

Steve Ashdown
Head of Development Management
Planning Services, Mid Sussex District Council
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 1SS

Dear Steve

Land east of Ansty, Cuckfield Bypass, Cuckfield

Revised Information for Planning Application– Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Statement of Conformity (SoC) Letter (April 2026)

PINS REF: 6002030

LPA Ref: DM/23/2866

1) Introduction and Project Background

In November 2023, Fairfax Acquisitions Ltd ('the Applicant') (now 'the Appellant') submitted an outline planning application (all matters reserved except for access) for the redevelopment of land to the east of Ansty ('the site'). to create a new Garden Community, ('the Proposed Development'). Planning application reference: DM/23/2866. That Application is the subject of a current appeal (PINS Ref: 6002030).

In line with good practice and general requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, this EIA Statement of Conformity describes the changes to the submitted outline planning application and reviews the implications for its Environmental Statement and Non-Technical Summary.

The Proposed Development includes for the redevelopment of land to the east of Ansty to create a new Garden Community, comprising of the erection of up to 1,450 homes (including 30% affordable housing), up to 90 residential care units (C2 class), a primary school, a special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) school, health hub, sports facilities including all weather hockey pitches and tennis centre, allotments, retail, community and employment uses together with ancillary and associated development including new and enhanced pedestrian/cycle routes, open spaces, and landscaping.

Under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, SI 2017/571 (as amended) ('the EIA Regulations') a statutory environmental impact assessment (EIA) was undertaken, and an Environmental Statement (referred to hereafter as the November 2023 ES) was prepared by Temple Group Ltd¹ on behalf of the Applicant, and submitted in support of the application.

An EIA statement of conformity (dated 27th May 2025) was prepared and submitted, which considered an amendment to the red line boundary to incorporate the additional northeastern element of the A272; and the relocation of the western access by 100 metres along the A272, in a northeasterly direction

¹ Temple Group were acquired in 2025 by, and now operate as, Ramboll UK Ltd.

away from the village of Ansty. The May 2025 EIA SoC concluded that these changes were considered to be non-material in review of the scope, content and conclusions of the November 2023 ES. The conclusions within the ES in relation to likely significant effects, residual effects and mitigation measures remain valid and unchanged.

The purpose of this EIA Statement of Conformity is to document any changes to the environmental effects associated with further amendments proposed to the parameter plans since 27 May 2025.

2) Proposed amendments

An *Alternative Plans Note* has been prepared by Fabrik (April 2026) which describes the proposed amendments. The following amendments have been made to the Proposed Development:

- The 4.5 hectares (ha) of land proposed to accommodate the two full-time equivalent (2FE) primary school and separate SEND provision (the 'land for education purposes') has been moved to the east, allowing an approximate 50-60m landscape buffer along the western edge of the site to the A272.
- The land for education purposes replaces the land parcel previously proposed to accommodate the 90 x C2 residential care units.
- A specific location of 90 x C2 residential care units is no longer included within the land use parameter plan. Rather, these units will be distributed across the remainder of the development parcels, with a specific location(s) to be agreed at the reserved matters stage.
- The area previously proposed to accommodate the 90 x C2 residential care units was classified as 'up to 2 storey (up to 10.0m ridge height)', is now 'zone for school building up to 10.0m ridge height'.
- The remainder of the area previously proposed to accommodate the 90 x C2 residential care units was classified as 'up to 1.5 storey (up to 8.0m ridge height) is now a 'zone for school building, up to 6.0m ridge height' (a decrease in maximum heights of two metres).
- The densities across the remainder of the site have been altered to accommodate the relocation of the 90 x C2 residential care units maintaining the total housing capacity of the site overall.

The following parameter plans have been amended:

- D3012-FAB-00-XX-DR-Y-036_DI16_Parameter Plan_Access and Movement;
- D3012-FAB-00-XX-DR-Y-037-DI11_Parameter Plan_GI;
- D3012-FAB-00-XX-DR-Y-039-DI16_Parameter Plan_Land Use;
- D3012-FAB-00-XX-DR-Y-040-DI14_Parameter Plan_Building Heights;
- D3012-FAB-00-XX-DR-Y-045-DI15_Parameter Plan_Density; and
- D3012-FAB-00-XX-DR-Y-009_DI17_Concept Masterplan.

3) Environmental Review of the November 2023 ES

Ramboll (previously Temple Group) as the Lead EIA Consultant for the planning application, has undertaken a review of the amendments to the Proposed Development to confirm if the conclusions of the November 2023 ES remain valid.

The November 2023 ES took note of relevant policy and guidance at the time. There have not been any material changes to legislation, policy or guidance for the technical assessments undertaken within the ES that would materially affect the assessments or residual effects presented in the 2024 ES. In the context of the revised information, the existing assessments can be considered valid in terms of the legislation, policy and guidance applied.

The baseline for the ES was determined from the conditions on and surrounding the site from 2022 to 2023. The baseline conditions in the intervening period are not considered to have materially changed from those assessed and the baseline assessed in the November 2023 ES. There have also been no changes to the list of committed developments considered as part of the cumulative effects assessments presented in the November 2023 ES, that have the potential to materially change the conclusions of the ES. In view of the above, it is considered that the baseline can still be considered representative and valid in the context of the revised information and the assessment of cumulative effects remains valid.

The changes are considered to have no material impact on the construction programme, construction activities and tasks and the construction assumptions that informed the November 2023 ES.

The changes made do not propose any increase in building heights compared to what was previously proposed and assessed and reported in the November 2023 ES. The change, a reduction in maximum heights is not considered to introduce any new or materially different significant effects. The replacement of the 90 x C2 residential care units with a school site has reduced the maximum building ridge heights in this plot from 8 m to 6 m high, a decrease of 2 m. This is likely to reduce the landscape and visual impact slightly. Therefore, the effects reported in the November 2023 ES in respect to effects on landscape remains valid and materially unchanged.

Regarding the change in densities, the Applicant has taken care to maintain lower densities in sensitive areas, such as at the rural edge of the site and around listed buildings, and densities have been maximised in the more enclosed parts of the site. The exact location of the 90 x C2 residential care units is a matter to be determined at the reserved matters application stage.

Overall, the increase in density of development within plots has not resulted in any increase in the overall number of residential dwellings for the Proposed Development. It is considered that there will be no change to the socio-economic effects, traffic generation or any other environmental effects as reported in the November 2023 ES. The conclusions of the November 2023 ES therefore remain valid and unchanged.

The potential increase in density across to accommodate all plots has also not resulted in an increase in the maximum building heights assessed as part of the November 2023 ES. Therefore, there would be no material change to the landscape and visual effects reported in the November 2023 ES, and the conclusions of the November 2023 ES remains valid and materially unchanged. The inclusion of a landscape buffer would provide a greater set back between the school sites and the A272. This is not considered to result in any material changes in relation to traffic, air quality and noise effects reported in the November 2023 ES.

Furthermore, the removal of primary and SEND schools areas, and play/pitches from the landscape buffer area adjacent to the A272 would provide greater separation distance between the built

development from the National Landscape boundary. Furthermore, the proposed amendments would mitigate further and reduce the visual effects of the Proposed Development to the west of the Proposed Development. The effects reported in the November 2023 ES in respect to effects on landscape and visual are considered to remain materially unchanged and valid.

4) Conclusions

In view of the above, it is concluded that the proposed amendments have no material bearing upon the likely significant environmental effects reported within the November 2023 ES and Non-Technical Summary. The conclusions within the November 2023 ES and Non-Technical Summary in relation to likely significant effects, residual effects and mitigation measures remain valid and unchanged. Furthermore, the ES is considered to remain comprehensive, enabling informed decision-making, and can be relied upon by the planning authority when determining the planning application.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "H Parker".

Harry Parker

Director – EIA Property, Ramboll