by this proposal it will be contrary to policy and have a damaging effect on this particular characteristic of Cuckfield.

2. At present heavy traffic flows north/south through Cuckfield during the daily commute towards the A23/M23, at times with long lines of static vehicles. The proposal will cause this to increase, if that is possible. This increase will add to traffic from the Burgess Hill northern sector yet to be completed. The pressure of traffic will be further increased in the years following completion as invariably vehicle ownership increases. A good example of this is nearby Bolnore Village now about 20 years old where parking anywhere on the road side is difficult.

Population and Services

1. Dwelling numbers do not accurately reflect the likely population but it is the population numbers which will impact and be needed to determine all services, water, gas, drainage and including schools, health needs, car ownership etc. It is of course people, not the housing which have these needs and an accurate assessment of the likely population is vital. The example I give below demonstrates how planning solely on dwelling numbers can result in a 33/50 % variation in occupation/population

10 no. 3 bed 3 person dwellings = 30 persons

COURTYARD HOUSE

London Road Cuckfield West Sussex RH17 5BY



10 no. 1bed 2 persn dwelling = 20 persons

This indicates a 33% population variation for the same number of dwellings. Central to the proposal should therefore be the proposed population.

For proper planning to take place population numbers and age groupings are needed.

Summary.

For the above reasons I believe this proposal to be flawed and if permitted will cause irreparable harm to the area. Lord Rogers report ,The New Renaissance, has shown the way forward and the town centres and urban areas of Mid Sussex are able to accommodate additional housing at higher densities. For these reasons I believe this proposal should be refused planning approval.

