

Dear Ma'am,

My name is Hayley and I have been a resident of Cuckfield for nine years. During that time, I have served as Chair of the Women's Institute, participated in the Community Speedwatch Scheme and supported a number of local organisations and societies. Like many of those speaking today, I am not a planning expert or legal professional. I am simply a resident who cares deeply about this community and the impact this proposal may have upon it.

Today I would like to focus on the cumulative pressure that a development of this scale is likely to place on local infrastructure and public services.

Many of the services relied upon by residents are already under considerable strain. Our local GP surgery has been closed to new patients for many years, and waiting times for appointments can stretch to in excess of 4 weeks. Access to NHS dentistry is becoming increasingly limited, with patients being encouraged to move to private provision. Residents regularly experience traffic congestion on roads that are already struggling to cope with existing demand, alongside ongoing issues with road maintenance, closures and diversions.

As per Mr Andy Burton – Chair of Cuckfield Parish Council commented this morning, utility services are also a concern. As a resident I can attest myself to the considerable interruptions to water supply and power outages. Weekly in some cases and increasingly so over the summer months, we now keep a store of batteries and water on hand – ‘just in case’. This raises questions about the capacity and resilience of existing infrastructure to accommodate significant additional demand.

Education provision is another area that deserves careful consideration. Local schools are already operating at or near capacity, and families can face challenges securing places within their local community.

It is important to remember that this proposal is not simply about the construction of 1,450 houses. It is about the population those homes will bring and the resulting demand on services.

Thousands of additional residents, additional vehicles on local roads, and additional children requiring education and healthcare provision will inevitably increase pressure on infrastructure that many residents already consider to be stretched.

I would also ask that careful consideration be given to the issue of affordable housing. While I recognise the importance of increasing housing supply, there can often be a significant difference between what is defined as "affordable" within a planning application and what is genuinely affordable for local people seeking to live and work in the area. The provision of affordable housing should be assessed not only against policy requirements, but also against the realities of local incomes and housing costs.

I wish to make clear that many residents are not opposed to development in principle. We understand that new homes are needed and that communities must evolve over time. However, development should be supported by infrastructure, services and facilities capable of meeting the needs of both existing and future residents.

I therefore respectfully ask that, when considering this appeal, you give careful weight to whether the necessary infrastructure, public services and community resources can realistically

accommodate a development of this scale, and whether sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that they can.

Thank you for your time and consideration.