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Dear Mr King,

Re: Objection to Amended Planning Application Reference DM/26/0454: Proposed erection of 33 new homes with access from Marwick Close, vehicle and cycle parking, landscaping, drainage, and associated infrastructure and highway works. (amended plans received 25/06/2026 showing revised layout, reduction in the number of units to 33 and new footway on A272.)

We write on behalf of the residents of Marwick Close and Upton Drive, Ansty to lodge a further objection to the above planning application which is currently being considered by Mid Sussex District Council.

Following our original objection the application has been the subject of a small number of amendments that includes primarily a revised layout, a reduction of 1 dwelling to the overall scheme, and the creation of a footpath along the A272.

These amendments do not address our objection to the principle of development as outlined in our original objection. We have set out our reasons for this below and included further evidence, by way of recent planning appeals, why development at this location would be fundamentally inappropriate and should be refused. Further to this we have also included comments and an additional note from our highway's consultants addressing the submitted transport rebuttal and the proposed new footpath. Our conclusion is that the amendments to the application make little difference to the overall negative impact of this development and the application should be refused.

This objection should be read alongside our original objection attached at Appendix 1 for reference.



Principle of development

We strongly consider 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 adopted District Plan.

Ansty is classed as a small village (Category 4 settlement) within the settlement hierarchy with limited services serving only that of the existing settlement. Therefore, it has been assessed as having low growth potential by the Council in both the current adopted District Plan and the emerging District Plan Review.

The proposed development consists of 33 dwellings which is a significant amount of development in a location which has been confirmed by the Council as having limited services, including a small petrol station, and an irregular bus service with all other services and facilities including schools a significant distance away. Most everyday services and facilities will be wholly reliant on private car travel.

The development proposed runs counter to the settlement hierarchy position of Ansty and despite being part of a draft allocation is inconsistent with the spatial strategy as set out in the District Plan Review. The strategy directs *"Growth at existing sustainable settlements where it continues to be sustainable to do so."* Outside of these areas development should provide *'Opportunities for extensions, to improve sustainability of existing settlements'*. There is no evidence presented in this application to demonstrate that this development extension of Ansty would improve the sustainability of the settlement. It proposes only the addition of 33 houses to an already unsustainable location.

Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan, which was adopted in 2017, produced a plan for sustainable growth of the village to 2031. This was based on meticulous evidence taking account of the services and facilities that are currently present within the village. The plan allocated 3 sites for development - Crouch Fields (8 dwellings), Marwick Close and Upton Drive (20 dwellings) both of which have been built out, and a yet to be built allocation for 10 dwellings at Ansty Cross Garage. To reiterate, these sites were planned to the needs of this small category 4 village to 2031.

The 2011 Census does not publish household data specifically for Ansty village. Household figures are only available for the wider Ansty and Staplefield parish. Using the Ansty Plan from the emerging District Plan Draft Policies Map (page 14) there are 116 total residential units within the village boundary.

Therefore, if this development were to be built there would be a 29% overall increase to the size of this unsustainable village without any provision for additional services, facilities or improvements to existing that would contribute to better sustainability. We have already set out a comprehensive review of the landscape and neighbouring amenity impact in the original objection that should be read alongside this.

Ashford Hill Appeal Precedent

A recent appeal decision (June 2026) dismissing an application for 45 dwellings on land opposite Lime Farm, Ashford Hill, Basingstoke & Deane is a very similar case to this

application and contains some important general points that have clear parallels to it. The appeal decision is attached at Appendix 2.

Ashford Hill, like Ansty, is a rural village surrounded by countryside that has seen recent development and growth. The village is characterised by small clusters of buildings and elements of linear development that followed the main roads through the village. Like the subject application this application was for development on greenfield land on the edge of the village.

Despite a severe lack of housing land supply in the local authority area the appeal was dismissed and great weight was given to sustainability and the conflict the application had with the spatial strategy and the settlement hierarchy. The Inspector considered that the “proposed residential development would be significant, both in transport terms (bearing in mind the number of journeys that would be generated) and in the context of a modest sized village (particularly bearing in mind the amount of growth in recent years) and would result in an overreliance on private vehicles.” The Inspector concludes that “this would not reflect the policy in the Framework to actively manage patterns of growth, focus development on locations which are or can be made sustainable, or limit the need to travel.”

There are clear parallels with this case and the subject application and we have set out below a summary of the Inspectors conclusions and how that relates to this application, and how it conflicts with the District Plan:

1. Sustainability of settlement; is the settlement an appropriate location for the specific development in terms of access to services & facilities? The Council has already confirmed in the adopted Local Plan and the emerging District Plan that Ansty is a category 4 settlement and unsustainable as it has limited facilities and a poor weekday only bus service that is not realistic for commuting. The proposal does not provide any enhancement to services or facilities just an additional 33 houses (29% increase in overall size of the village) that will be car dependant – **Conflicts with NPPF Paragraph 11, Adopted Local Plan - Policy DP3, Policy DP6, Policy DP15, Emerging District Plan - Chapter 6 Spatial Strategy, Policy DPC3, Policy DPH2**
2. Proposed development would be significant, in the context of a modest sized village both in impact on transport and the character and appearance of the village (Ansty is smaller than Ashford Hill). This application alone would increase the size of the village by over 29%, with no improvements to public transport there will be an overreliance on cars and an overall negative impact. A 29% increase to the village on a greenfield site will have a significant negative impact on the character and appearance of the village. The Neighbourhood Plan defines the village as primarily linear in character and this addition will wholly change that and encroach onto the surrounding countryside. **Conflicts with NPPF Paragraphs 11, 109, 110, 135 (a) and (c), Adopted Local Plan – Policy DP6, Policy DP21, Policy DP26, Emerging District Plan – Policy DPH2, Policy DPB1, Policy DPT1, Policy DPT3**

3. Design – As with the Ashford Hill application this application would create a mass of housing on the edge of the village. The inevitable harm in developing a greenfield site weighs against a scheme and consequentially the benefits need to outweigh such harm. The only benefit that this proposal brings is the delivery of housing given the current lack of housing land supply. The location and design of the proposal, coupled with the above negative impact it will have on the character and appearance of the village, will be significantly harmful to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and does not deliver a development that contributes to local distinctiveness and a sense of place in this rural setting. **Conflicts with NPPF paragraphs 136, 139, 187 (b) Adopted Local Plan – Policy DP12, DP26 Emerging District Plan – Chapter 6 and Policy DPC1**

The Inspector in the Ashford Hill appeal concludes that “Overall, I find that the adverse impacts arising from the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole. In reaching this conclusion, I have had particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes.”

We would urge the Council to review the similarities of this case with this application. Despite having a lack of housing land supply weight should be given to the fact that this application does not represent sustainable development and does not contribute to the enhancement of the sustainability of Ansty. The overall impact this development will have on the character and appearance of the settlement will be negative, increasing the size of the village by over 29% on the edge of the settlement. In this context the application should be refused.

Planning Inquiry - Land East of Ansty, Cuckfield Bypass

Set against the backdrop of the above appeal, the Mid Sussex District Council have just completed a Planning Inquiry into the proposed development of 1400 homes on land to the east of Ansty. (AP/26/0017)

The Council refused this application through planning committee for the following reasons:

1. The proposal would be major development in the countryside, which was out of keeping with the rural character and would fail to protect the distinctiveness of the area by extending the boundary of Ansty and so result in perceived coalescence with Cuckfield
2. The proposal would erode the rural nature of the site which makes a positive contribution to the setting of the HWNL;
3. In the absence of a completed s.106 agreement, the proposal failed to provide the infrastructure, contributions and off-site highway works to serve the development, and the required affordable housing;

We have attached the Council's opening statement at the Inquiry at Appendix 3 for reference. In this the Council argue that *“It is not the place of this Inquiry to review or*

prejudge decisions taken as part of the Local Plan process, but the message which emerges from it is clear: Mid-Sussex fully understands the importance of meeting housing needs, but is firmly of the view – now expressed on three separate occasions - that Ansty is simply the wrong place."(Paragraph 4).

Further to this, in response to whether the site is in a suitable location the Council states: *"In summary, the Council's position here is that while the Appeal Site is not currently sustainable, it could be made so, provided the infrastructure proposed as part of the appeal scheme is provided, and is provided in a timely fashion."*(Paragraph 8)

"The reasons for this are straightforward:

a. Within the MSDP settlement hierarchy, Ansty is classified as a category 4 settlement, i.e. it is a small village with limited services. As such, it does not provide anything like the level of facilities required for a development of 1450 new homes to be regarded as sustainable.

b. However, national policy directs that development should be focused on "locations which are or can be made sustainable through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes"4.

Para 77 of the NPPF advises that: "The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport mode)."(Paragraph 9)

Notwithstanding the fact that the appeal decision is yet to be issued, it is clear from the Council's statements that:

- Ansty is simply the wrong place for development
- It is a category 4 settlement with limited services
- it does not provide anything like the level of facilities required for a large scale development of new homes to be regarded as sustainable
- It is recognised that national policy directs that development should be focused in locations which are or can be made sustainable

Our objection and the Ashford Hill appeal follows this exact argument. The proposal is for 33 dwellings, but that would still increase the overall size of the settlement by over 29% making it a large scale development for the village. The same arguments that the Council have made under this appeal should apply to the subject application.

Proposed Amendments to the Application

Turning to the amendments proposed in this application. The design and layout amendments are minimal resulting in a slightly modified layout and the reduction of 1 dwelling over the entirety of the scheme. The changes do not change our original

objection and the overall negative impact that the scheme will have on the character and appearance of the area and wider landscape. Our original comments on these still stand.

In relation to highways, it is now proposed to create a short section of footway along the south side of the proposed access road with a footpath link into the adjoining field to the southeast. In addition, to create a new footway on the south side of the A272 connecting Upton Drive with the proposed footpath connection from the site onto the A272.

The applicant has also produced a Highways Rebuttal Note to our original highways objection note. We have therefore attached at Appendix 4 a Highways Technical Note Addendum produced by GTA Civils that addresses that Rebuttal Note and the proposed footpath changes. The serious concerns raised in the original objection remain and the technical note highlights these.

It is also important to reiterate the insufficient sustainable travel opportunities for the proposed new residents. Despite the proposed changes to the footpaths there is still only one irregular bus service within Ansty that runs 4 services per day excluding weekends. The nearest station is Haywards Heath which is 5.2km to the east and which exceeds the recommended IHT cycling distances. Residents of the proposed development will therefore still be heavily reliant on the private car. They would not have a real choice for sustainable travel, which would not be in accordance with paragraph 110 of the NPPF which seeks to ensure that developments can be made sustainable, offering a genuine choice of travel, and paragraph 115(a) where sustainable transport modes are prioritised.

The proposal is contrary to paragraph 110 of the NPPF which states that *'significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport routes.'* The development of this site is not sustainable and cannot be made sustainable due to its location within a Category 4 settlement with few services and facilities.

Conclusion

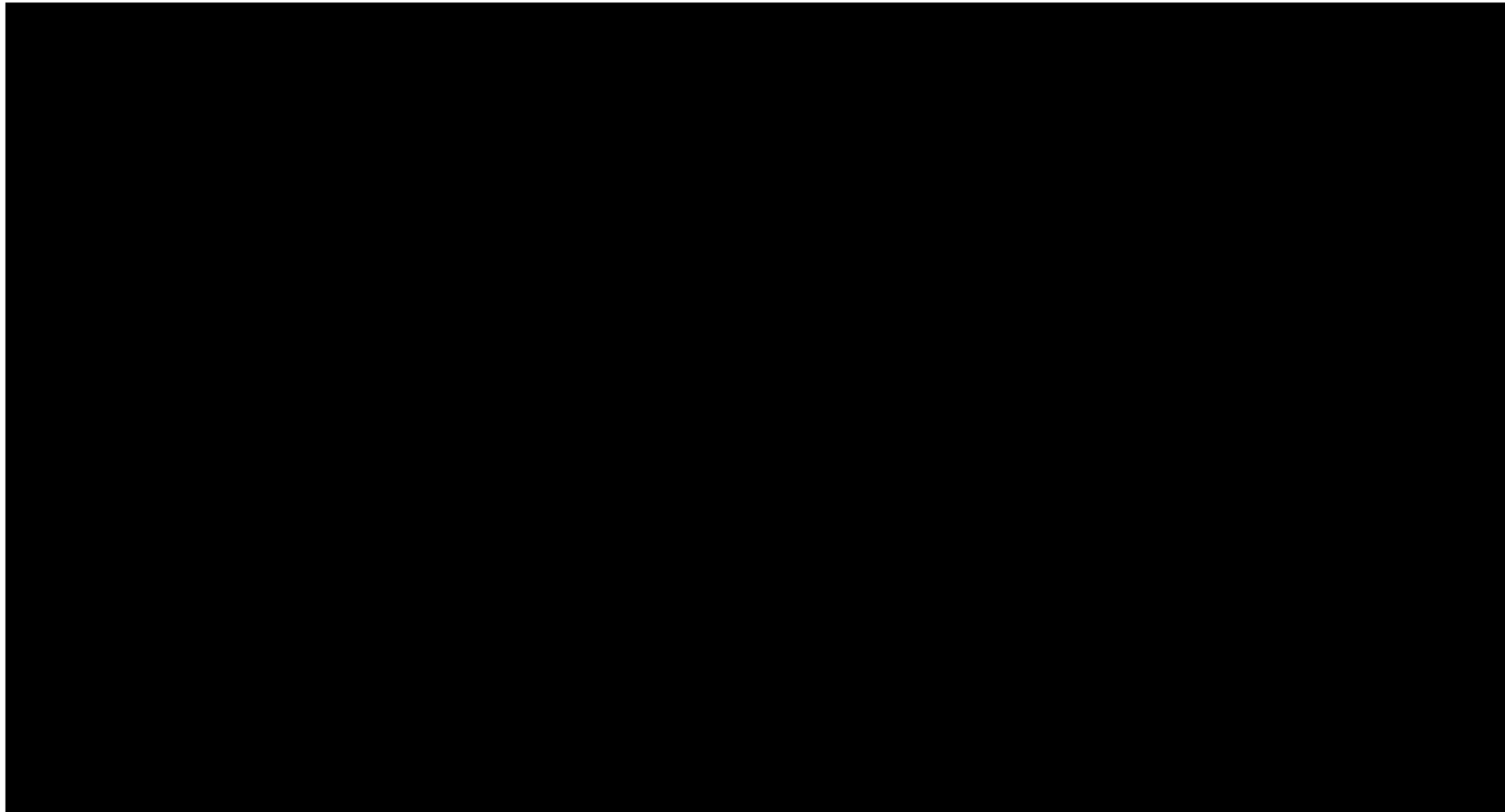
The proposed development is within the countryside, within the setting of the High Weald National Landscape. Ansty is a Category 4 settlement with limited services and facilities. It is not a sustainable location for development and there is no choice of sustainable transport modes. Potential occupants would be solely reliant on the private car. The proposed amendments do not change this.

The proposed development of 33 dwellings on this greenfield site does not constitute a sustainable form of development, which is the purpose of the planning system (paragraph 7 of the NPPF). Net gains across each of the sustainability objectives in the NPPF (economic, social and environmental) have not been achieved. There is a presumption in favour of development that is sustainable, and it is demonstrated in this strong objection that the proposed development is not sustainable across a wide range of National and District Plan objectives.

This is reinforced by the recent appeal at Ashford Hill and by the recent Planning Inquiry submissions for Land East of Ansty.

On behalf of the residents of Marwick Close and Upton Drive we urge Mid Sussex District Council to refuse this planning application.

Yours Faithfully,



Appendix 1 – Original Objection Letter

Appendix 2 – Appeal Decision Ashford Hill

Appendix 3 – Land East of Ansty Appeal - Mid-Sussex District Councils Opening

Appendix 4 – Highways Technical Note Addendum