

Sarah Valentine

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 November 2023 15:55
To: planninginfo
Subject: Planning Application DM 23/2610

[REDACTED]
Land south of Hanlye Lane, Longacre Crescent, Cuckfield, West Sussex (Sigma)

I am writing to set out my objections to the proposed building application for 55 houses on the above site.

Firstly, the proposed site is green field land, unlike the now demolished special needs school next to the site in question, where Sigma have been building 13 new homes. Once developed, these two fields will never be open land again.

This site is adjacent to an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the houses, which would be very visible on the ridge at the top of this AONB, will noticeably affect the views and landscape.

Hanlye Lane is a narrow, winding old road, with shortened views of on-coming traffic and the proposed exit from the site, for what will be a very large number of vehicles, on a regular basis, will present a severe hazard.

The whole site, with it's public footpaths, and access from the top end of Cuckfield right the way through to Haywards Heath, is an important amenity for the public in general, and the residents of Cuckfield in particular. Residents walk their dogs, children play, cycle and climb trees here, people bird watch, and generally enjoy the surroundings. Runners and joggers use the fields and people in general have a good time.

It provides food and shelter for all kinds of wildlife, and I personally have spent many years regularly recording numbers of birds and mammals for Sussex Wildlife Trust, and the British Trust for Ornithology. Other volunteers have collect information relating to moths and, butterflies for Butterfly Conservation,, wild orchids, and Ancient Trees for the Wildlife Trust. All this information is collected and forwarded to various governmental departments ,where it is used to influence government policy on the countryside.

This site was originally not included in the local Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan, which tried to protect the site with it's far-reaching and iconic views, but the value of the site was considered to be worth more if developed, than if left in it's natural state, so it has been given the go-ahead in spite of the Neighbourhood Plan.

According to a recent article in the Observer, there are 248,000 properties (almost a quarter of a million) in England which have been empty for months. Housing experts say that tens of thousands of these properties could be re-purposed as affordable homes. So – why devour our precious green field sites when so many homes are waiting to be returned to their proper use, instead of waiting empty?

I find it hard to believe that such natural amenity as this lovely, open space, which means so much to so many people, can be gobbled up and put through the developers' mincer.

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