

Steve Ashdown

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk
Sent: 10 December 2024 21:52
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 10/12/2024 9:51 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 received on 8th November 2024).
Case Officer:	Stephen Ashdown

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address:	Quinces Courtmeas Road Cuckfield
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Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour or general public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	
Comments:	It is clear that this application is for the sole purpose of Fairfax trying to deliver a biodiversity net gain to offset the destruction of biodiversity at the Ansty Farm site and not to deliver recreational facilities. Fairfax's own documentation makes it clear that public access to the site will be limited to less than a third of the overall site and the new footpath would be closed during February to August each year for "ground nesting birds". The ancient woodland on the site (Walks Wood etc) will have a cycle path running through it linking up with other public rights of way which will be destructive to the tree roots and smaller plants. The activity of cycling will also adversely affect the wildlife. The cycle path will consist of a rolled hoggin surface that will compact the soil. The High Weald National Landscape has a high sensitivity to change where even modest

changes to visitor numbers, footpath construction or car parking can have a significant effect on the landscape fabric. The latest documentation suggests that there will be no parking facilities in one document yet in another document is the suggestion that endowment fees to maintain the site could be reduced by car parking income for 100 visitors per week, a cafe or a concession of say a van selling food and drinks. There also seems to be nothing in place to prevent the use of parking at the football ground. The concept seems confused and contradictory with the potential for a destructive impact on the environment.

The erection of fencing (post and wire) will form barriers to existing wildlife such as deer and small rodents. Fencing is also disapproved of by the National Landscape (AONB) authorities as it disrupts historic field boundaries. It is also visually unattractive.

The "rewilding" "light touch management regime" will not enrich the existing habitat but merely replace an already bio-diverse natural environment with another more alien one. There are several references in the documentation to learning from the re-wilding at Knepp Estate, this is completely at odds with the objection submitted already by Sir Charles Burrell, owner of the Knepp Castle Estate. He makes it clear that the documentation is full of errors and the site is too small to be viable.

The purpose of the "Parkland Reserve" or "Country Park" is confused and contradictory. On the one hand it claims to provide a recreational resource to local people whilst at the same time limiting access to enhance biodiversity. It cannot achieve both aims in such a small area because they are mutually incompatible.

The special landscape qualities of the High Weald are the result of interaction between rural people and the natural landscape over centuries. It cannot be improved upon by the revolutionary imposition of a new land management regime imposed from above.

Kind regards