

Andy Watt

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 January 2026 18:56
To: Andy Watt
Subject: Planning Application DM/25/3108

Dear Andy,

Wishing you a Happy New Year. Please see my comments regarding this proposed site below.

REF: planning application No: DM/25/3108

Proposed 5 pitch site for settled gypsy accommodation, including enlarged vehicular access, each containing a mobile home, utility building and two parking spaces on land at Moonshine Meadow, Cuckfield Road, Ansty, West Sussex

I am compelled to object to plans for the above 5 pitch caravan site on Cuckfield Road, Ansty, owing to the impact it will present to our property at Leigh Watermill Farm on Cuckfield Road, Ansty. Despite not being immediate neighbours of the field in question, we are at the lower end of a long road and must annually deal with surface water run-off from the properties up the road. I, therefore, trust that the council takes into consideration the points which I must raise.

My strong objections to the proposal are based on the following:

Surface Water Drainage and Foul Water Waste, and flooding risk to neighbouring property (as pertains to DP42)

Firstly, the area on lower Cuckfield Road is prone to annual flooding; the names of the properties reflecting this, eg Streams Farm, Leigh Watermill, Pondlye Barn. Since we took possession of our own property on Cuckfield Road, we have experienced persistent flooding which, despite having invested considerable monies in flood defences, still produces water which covers Cuckfield Road at times. At present, despite hosepipe bans across the Southeast, running water is constantly present between the proposed caravan site and our own property.

The proposal would necessitate disposal of foul water from five homes (a clear, legal plan of the location for the septic tank still appears to have been overlooked). This water would be channelled into an area which is already experiencing annual, seasonal flooding in winter and early spring at a time when slippery, icy roads are already posing a risk to drivers; this would be in addition to the environmental pollution which would arise, owing to the sizeable increase of inhabitants, producing this waste. The proposed site aims to accommodate a number which would result in a substantial increase to our current population but there is no legal, clear, or concise plan for human waste disposal. No property on this road has access to mains sewage; it is incumbent upon the local residents to provide for and maintain our own paths of waste to prevent environmental destruction. A lack of attention to this most salient detail points to a clear lack of regard for the present health and environmental welfare of the locale.

Warmer, wetter winters are becoming the norm in the UK and trees, such as ash and horse chestnut, would have drained much water away. Ash trees, however, are now suffering from die-back and many of the trees which may have accommodated surface water in the past have been removed at the mandate of Mid Sussex Council. Adding further residences with their ensuing waste will create environmental harm to an already precarious situation. The plan ear-marks a number of trees for felling. Surely this will only add to the present problem and make the road even less safe in winter months.

Access and Highway Safety

Secondly, the proposal would create a significant increase in traffic, including heavy vehicles for the transportation of mobile homes.

Cuckfield Road is colloquially known as “The Bumpy Road” by residents of Ansty, Burgess Hill, Cuckfield and Haywards Heath. One only has to stand and watch car owners nervously navigating this road to see its effect. The recent fatal crash [REDACTED] which occurred on Cuckfield Road, Ansty, on 30 August 2022, is a tragic and visceral reminder of the perils of this country road and how easily vehicles may veer out of control with the most dire of consequences. The road is often used by cyclists, dog walkers, runners and walkers, as it contains links to a network of public footpaths (despite which, as per above, are prone to annual flooding). Additional, heavy vehicles pose a real danger to these road users, as well as to other drivers.

Change of Use of rural land to commercial business

Additional to all of this, the road is frequently used by local shepherds for the movement of livestock. Residents on Cuckfield Road are not unused to ushering sheep alongside of the farmers, moving from one field along Cuckfield Road to another at a distance of ¼ to ½ a mile at times. Whilst this is an endearing and charming part of the nature of Cuckfield Road, one cannot fail to anticipate that frequent movement of large traveller vehicles presents a real threat of loss of life to sheep and cattle, as well as posing economic loss to farmers. The introduction of a significant commercial enterprise to this residential community will take a toll. Mr Dighton has made it clear that he is comfortably domiciled elsewhere and the caravan park is purely a business enterprise, as he has no intention to reside there himself. This proposal constitutes a drastic change of use, setting a deeply concerning precedent in terms of harm and distress to our natural areas.

I understand that Mr Dighton received retrospective planning permission for the driveway which he installed into the property a few years ago. This appears to have been granted on the assumption that the road is safe (which we have tragically seen is not the case) and that there is no flooding (to which I can clearly attest is not the case). Mr Dighton’s plan shows a significant increase in the size of the access way for this proposed caravan site which acknowledges the size of vehicles which he expects to be coming and going, despite the awareness he now has of the road’s tragic safety records and the obvious physical evidence of constant flooding (if one goes to look).

I further wish to add a note of historical precedence: the proposed property forms part of a larger portion of land originally owned by [REDACTED]. Each property has retained an identical covenant which [REDACTED] placed upon the lands stating that no wheeled domiciles or caravans would be allowed. This covenant remains in place and certainly sets a clear, historical precedent which should be respected by Mr Dighton, as it has been respected by the permanent residents of Cuckfield Road.

I very much hope that the council will reject the proposal on the grounds which I have stated above.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Leigh Watermill Farm,
Cuckfield Road
Ansty
West Sussex RH17 5AL