

Sarah Valentine

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 January 2026 18:03
To: planninginfo
Subject: Planning Application DM/25/2223

[REDACTED]

Dear Sirs

I am writing to lodge an objection to the planning application DM/25/2223. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

The proposed development pertains to a property located in a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The property has been used over the course of many years for a temporary structure used by the Church of Scientology for a singular annual event. The applicant now seeks to build permanent infrastructure to facilitate the event taking place. I feel that this should not be granted.

The temporary structure built for the event in 2025 has been seen to cause significant scarring to the land when it was removed. The ground has been affected by the many weeks the “temporary” structure was up, a structure that dwarves the permanent buildings at Saint Hill Manor. Drone images taken by other locals and readily shared on social media show what should be lush green fields looking more like brownfield sites due to the damage caused by the massive marquee. As well as being an AONB, the fields in question are in an area known to be habitat to the Great Crested Newt, an endangered species.

Your own AONB Strategy Plan states that “There is a presumption that planning permission should be refused for major development in AONBs other than in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest.” This proposed development does not fit into that description. There are other locations within the county that large events could be held at without damaging the local landscape, not least the South of England Showgrounds.

In 2024, the temporary structure was constructed without the necessary permissions, resulting in a contravention notice. In 2023, the event was held without adhering to the regulations of the premises license. Furthermore, the applicant has consistently disregarded requests from West Sussex Highways regarding planting on public land adjacent to their entrance, including disregarding restrictions placed on their permissions to ensure safety along the public highway.

I mention these instances to highlight my concerns that any attempt to impose restrictions or limitations on the planning would likely be disregarded and it should therefore be rejected outright. Given the applicant’s history with the planning department, I am skeptical that permission granted with provisos would be effective.

The applicant demonstrates a lack of respect and concern for the rules established by local authorities, who represent the interests of all county residents. They have repeatedly demonstrated a lack of collaboration with the local community, disregarding our concerns when they conflict with their preferences. There are numerous objections to the event itself, such as noise and light pollution, traffic management issues, and the general disruption to the local area during their annual event. Even without these, however, I cannot discern a compelling reason for constructing such infrastructure when it could be held elsewhere. We designate Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty for a reason, to allow such a development within one would seem to ignore why the land was assigned such in the first place.

Regards,

