

CAVENDISH

Insight. Influence. Creativity.

Statement of Community Involvement

Ansty Garden Community

Created for Fairfax

November 2023

The ideas and information contained within this report and any other associated documents are of a confidential nature and must not be passed on to any third party without the prior written consent of Cavendish Consulting.

Contents.

Executive Summary.....	3
1. Introduction.....	4
2. Background.....	5
2.1 The site.....	5
2.2 Proposal.....	6
3. Engagement.....	8
3.1 National Planning Policy Framework (September 2023).....	8
3.2 Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) Statement of Community Involvement.....	8
3.3 Contacting statutory bodies.....	10
3.4 Engagement with stakeholders.....	10
3.5 Consultation newsletter.....	11
3.6 In-person exhibition.....	12
3.7 Virtual public consultation.....	12
4. Feedback Received.....	14
4.1 Feedback overview.....	14
4.2 Feedback Forms.....	16
4.3 Other Feedback.....	24
5. Response to comments.....	26
6. Conclusion.....	29
7. Appendices.....	30
7.1 Stakeholder email.....	30
7.2 Consultation reminder stakeholder letter.....	31
7.3 Exhibition invitation newsletter.....	32
7.4 Online consultation screenshots.....	34
7.5 Feedback form.....	36
7.6 Exhibition boards.....	38

Executive Summary.

Fairfax (hereafter “the Applicant”) is bringing forward outline plans for a new, sustainable, and self-sufficient neighbourhood at Ansty Garden Community.

The proposed development is located to the north and east of Ansty village and covers around 100 hectares (250 acres) of land. The Applicant’s masterplan envisions a new Garden Community, including 1,450 new homes on the land to the east and a separate Parkland Reserve on the land to the north of Ansty.

The Applicant is committed to consulting with the local community regarding its proposals. A full pre-application consultation process has been undertaken in advance of a planning application being submitted to Mid Sussex District Council.

Residents and stakeholders were given the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the proposals at all stages of our public consultation via a consultation website (including a virtual exhibition) and two in-person exhibitions at a local venue. A Freephone information line and a feedback email address were also made available throughout the course of the pre-application consultation, for interested parties to receive further information and to enable people to provide their feedback to the project team.

This has ensured that the local community has had an opportunity to understand the proposals, discuss them with members of the project team and provide their feedback before the submission of a planning application.

The virtual public exhibition was hosted from **Monday 11th September** until **Monday 9th October 2023** through the project website **ansty.consultationonline.co.uk**. Two physical public exhibitions were also held on **Wednesday 20th September** and **Saturday 23rd September** at **Ansty Village Hall, Deaks Lane, Ansty, RH17 5AS**. Members of the project team were available to answer questions on both days.

On **Monday 11th September, 2,045 local residential and 106 business addresses** close to the site were sent a two-page newsletter which included a direct link to the project website, and the virtual consultation. The newsletter included an invitation to attend the public exhibition on **20th and 23rd September 2023**.

Online feedback forms were available as part of the virtual exhibition for attendees to record their views. Hard copies of the feedback form were also available at the public exhibition for visitors to record their views.

The Applicant has reviewed all the feedback received to date, and the main comments raised by the local community have been addressed within this document and the wider material submitted as part of the planning application. Following submission of the application, the Applicant will ensure that interested parties and key stakeholders remain informed and updated regarding the proposals.

1. Introduction.

- 1.1 The Applicant is committed to consulting stakeholders and the local community about its planning applications and has a strong track record of communicating with members of the local community, community groups, local councillors and other relevant third-party stakeholders about its ambitions.
- 1.2 This document has been produced with the aim of clearly and concisely highlighting the community consultation undertaken by the Applicant in respect of its proposal for the site. It provides a chronological account of the consultation activity that has been undertaken within the pre-application stages of the planning application and the activity that the Applicant proposes to undertake post submission.
- 1.3 In order to assist with the community consultation process, the Applicant appointed Cavendish Consulting, a specialist communications consultancy, to form part of its wider project team for the proposed redevelopment.
- 1.4 All feedback received is accounted for and represented within this document.

2. Background.

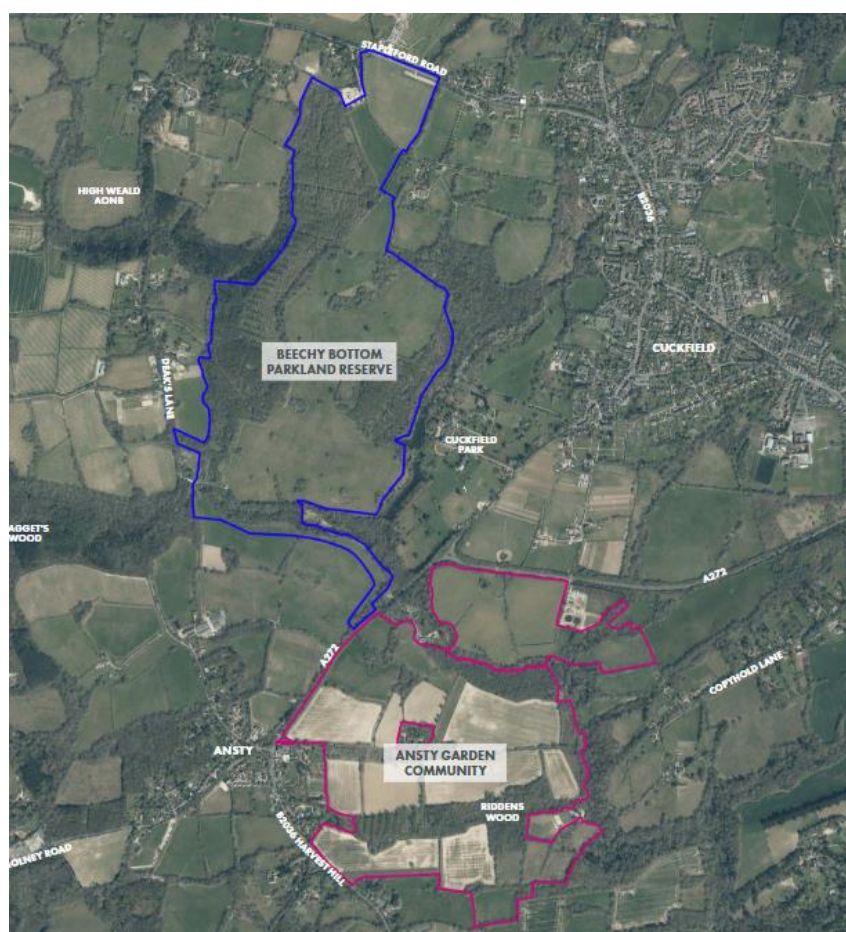
2.1 The site

2.1.1 Ansty Garden Community

The proposal site for the Ansty Garden Community is located to the east of Ansty and south-east of the A272 and covers around 100 hectares of land, outlined in pink in the indicative aerial view of the site below. It predominantly comprises farmland, punctuated by woodlands and waterways. Within the centre of the site, but outside the site boundary lie the Listed buildings of The Old Place & The Barn House, as well as access to a handful of properties.

2.1.2 Beechy Bottom Parkland Reserve

The proposed Beechy Bottom Parkland Reserve, outlined in blue on the aerial view below, is located to the north of Ansty and west of Cuckfield. It currently comprises around 80 hectares (198 acres) of farmland and 7 hectares (17 acres) of recreational grassland, including part of the Whitemans Green recreation ground, which is home to Haywards Heath Rugby Football Club, Cuckfield Cosmos Football Club and other formal pitches.



Site Location Plan

2.2 Proposal

2.2.1 The Applicant will be submitting two applications to Mid Sussex District Council for the sustainable development of this site.

2.2.2 Outline planning will be sought (All matters reserved except for access) 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 (C2 units), a primary school, new SEND school, 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

2.2.3 A change of use of farmland and woodland to parkland reserve will also be sought, to include public access and instigation of long-term management and rewilding regime, including establishment of pedestrian and cycle tracks, with new pedestrian and cycle access points off Cuckfield Road to the south and Staplefield Road to the north. Proposals to include the addition of two wooden viewing platforms. Sports pitches at Beech Farm Field to remain in sports use.

2.2.4 Highways and access

As part of the proposed garden community, three new vehicular access points would be created, two which would link directly to the A272 and the other that would link to the southern B2036, reducing the need for car movements to and from the site travelling through Ansty village.

Sustainable travel will be at the heart of the proposed garden community in Ansty, comprising new bus, pedestrian and cycle connections throughout the neighbourhood, as well as a mobility hubs that will link to the wider Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath towns. Additionally, the proposal will incorporate green paths and cycling routes that will connect to existing pedestrian and cycle paths, including Public Rights of Way (PRoW).

The proposed garden community would be largely self-sufficient, and will adhere to the 20-minute neighbourhood principles, with a community hub at the heart of the development that will seek to accommodate the majority of residents' needs. It is hoped that this strategy will encourage walking and cycling first, reducing the need to depend on cars to travel, and will be for the benefit of the Garden Community as well as the surrounding population.

2.2.5 Landscaping and trees

Alongside the 87 hectare country park, the safeguarding of ancient woodland has been prioritised to ensure its protection. The proposed development parcels would be located at least 15m away from the Ancient Woodland, providing a generous buffer for these important ecological areas. In addition, to connect the site, bridges are proposed across

the woodland areas to reduce construction footprint as much as possible. The proposals have been developed to create a living around nature environment, with strong green infrastructure retained and enhanced throughout the garden community.

The Applicant's proposals would seek to also retain the important mature trees and hedgerows, as much as is possible throughout the site and boundaries to continue to provide biodiversity habitats. Other notable ecological assets near the site include the Great Wood and Copyhold Hanger Local Wildlife Site. As part of the planning application, a full Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan has been submitted to the Council.

Alongside this, the Applicant is proposing to deliver a new, publicly accessible Parkland Reserve on the northern parcel of land. This would comprise of the restoration of nearly 250 acres of farmed parkland, semi-ancient woodland and replanted woodland, creating an exemplar biodiverse habitat. Whilst there are currently Public Rights of Way over parts of this space, the majority is privately owned land which is inaccessible to the public. By delivering new homes to the east of Ansty village, this important green space between Cuckfield and Ansty will be preserved and enhanced for the benefit of the community in perpetuity.

2.2.6 **Social value for the whole community**

The proposed development of Ansty Garden Community would create a sustainable and self-sufficient new neighbourhood that feels responsible for looking after the environment in which they live. The proposals would incorporate important new facilities for the benefit of new and existing residents, that would complement the existing amenities available in Ansty, including:

- A new 2.5 FE primary school and early years nursery
- A new Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) school
- A health hub including a doctors surgery
- Dedicated on site hockey and tennis sports facilities
- A local centre, where space for community events could be held
- Extensive links to the green spaces throughout the development and to the wider area
- A new Parkland Reserve for the benefit of the whole community, both existing and new

The new development would foster a sense of belonging, culture and pride of place.

3. Engagement.

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework (September 2023)

- 3.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's policies for England and outlines how these policies should be applied.
- 3.1.2 The Applicant has paid regard to the NPPF at Paragraph 39 when it states that *"early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties."*
- 3.1.3 It goes on to highlight at Paragraph 40 that *"Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications."*
- 3.1.4 Paragraph 41 outlines that the Local Planning Authority should encourage other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage, noting that *"the more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits."*

3.2 Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) Statement of Community Involvement

- 3.2.1 Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) formally adopted its current Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in 2019.
- 3.2.2 MSDC adopted SCI sets out that applicants engage with individuals, local communities, and other stakeholders should be written in plain English, and should reflect these six principles:

Principle 1: *Be timely The community should be involved as early as possible in the decision-making process when there is more potential to make a difference. Usually it is best to 'front load' consultation activity and use it to identify potential issues and options. However, consultation can be effectively used to confirm the level of support for particular courses of action too. Reasonable timescales should be given to the distribution of information and for responses to consultation. Potential participants should be given some notice of an impending community involvement exercise that could affect them, wherever possible.*

Principle 2: Be inclusive A key principle of community involvement is that it should be accessible to all those who wish to take part. This may well vary according to the nature of the matter being looked at. Reasonable effort must be made to ensure a representative cross-section of the community is involved including seldom heard groups and groups defined as having protected characteristics under Equalities Legislation. In designing each exercise, the Council will endeavour to understand and accommodate the different ways people want to get involved, including online and via social media, where possible.

Principle 3: Be transparent The quality of information provided to potential consultees must be clear, honest, accurate and unbiased. All written materials should use plain English and be jargon free. It is also important that the material makes it very clear what can be influenced and changed by the participant's suggestions and comments. Likewise, it needs to explain how and when decisions will be made, following the end of the consultation period.

Principle 4: Be respectful of each other's views Community involvement exercises will usually uncover a range of views, some of which are in conflict or contradictory. The Council will listen to all the views it receives and seek to balance their relative merits, drawing on other information from the evidence base where that is available. Where the opinion being put forward is not clear it will seek to better understand what is being said. However, it is for all participants in the process to respect the views of other people and encourage a variety of contributions.

Principle 5: Be efficient The Council will work with other organisations, where possible, to streamline consultation processes. Likewise, it will look to use existing networks to save time and resources, and to reduce duplication and 'consultation fatigue'. Town and Parish Councils can have a particularly important role in this. It is also important to ensure that community involvement exercises are proportionate to the scale and importance of the issue/matter under consideration (there is no 'off the shelf' way of conducting such exercises that can be applied to all matters). This will ensure that the Council's limited resources are spent as wisely as possible.

Principle 6: Be clear about results It is essential that those who have contributed to a community involvement exercise are informed in a timely way about the results of the consultation and kept informed of further opportunities for being involved. This will often be in summary form, but it must be clear and objective in its presentation. Similarly, the Council will publicise the decision(s) it came to and, where this differs from the results of the consultation, it will explain why. In this way, it will demonstrate how the consultation exercise has affected the decision at hand.

- 3.2.3 Government guidance and MSDC SCI encourage pre-application discussions and community involvement. Therefore, prior to submitting the formal planning application for the site, the Applicant undertook a detailed programme of community consultation, as outlined in this Statement of Community Involvement.

3.3 Contacting statutory bodies

3.3.1 Pre-application discussions were held with officers at Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) and West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) and will continue throughout the submission and determination period.

3.3.2 These discussions have been invaluable in helping to ensure that the planning application as submitted is consistent with local planning policy.

3.4 Engagement with stakeholders

3.4.1 A notification of the community consultation process was issued to relevant stakeholders on Monday 11th September 2023. The letter invited recipients to attend the public exhibition and offered a meeting with the project team should this be of interest. The letter was issued to:

- Leader of MSDC
- Deputy Leader of the Council
- Cabinet Member for Sustainable Economy and Housing
- Cuckfield, Bolney & Ansty Ward Member
- Cuckfield, Bolney & Ansty Ward Member
- MSDC Planning Committee Members
- Ansty and Staplefield Parish Council
- Cuckfield Parish Council
- Cuckfield and Lucastes Division Member
- Member of Parliament for Mid Sussex
- Head of Planning at MSDC
- Head of Planning Policy at MSDC

3.4.2 **A copy of the notification email can be found at Appendix 7.1.**

3.4.3 A follow up email was distributed on Wednesday 20 September, reminding stakeholders of the exhibition and again offering a meeting with the team should it be of interest.

3.4.4 **A copy of the reminder email can be found at Appendix 7.2.**

3.5 Consultation newsletter

3.5.1 The Applicant undertook a hybrid approach to its pre-application consultation, with a mixture of in-person and online opportunities to engage and record feedback.

3.5.2 An invitation newsletter was distributed to 2,045 residential households and 106 businesses in the local area providing information about the proposals for the site and how to take part in the consultation programme. The invitations were distributed by first class post on Monday 11th September 2023. The following map illustrates the distribution area.



Newsletter distribution area

3.5.3 The two-page A4 invitation newsletter contained the following information:

- Background to the site
- Indicative site location plan
- Details of the project website and virtual consultation
- Invitation to attend the public exhibition
- An overview of the proposals
- Benefits of the proposed development
- Email and freephone contact details

3.5.4 **A copy of the invitation newsletter can be found at Appendix 7.3.**

3.5.5 The invitation newsletter also displayed details of the Freephone information line, email address and the project's dedicated website address to allow people to request further information.

3.6 In-person exhibition

3.6.1 The Applicant held two in-person exhibition events on between **4pm - 7pm** on **20th September 2023** and between **10am - 2pm** on **23rd September 2023** at **Ansty Village Hall, Deaks Lane, Ansty** for those wishing to view the plans in person and ask questions on the proposals.

3.6.2 Feedback forms with prepaid return envelopes were available at the in-person consultations, to ensure the consultation was inclusive.

3.6.3 Technical consultants from key disciplines, including master planning, transport, landscaping and planning were in attendance.

3.6.4 The exhibitions were attended by a total of **176 individuals**, including local councillors and a prospective MP candidate.

3.7 Virtual public consultation

3.7.1 A website was set up displaying information about the proposals and is being updated throughout the public consultation and planning process. The website is hosted at ansty.consultationonline.co.uk

3.7.2 The website address was printed on the exhibition invitation newsletter, was linked on the exhibition boards via a QR code and relevant correspondence.

3.7.3 A copy of the consultation website can be found at **Appendix 7.4**.

3.7.4 The website home page was viewed a total of **484 times** throughout the consultation process.

3.7.5 The Applicant held a virtual public exhibition of the draft plans, which was hosted on the project website, that allowed the local community to both explore the initial proposals in detail and respond to them with their views, comments, and suggestions.

3.7.6 The virtual public exhibition was open for comments on the project's website between **Monday 11th September** to **Monday 9th October 2023**. The virtual consultation displayed details about the proposal, which included information about:

- Location of the site
- Proposed site layout
- Overview of the proposals
- Approach to design
- On-site infrastructure
- Beechy Bottom Parkland Reserve

- Open space and biodiversity
- Transport and access
- Sustainability
- Drainage
- How to provide feedback

3.7.7 Local residents could provide feedback electronically by submitting the feedback form on the project website or email via feedback@consultation-online.co.uk with comments or questions. Local residents were also able to call the freephone information line on 0800 298 7040.

4. Feedback Received.

4.1 Feedback overview

- 4.1.1 The following review includes all comments received up to Monday 9th October 2023, including online, public exhibition and postal responses. 484 unique visitors viewed the consultation website during the consultation period.
- 4.1.2 During the consultation period, the Applicant received **188 feedback responses** concerning the proposal for Ansty Garden Community. It comprised **108 online feedback forms, 71 physical feedback forms** along with **seven emails** and **two telephone calls**. Of the feedback forms received, five which were in objection to the plans were not GDPR compliant, and therefore have not been included as part of the overall analysis.
- 4.1.3 Questions outlined in the feedback forms related to desired features and improvements of the site. A number of residents nonetheless approached the consultation from a principle-of-development perspective and these comments are captured in the analysis below.
- 4.1.4 The key concerns raised by residents in response to the proposals is a belief that Ansty and Cuckfield does not need further housing and the proposed Garden Community is too much for the site to be able to accommodate. Furthermore, some objectors also cited concerns regarding an increase in traffic and safety of drivers along local roads. The key themes of feedback were as follows:

Themes
Insufficient road infrastructure / impact on traffic
Overdevelopment of a greenfield
Development is not wanted by the local community
Existing homes under construction are already impacting the area
Development is not needed with the homes already being delivered elsewhere
Merging of villages
Expansion to Haywards Heath undesirable
Homes are not affordable for local people
Insufficient affordable homes
Loss of character
Homes should be delivered elsewhere
Destruction of ancient woodland
Increased pressure on local resources
Services proposed are not needed in the community
Other local centres should be provided with a financial boost rather than a new one being created
The District Council already removed the site as being suitable
Issues around existing water supply
The country park will be used for excavation spoil

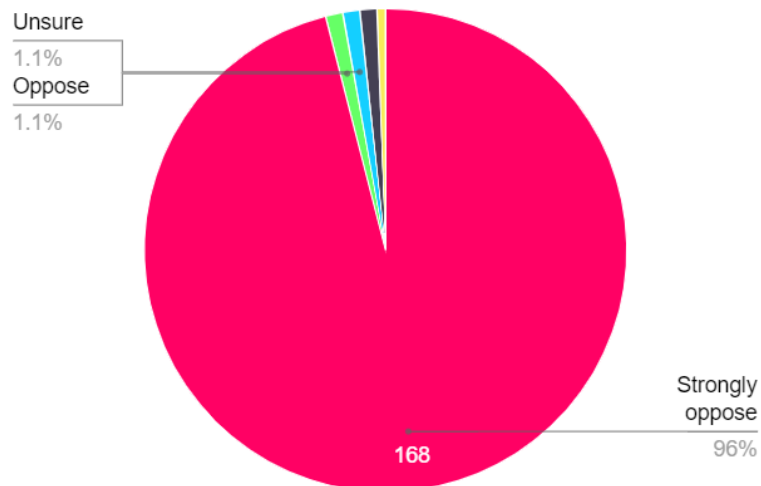
Proposals would not result in a BNG
A reduction of the number of homes proposed would be more sustainable
Suggestion of eco-homes would be more desirable
Country Park is not needed as already accessible
Use brownfield sites first
Land should be used for rewilding projects
Other projects have not delivered infrastructure proposed
Impact during construction
The development would increase surface water run off
Insufficient doctors' surgery provision currently
Insufficient parking for commuters from Haywards Heath Railway line
Loss of hamlet / village feel
Local leisure facilities are already oversubscribed
Parking difficulties in the existing area will be exacerbated
The development should utilise grey water
Existing electrical supply cannot cope
An additional secondary school will be needed for the proposed development
The Country Park will increase traffic and parking difficulties

4.1.5 The analysis will be divided into individual sections in order to address the specific question asked via the feedback form. As emails received were not in direct response to the questions on the feedback form, they have been analysed separately.

4.2 Feedback Forms

4.2.1 The feedback forms asked particular questions whilst the emails were an opportunity for free entry comment. As such, the correspondence is analysed separately below. The first part of the analysis relates to the **174 feedback forms**.

4.2.2 **To what extent do you support the proposals for the site?**



4.2.3 The multiple-choice question allowed residents to select one option. The most frequent answer was for “Strongly oppose” with 95.9% of residents selecting this option. “Support”, “Unsure”, and “Oppose” were all selected by 1.2%, with “Strongly support” selected the least amount with 0.6%.

4.2.4 *N.B. Not all respondents answered this question.*

4.2.5 The second part of this question allowed for comments on the proposal. Many residents took this section to set out their concerns over the development proposals. Below are examples of some of those comments.

Comments
“Only the worse idea of planning I’ve ever seen”
This monstrous proposal should remains OUT of the District Plan and stay OUT”
“Go away Fairfax. We do not need or want your money grabbing development”
“This whole development is not required”
This environmental vandalism should be rejected in total. Residents, council, parish council should stand strongly against it.
“Nobody wants this apart from the land owners and Fairfax – all for their financial gain”
“A glossy brochure will NOT persuade the local community this is a good thing!

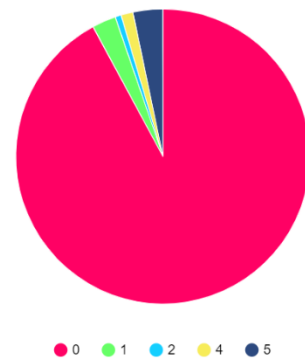
4.2.6 **Which element(s) of the proposed scheme do you consider to be of most value to the local area? Please rank according to your preference (5 = strongly preferred, 0 = not at all preferred)**

4.2.7 This question was split into eight separate questions where respondents could rank their preference on a scale with 5 = strongly preferred and 0 – not at all preferred. The result of these will be shown in eight separate parts.

4.2.8 *N.B. Not all respondents answered this question.*

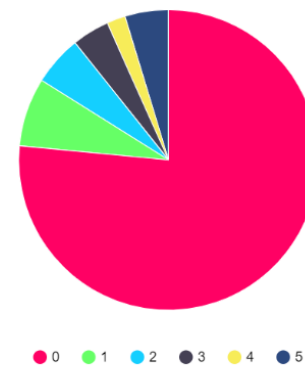
Up to 1,450 new dwellings (including affordable and specialist older persons housing)

Response	Frequency
0	90%
1	3%
2	2%
3	0%
4	2%
5	3%



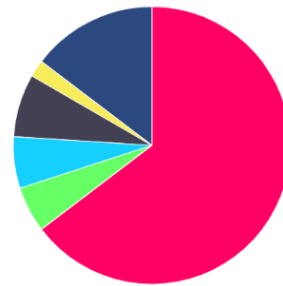
A new elderly care facility

Response	Frequency
0	75%
1	7%
2	6%
3	4%
4	2%
5	6%



A doctor's surgery

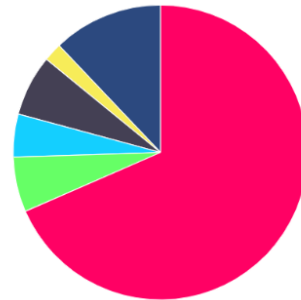
Response	Frequency
0	64%
1	5%
2	6%
3	7%
4	3%
5	15%



0 1 2 3 4 5

A primary school

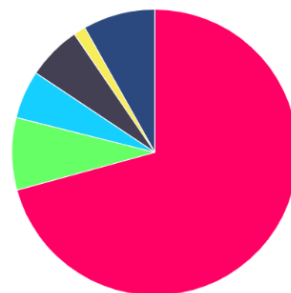
Response	Frequency
0	67%
1	6%
2	5%
3	7%
4	2%
5	13%



0 1 2 3 4 5

A new Special Educational Needs and Disability school

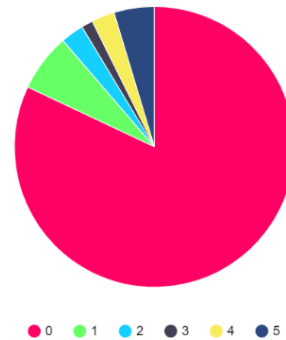
Response	Frequency
0	70%
1	8%
2	5%
3	6%
4	3%
5	8%



0 1 2 3 4 5

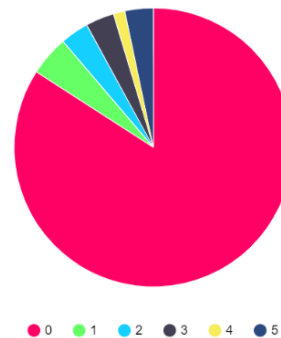
Space for amenities and facilities including shops, community areas and shared working spaces

Response	Frequency
0	81%
1	7%
2	3%
3	1%
4	3%
5	5%



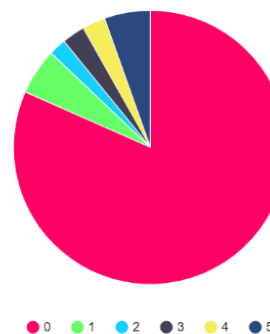
A sports hub, including hockey pitches and tennis courts, and a pavilion

Response	Frequency
0	83%
1	6%
2	3%
3	3%
4	2%
5	3%



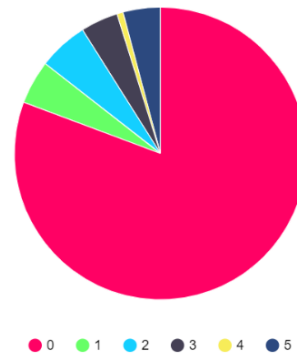
A mobility hub, encouraging sustainable travel throughout the area and reducing carbon emissions

Response	Frequency
0	82%
1	5%
2	2%
3	3%
4	3%
5	5%



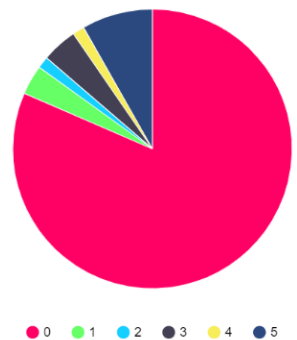
New public open spaces, including a country park, pedestrian and cycle routes, recreational space and dedicated dog walking areas

Response	Frequency
0	80%
1	5%
2	6%
3	4%
4	1%
5	4%



Over 20% biodiversity net gain across the site through careful management and establishment of habitats

Response	Frequency
0	82%
1	3%
2	1%
3	4%
4	2%
5	8%



4.2.9 The Applicant welcomes the responses to Question 2 and is pleased that a large number of residents were able to give their feedback on the emerging proposals. A significant amount of respondents used this section to protest against the development however, a significant amount of responses suggests support for aspects of the Applicant's proposed scheme such as:

- **15% support for a new doctors surgery**
- **8% support for a 20% biodiversity net gain across the site**
- **8% support for a new Specialist Educational Needs and Disability school**
- **13% support for a new 2 FE primary school**

4.2.10 **How do you think the layout could be improved?**

4.2.11 In this section the Applicant provided space for suggestions to how the current layout could be improved. Many of the residents suggested that the site should be left alone and remained untouched, with other residents suggesting that the site should be left as fields.

4.2.12 *N.B. Not all respondents answered this question.*

Response	Frequency
Leave the site alone/untouched	40
Reduce the number of houses	13
Cancelling it	11
Leave the site as fields	10
More infrastructure needed	8
Layout cannot be improved	5
Move elsewhere	2
More parking spaces for residents	1
More consideration for water and electricity supply	1

4.2.13 The most common themes raised in the comments for this question are summarised in the table below.

4.2.14 Below are examples of some of the comments received to date.

Leaving the site alone/untouched
"Leave this site untouched as it already provides what is needed"
"By not building on it at all"
"Leaving the site alone altogether and finding somewhere else to build your monstrosity"
Reduce the number of houses
"It should be much smaller. There is already biodiversity and open space, it's the countryside. Adding this many new homes will never improve upon that"
"Greatly reduce the number of houses. There are already approved plans for thousands of houses in the Burgess Hill Northern Arc Development, close by, and existing infrastructure cannot cope with more"
"A substantial reduction in the proposed plan (4-500 houses maximum) and reduction of 2/3 of its size to be a sustainable development for the area (able to cope with the additional needs of the residents)"
More infrastructure needed
"Development is far too large and will cause transport chaos with roundabouts on the Cuckfield Road and bypass"
"Increased traffic through local roads will be overwhelming: NEW roads are necessary Proposed how on local roads (crossing points will further hinder traffic flow - definite negative impact"
"Consideration to supply (water, electricity) as there are already supply issues. Traffic plan needs looking at as it will worsen already congestion problems"

4.2.15 **Are there any facilities or amenities that you feel would be beneficial for the local area, that you would like to see included in the proposals?**

4.2.16 The Applicant recognises the local interest of a medical centre, reflected in the number of comments on the matter. The most common themes raised in the comments for this question are summarised in the table below.

4.2.17 *N.B. Not all respondents answered this question.*

Response	Frequency
None or N/A	70
GP or doctors surgeries	8
Water treatment facilities	5
Improved paths and bridleways	3
Improved infrastructure	3
Another school	2
Swimming pool	1
Organic farm	1
Cycle links	1
Additional farmland	1

4.2.18 Below are examples of the comments received to date.

Doctors surgeries/doctors facilities
"Fund doctors surgery Growing need for pharmacy"
"New GP surgery"
"Schools, doctors surgery, hospital, public transport"
Water treatment facilities
"Double water treatment facilities to prevent pollution to local system and nature"
"Better water supplies to the area so we don't get shortages/outages!"
"WATER STORAGE AND CONSERVATION - ECO HOMES? - NO SEPARATE COUNTRY PARK - DENTIST"
Improved paths and bridleways
"This path could be used by all non-motorised users"
"New bridleways and links to existing bridleways. Bridleways in the new park. A pedestrian bridge over the Cuckfield by-pass"
"A multi-use path in the park - not for cyclists only. NMU - non motorised users"

4.2.19 **Do you have any other comments regarding the proposals?**

4.2.20 This question allowed residents to comment on any other aspect regarding the proposals. Whilst the majority of responses were in protest to the development being built, comments suggested an increase in infrastructure such as roads, water and electricity and disdain towards the provision of a country park as many used the existing Public Rights of Way across this part of the site.

4.2.21 Below are examples of some of the comments raised.

Concern over road infrastructure and traffic
"The roads are already at capacity and not in best state of repair. Thousands of additional daily journeys including heavy good delivering building materials, shopping, groceries etc would have a devastating impact on Cuckfield and Ansty and making it a dangerous place for children and vulnerable adults to be able to cross the road"
"The construction traffic is no doubt coming from the A23 to Ansty so I'm assuming we have to put up with HGV's for the duration of the development crashing through our village"
"Traffic from Bolney and Northern Arc of Burgess Hill has not started yet as developments not complete any traffic assessments have to consider what these will add plus the already congested area into Haywards Heath - there is nothing that benefits the local environment from this proposal"
Comments against the development as a whole
"The name 'Ansty Garden Village' is awful. It has a soviet-era vibe to it- like some sort of town planning nightmare. It would put me off buying a house there."
This is greed with large at the expense of local population"
Water infrastructure concerns
"Seriously concerned with the impact on environmental / already clogged road - mostly concerned as we have suffered for last 3 years with no water supply for up to one week at a time - i.e. Impact on basis amenities, water, sewage, electrics - won't make this any better. Massive problem for the elderly & sick if they don't have water."
"Infrastructure concerns S. Water is already incapable of giving us guaranteed water supply - 3 x no water for several days each time in last 3 years. Over population - roads already too busy"
"Water supply: too simply allow water authority to satisfy that would be abandoning your new homes owners too tremendous disappointment. Already loss of supply to new homes. Electricity supply is currently below expected to new houses - many power cuts already.
Comments regarding overcrowding in the local area
"I don't want it built at all. The area is already overcrowded and overbuilt with too much traffic and not enough water"
There is so much development happening with the Northern Ark that this development will put too much pressure on roads, water supply, secondary school, dentists, doctors (there are not enough doctors to fill positions in the local area). The village of Cuckfield would not cope with this quality of houses"
This is overdevelopment of a rural area leading to the joining up of Ansty and Cuckfield. The roads, A272 and B2036 are already clogged with traffic with the possibility of another 6,000 cars as the Northern Arc is developed. The water supply is under stress. A new village hall and sports facility has recently been opened in Ansty so there is no need for more. The uncertainty of this development has blighted the lives

of local residents for years and it must now be permanently rejected by Mid Sussex District Council”

Dissatisfaction over proposed Country Park

“The ‘country park’ is already green open space and should be left. To sell it by trick the locals is a slight of hand. You cannot build on it. The cost to the locals will be huge to mankind”

“Proposing a ‘Country Park’ in an area which already comprises wonderful countryside adds insult to the injury of the proposal”

4.3 Other Feedback

- 4.3.1 The Applicant received **seven email submissions** and **two telephone calls** throughout the consultation period. As the emails were not in direct response to the questions on the feedback form, submission have not been counted towards the analytical summaries in the previous section.
- 4.3.2 Key themes raised related to the size of the proposal, which was broadly reflective of the comments made via the submitted feedback forms.
- 4.3.3 **Examples of the responses via email engagement.**

Email

“You have asked for feedback on your proposed development.

You must be aware that there is enormous opposition to your scheme already from residents of Cuckfield and Ansty. I am amongst the group who oppose the destruction of our countryside and the development of large housing estates in green spaces around and linking our existing villages.

The ‘country park’ is already an accessible area enjoyed by Cuckfield and Ansty residents. There is an existing network of public footpaths throughout this area which we use and enjoy. You are not providing anything additional. Please don't insult us by suggesting you are adding anything to our community.”

“I would like to offer some feedback on your proposed housing development between Cuckfield and Ansty

Temperatures are currently 10 degrees higher than the average for October. It will only take one long, hot dry summer which will happen very soon and we will run out of water while our rivers will be largely composed of sewage - how can your housing development possibly be considered sustainable when it will simply make this problem considerably worse?

we already have the countryside - why do we need a country park?

obviously its easy to produce a 20% BNG if the government sets the methodology as 0% for agricultural fields - in reality if you actually consider all the biota in the soil alone that you will be destroying, you will never ever get close to 20%

a mobility hub is futile - everyone will travel by car clogging our roads further

I strongly object to this proposal”

“Dear Sir / Madame

NO – NO – NO

Our roads are clogged our health service chocked, public services at the brink and your propose to build another 1400 homes.

It beggars’ belief – destroying our beautiful country side for ever, it must not materialise.

You will meet fierce opposition.”

“After giving the Ansty proposal consideration and completing the feedback form, I have been thinking further about the issue of water, a vital and increasingly precious resource in the exceptionally dry Mid Sussex area.

As I’m sure you are aware, residents in Mid Sussex have been subject to two recent hosepipe bans. Last week another email was received from SE Water asking residents to conserve water during another exceptionally hot and dry spell.

I cannot see the situation regarding water supply and use improving. If predictions about climate prove to be correct, the situation is going to become increasingly more serious. Building 1450 homes with new gardens in this area will only create even more strain on our water supply.

I would like to try and gain SE Water’s perspective on the issue of water supply and how they will be able to guarantee that the introduction of over 1000 more homes to Mid Sussex will not create further pressure on existing households ability to not only enjoy their gardens but also have enough water to wash with and drink in the future.

I would be very grateful to receive your comments on the above and justification for building 1450 new homes in one of the driest areas of the UK that is already struggling with low water supply.”

5. Response to comments.

- 5.1.1 All comments received have been reviewed by the project team. Many of the issues raised are covered in the application documents which accompany this response.
- 5.1.2 The following paragraphs are the project team summary responses to the main issues raised, but more detail will be provided in the technical documents supporting the outline planning.

Need for housing on this site

The initial vision for the site was allocated in the Mid Sussex District Council Draft Local Plan in January 2022 as suitable for delivering up to 1,600 new homes, including affordable housing alongside a new country park by Mid Sussex District Council Officers.

Following political pressure from local residents, the former Leader Cllr Jonathan Ash Edwards confirmed that Ansty's site allocation would be removed from the draft Local Plan ahead of the Reg. 18 consultation. This was done without any significant information to detail why the site was removed from the draft Local Plan process, other than overarching highways and transport concerns.

Mid Sussex District Council subsequently hit pause on the Local Plan process whilst awaiting updated information from the government on expected housing delivery numbers. However, the reallocated housing numbers previously proposed for this site into other site allocations and overprovision on others means the current plan is unlikely to deliver the unmet local housing needs. Housing targets are set by the central government, based on their Standard Methodology calculation which seeks to deliver 300,000 new homes a year. Based on this formula, Mid Sussex should currently be looking to provide 1,119 homes per year.

The removal of the site from the emerging Local Plan hasn't changed the overall housing demand; it has only shifted the allocation to less feasible sites within the District. Despite being outside the current settlement, the site is recognised as a sustainable extension to Ansty village. The traffic impacts of the proposals have now been satisfied and therefore, the Applicant believe that this site can now be brought forward.

Aligned with the draft District Plan's aim to bolster growth across the entire authority area, our proposed masterplan envisions a new Garden Community and separate Parkland Reserve. The plan emphasizes infrastructure, services, and improved pedestrian/cycle routes and open spaces, and is a fully landscape-led design.

As of December 2022, Mid Sussex District Council only had six new brownfield sites without an existing permission that were suitable, available and achievable to deliver new homes – totalling 252 units. A further 17 brownfield sites with planning permission for 695 units have also been identified as well as an additional c.30 sites which have been allocated to deliver 742 units. There is therefore not sufficient brownfield land to address the future housing needs within the district.

Merging the villages

The development is isolated to the southern side of the bypass, to the north of which there are significant fields which provide a robust buffer between Cuckfield and the proposed development.

Landscaping and biodiversity

An extensive survey has been undertaken to evaluate the types of habitats and species currently on-site and evaluated according to the Biodiversity Metric Habitat Condition Assessment. This is the UK Habitat's recognised methodology for identifying potential effects of a development as well as opportunities.

The Applicant's proposals would seek to also retain the important mature trees and hedgerows, as much as is possible throughout the site and boundaries to continue to provide biodiversity habitats.

Alongside this, the Applicant is proposing to deliver a new, publicly accessible parkland reserve on the northern parcel of land. This would comprise of the restoration of over 250 acres of farmed parkland, semi-ancient woodland and replanted woodland, creating an exemplar biodiverse habitat. Measure to create this could include:

- Replanting parkland trees and managing woodlands as part of a holistic masterplan
- Enhancing large areas of grassland and protecting species rich-grasslands
- Restoring ponds
- Providing dog, cycle and pedestrian friendly routes away from sensitive habitat areas

It is anticipated that the measured proposed across the whole site will contribute towards a biodiversity net gain.

Water and Electrical supply

South East Water and UK Power Network have a legal obligation to provide water and electricity supply respectively to the development, as well as upgrades to the network to facilitate for additional need. Upgrades will be made to the local system to ensure that there is no impact on existing properties/businesses. How this is achieved is a matter for South East Water and UK Power Network to determine.

As has happened elsewhere, planning conditions can be put in place on a development so homes cannot be occupied until the necessary upgrades are complete, so new developments do not have a detrimental impact on existing homes.

Local transport

The proposals include a new pedestrian and cycle link across the A272 from the east side of the site to the proposed parkland reserve. The team are working closely with West Sussex County Council on all transport and access matters, however, the final details of what this could look like have not been agreed.

Construction impact

Should the proposals be approved to be brought forward for the site, a detailed Construction Management Plan, which will include traffic movements to and from the site

will be prepared for each stage of construction and submitted to the Council for review and approval.

Local amenities

The healthcare provision will be an allied healthcare approach, so even if there are no GPs, the Applicant would look to provide dentist, physiotherapist and treatment rooms.

Any change from healthcare use could only be achieved through a formal planning application to change the use. As with any planning application, this would be open to public comment and would have to be approved by the Council.

As part of the application for the site, there will be a legal agreement, enforceable by the Local Authority ensuring delivery of all infrastructure, with triggers for delivery at certain points in the development.

6. Conclusion.

- 6.1.1 The Applicant has sought to engage with residents and local stakeholders to seek feedback on emerging proposals.
- 6.1.2 Engagement is an ongoing process, and the project team is committed to continuing the dialogue with both the Council and the local community.
- 6.1.3 The Applicant remains committed to continuing communicating and working with the local community and local stakeholders during the determination period of the planning application and post planning.
- 6.1.4 The website, ansty.consultationonline.co.uk will be updated at the following points during the application process:
- Upon submission, details of the proposals will be available online
 - During the process, additional information will be posted
 - Once a decision has been made

7. Appendices.

7.1 Stakeholder email

Hello,

Ansty Garden Community

I am writing to you on behalf of Fairfax, who is seeking to bring forward new proposals for a sustainable new garden community on land adjoining Ansty.

The site would provide up to 1,450 new homes, including much-needed older persons accommodation as well as affordable housing and self-build provision. The new neighbourhood would also include community infrastructure, such as a doctor's surgery, hockey and tennis sports facilities, primary and Special Educational Needs and Disability schools and amenities in a local centre.

As part of the proposals, a country park will also be created to the north of Ansty, which will be available for the enjoyment of all.

Fairfax's vision for a new and integrated neighbourhood will make a vital contribution towards meeting local housing needs. In summary, the proposals offer the following major benefits:

- Housing for local families, including much-needed affordable housing
- Creation of new educational facilities
- Creation of public sports facilities and children's play spaces
- Green links across the site, connecting and creating habitats, resulting in over 20% biodiversity net gain
- A 87-hectare (215 acres) country park, with woodland trails and wildflower meadows
- Creation of substantial public open green spaces for all to enjoy
- Fully integrated network of cycle and pedestrian routes to encourage greener travel, which would also connect to Cuckfield, Ansty village, Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill
- Provision of a new local centre with a mobility hub to encourage sustainable travel
- Creation of jobs during construction and from new employment space

Whilst the vision for Ansty Garden Community is still being developed, we have launched a public consultation, to provide further information on our proposals and receive the community's feedback, to refine our proposals further. Invites have been issued to over 2,000 local residents and businesses.

Please find attached a copy of the invitation that has been distributed, which provides details of our virtual and in-person consultation.

Given your role in the community, we wanted to provide you with this information and offer the opportunity to discuss the proposals with the project team, should this be of interest to you.


If we may, one of our team will be in touch shortly to discuss your availability for a meeting.






With kind regards,

Hannah Anderson-Jones
On behalf of Fairfax

7.2 Consultation reminder stakeholder letter


Ansty Garden Village


 Jacob Salawu
To

 Reply  Reply All  Forward  

Wed 20/09/2023 10:11

Bcc christopher.phillips@midsussex.gov.uk; Dick.Sweatman@midsussex.gov.uk; malcolm.avery@midsussex.gov.uk; richard.bates@midsussex.gov.uk; kristian.berggreen@midsussex.gov.uk; anne.eves@midsussex.gov.uk; +18 others

 You forwarded this message on 17/10/2023 17:31.

 Fairfax Ansty Garden Community Exhibition Invitation.pdf
1013 KB

Good morning,

I am emailing to provide a reminder that Fairfax is undertaking a [virtual consultation](#) regarding plans to bring forward new proposals for a sustainable new garden community on land adjoining Ansty.

We are also holding a public exhibition event today (Wednesday 20 September) between 4.30pm – 7.30pm and on Saturday 23 September between 10am – 2pm at Ansty Village Hall, Deaks Lane, Ansty. We would be delighted if you would join us to find out more about the proposals.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or would like to meet the team separately to discuss the proposals in greater detail, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Jacob



GET INVOLVED

We are committed to providing inclusive engagement with the local community on our proposals for the Ansty Garden Community.

We are undertaking both a virtual public exhibition of our draft plans as well as two in-person events.

The virtual and in-person exhibitions will allow you to both explore our initial proposals in detail and respond to them with your views, comments and suggestions.

Virtual Consultation

The virtual public exhibition will be open for comments at: ansty.consultationonline.co.uk

Between: **11 September – 9 October 2023**

In-person events

There will be two in-person events held:

On: **20 September 2023**

Between: **4.30pm – 7.30pm**

At: **Ansty Village Hall, Deaks Lane, Ansty, RH17 5AS**

And on: **23 September 2023**

Between: **10am – 2pm**

At: **Ansty Village Hall, Deaks Lane, Ansty, RH17 5AS**

Feedback

Share your thoughts on our proposals by:



Submitting the feedback form on our project website: ansty.consultationonline.co.uk



Emailing our project team via feedback@consultation-online.co.uk with comments or questions



Calling our freephone information line on **0800 298 7040** and leaving a message, and a member of our team will call you back.

Attending one of our in-person events on either **20 or 23 September 2023**, where physical copies of the feedback form as well as freepost reply envelopes will be provided.

The last date to provide feedback on the proposals is midnight on **9 October 2023**.

7.4 Online consultation screenshots

Proposals for Ansty Garden Community

Find out more about our vision

WELCOME

Fairfax is seeking input from local residents to help shape its vision for a sustainable new community on land adjoining Ansty. The site would provide up to 1,450 new homes, including much needed older persons and affordable housing and will build provision. The new neighbourhood would also include community infrastructure, such as a doctor's surgery, hockey and tennis sports facilities, primary and Special Educational Needs and Disability schools and amenities in a local centre.

As part of the proposals, a country park will also be created for the north of Ansty, which will be available for the enjoyment of all. While the vision is still being developed, the project team is keen to consult residents and other local stakeholders.

Key benefits of the proposals

- Up to 1,450 new dwellings in a high quality landscaped setting, including affordable and self-build homes.
- An 87 hectare (215-acre) country park, providing publicly available open space for the whole community to enjoy.
- A much-needed primary school and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) school.
- Around 33 hectares (82 acres) of new Public Open Space and play areas.

Sustainable development on land adjoining Ansty

Homepage

ABOUT THE SITE

Ansty Garden Community

The proposed development site is located to the east of Ansty village and covers around 100 hectares (250 acres) of land, outlined in red in the indicative aerial view of the site. It predominantly comprises farmland, punctuated by woodlands and waterways. Within the centre of the site, but outside the site boundary for the listed buildings of The Old Place & The Barn House, as well as access to a handful of properties.

The northern and north-western edges are bound by the A272, the south-western boundary abuts the B2036 and the western boundary abuts Wood Riders Farm and the wider agricultural landscape. While the part of the site has no landscape designations, the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) lies north-west of the site and a Local Wildlife Site lies to the south-west, outside of the site boundary.

Country Park

The proposed Beeches Bottom Country Park, outlined in blue on the indicative aerial view of the site, is located to the north of Ansty and east of Cuckfield. It currently comprises around 80 hectares (195 acres) of farmland and 7 hectares (17 acres) of recreational grounds, including the Withemere Green recreation ground, which is home to Hovevants Heath Rugby Football Club, Cuckfield Common Football Club and other formal pitches.

The land is bounded to the north by Sheffield Road, the eastern edge abuts Cuckfield Park, and the southern boundary is defined by a private access road and excellent field. The park's southern boundary is defined by a private access road and excellent field. The park's southern boundary is defined by a private access road and excellent field.

Our proposals

Our vision for the site

Our plans have been carefully evolved to fit within the local landscape features and create a strong sense of place. The masterplan thoughtfully connects residential and green spaces, fostering a village ambience.



indicative masterplan

7.5 Feedback form

Give us your view
Ansty Garden Community



PRIVACY STATEMENT

By completing this form, you are agreeing that Fairfax along with its project partner Cavendish Consulting, can hold and process your personal data in relation to this public consultation exercise.

Your personal data will only be used in relation to the Ansty proposals for planning evaluation purposes only. Your identifiable, personal data will not be used for any other purposes without your consent.

Fairfax and Cavendish Consulting will use your data to:

- Send you updates about the project (where you provide us with your contact details)
- Develop a Statement of Community Involvement (or similar document) about this consultation that will be submitted to Mid Sussex District Council; this would be a publicly available document, but your comments will be anonymous, and we will only identify you in these reports with your permission.

If you provide us with your contact details, we might also approach you to ask you more about the comments you have made. Cavendish Consulting is acting on behalf of Fairfax to run consultation activities. Please return all feedback by **Monday 9 October 2023**.

Your Details

If you choose not to fill in all parts of this section, we will not be able to include your comments in the consultation process.

Your Contact Details

We will use these details to contact you and update you on the proposals. You don't have to fill in this section if you'd rather we didn't contact you.

Title (Miss/Mrs/Ms/Mr/Other):	Address:
First Name or Initial:	
Surname:	
Postcode:	
Age Group (please circle):	Telephone:
Under 16 Over 16	Email:

***PLEASE COMPLETE ALL SECTIONS IN BLOCK CAPITALS**

Data Protection

We hold all personal data in accordance with the retained EU law version of the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (the "UK GDPR"), as it forms part of the law of England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland by virtue of section 9 of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, the Data Protection Act 2018, the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003 as amended, and any successor legislation. Your personal data will not be transferred outside of the EU. You can see our full Privacy Statement, Data Protection Policy, Data Retention Policy and find out how to make a Subject Access Request at the following website address cavendishconsulting.com/idp or by contacting us on 01942 893 893 / dataprotection@cavendishconsulting.com.

Q1 To what extent do you support the proposals to deliver a new, sustainable garden community on the site?

(Please circle)

Strongly support Support Unsure Oppose Strongly Oppose

[Response area for Q1]

Q2 Which element(s) of the proposed scheme do you consider to be of most value to the local area?

Please rank according to your preference (5 = strongly preferred, 0 = not at all preferred)

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Up to 1,450 new dwellings (including affordable and specialist older persons housing)						
A new elderly care facility						
A new primary school						
A doctor's surgery						
A new Special Educational Needs and Disability school						
Space for amenities and facilities including shops, community areas and shared working spaces						
A sports hub, including hockey pitches and tennis courts, and a pavilion						
A mobility hub, encouraging sustainable travel throughout the area and reducing carbon emissions						
New public open spaces, including a country park, pedestrian and cycle routes, recreational space and dedicated dog walking areas						
Over 20% biodiversity net gain across the site through careful management and establishment of habitats						

Q3 How do you think that the layout could be improved?

[Response area for Q3]

Q4 Are there any facilities or amenities that you feel would be beneficial for the local area, that you would like to see included in the proposals?

[Response area for Q4]

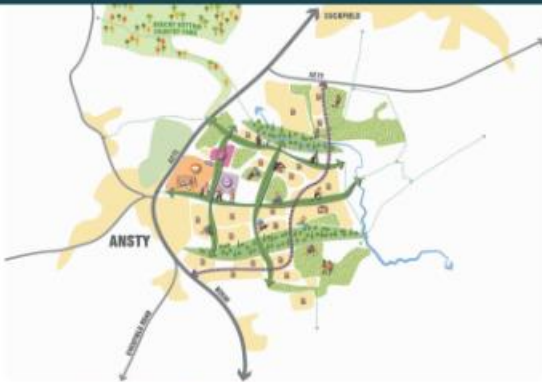
Q5 Do you have any other comments regarding the proposals?

[Response area for Q5]

7.6 Exhibition boards

Fairfax

Proposals for a Vibrant, Sustainable New Garden Community and Country Park



Welcome to our public exhibition


Thank you for visiting our public exhibition showcasing our vision for a new, sustainable and self-sufficient neighbourhood at Ansty Garden Community and country park to the north of Ansty.


This exhibition has been arranged to provide you with an opportunity to review and provide your feedback on the masterplan for the site.

You can find a copy of our feedback form at this exhibition with a freepost envelope or online via our website: ansty.consultationonline.co.uk

These proposals aim to bring forward:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of up to 1,450 new dwellings, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable homes and self-build plots • Specialist accommodation for older people • A care home to address the district's need for nursing care • An 87 hectare (215 acre) country park, providing publicly available open space for the whole community to enjoy • Over 20% biodiversity net gain achieved through the safeguarding and enhancing of existing ecology and creation of new habitats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A much-needed primary school and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) school • The creation of new jobs through construction, healthcare, education, retail and office space • Around 33 hectares (82 acres) of new Public Open Space and play areas • A local centre with amenities and facilities, such as a doctor's surgery, shops, community spaces, car clubs, a bus service and shared working areas • Prioritising and encouraging sustainable, active transport throughout the development to reduce carbon emissions.
---	--





Ansty Garden Community

The proposed development site is located to the east of Ansty village and covers around 303 hectares (250 acres) of land. It predominantly comprises farmland, punctuated by woodlands and waterways. Within the centre of the site, but outside the site boundary lie the listed buildings of The Old Place & The Barn House, as well as access to a handful of properties.

The northern and north-western edges are bound by the A272, the south-western boundary abuts the B2036 and the southern boundary abuts West Ribbles Farm and the wider agricultural landscape. While this part of the site has no landscape designations, the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) lies north-west of the site and a local Wildlife site lies to the south east, outside of the site boundary.

Country Park

The proposed Beech Bottom Country Park is located to the north of Ansty and west of Cuckfield, and currently comprises around 80 hectares (598 acres) of farmland and 7 hectares (37 acres) of recreational ground, including the Whitesmans Green recreation ground, which is home to Haywards Heath Rugby Football Club, Cuckfield Cosmos Football Club and other formal pitches.

The land is bounded to the north by Staplefield Road, the eastern edge abuts Cuckfield Park, and the southern boundary is defined by a private access road and woodland belt. The western boundary is separated from Deaks Lane by a belt of woodland, small pasture enclosures and scattered dwellings.



Aerial view of the site

Policy Context

All Local Authorities are required to have an adopted Local Plan. Each authority must update their plan every five years, as a plan more than five years old is considered to be out-of-date. Mid Sussex's current plan was adopted in 2016, and therefore the Council are currently in the process of preparing a new plan with updated site allocations and planning policies. To assist in addressing the identified housing need in Mid Sussex the District Council initially designated the Ansty Garden Community site as an allocation in the draft District Plan (January 2022). Whilst the site was later removed from the draft plan for the November-December 2022 public consultation on the plan, the reasons cited indicated that the council had concerns over potential transport and highways issues. These reasons have been reviewed and further assessment work undertaken, which has found the anticipated issues to be readily resolvable and this has been agreed with West Sussex County Council Highways.

The removal of the site from the emerging Local Plan hasn't changed the overall housing demand; it has only shifted the allocation to less feasible sites within the District. Despite being outside the current settlement, the site is recognised as a sustainable extension to Ansty village. Aligned with the draft District Plan's aim to bolster growth across the entire authority area, our proposed masterplan envisions a new Garden Community and separate Country Park. This includes up to 1,450 homes (including affordable housing and self-build plots), 90 residential care units, a doctor's surgery, a two-form entry primary school, a new Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) school, tennis and hockey facilities, retail spaces and a considerable amount of new public open space, including formal and informal children's play. The plan emphasises infrastructure, services, and improved pedestrian/bicycle routes and open spaces, and is a fully landscape-led design.



Neighbourhood Centre and On-Site Infrastructure

Fairfax

The village centre will be a vibrant and modern space that will form a community hub to enable social connection and provide amenities for residents. The spaces within this area will include:



Village centre

- A local foodstore
- Shops, such as a cafe, retail and on-street parking
- A doctor's surgery
- Community uses - such as a creche, music classes/yoga and community group/meeting rooms
- A flexible outdoor space that can be used for events, such as markets and community days
- A softer area of tree and shrub planting
- A mobility hub, including disabled and car club parking, cycle parking/ride and a bus stop
- An online delivery collection point, such as Amazon lockers

The Common will form the heart of the development, providing a welcoming, inclusive space for the whole community, to relax and enjoy. The Common will comprise a mixture of open spaces alongside existing mature trees and woodland areas, as well as space for informal sports and formal children's play to bring people closer to nature and foster a sense of community.

A network of accessible routes will enable easy access throughout the site to the Common. Careful attention has been given to the southern boundary of the green space, where existing planting will be retained and enhanced to preserve the separation of the development with the listed buildings.



Village Common



Indicative CGI of the local centre





Indicative map of the proposed Country park

Our vision sees the northern portion of the proposed site transformed into a country park, safeguarded as such in perpetuity. This will feature a dog walking area, woodland trails and wildflower meadows.

The northern half of the site also includes five public rights of way, which would be retained, alongside the introduction of new cycle and pedestrian routes, including a safe connection between Ansty and Cuckfield and dedicated dog walking areas. There will also be opportunities to provide educational benefits for the community at the country park through potential school partnerships or summer camps.

Country Park Management

We are proposing to deliver environmental and landscape enhancements through the management of degraded habitats on the existing land. This will include the development of scrub and grassland areas, as well as regeneration of the woodlands and pond restoration.

Once the initial management has been completed, the country park will be left to evolve, with close monitoring to evaluate habitat value and wildlife population requirements, creating a species and wildlife rich habitat. It is the intention that the following management proposals will be implemented:

- Woodland management to encourage species diversity
- The creation of rides and glades, grazed by controlled herds of animals
- The reintroduction of farmland bird species as well as reptile, amphibian, mammal and invertebrate
- Newly planted trees to encourage birds and mammals
- Ponds to be restored
- The use of natural conservation to manage species rich grasslands and woodland





- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| SITE BOUNDARY | LANDSCAPE BUFFER |
| RESTORED & ENHANCED LANDSCAPE | TREE-LINED DRIVE |
| AMENITY OPEN SPACE | EXISTING WOOD BARRIERS |
| PLAYING SPORTS & RECREATION PLACES/PLANS | POTENTIAL LOCATION FOR HUB |
| RESTORED & ENHANCED WOODLAND | |
| RESTORED PASTURE | |

Open spaces and biodiversity

Living with nature and enabling interaction and connection with the environment have been key to how the proposals have developed for the site. The residential parcels of land and areas of on-site infrastructure have been carefully considered to maximise the retention and enhancement of existing mature woodlands, trees and hedgerows, wherever possible.

Fairfax is committed to ensure that enhancements across the site are in accordance with the dedicated ecologist and arboriculturalist recommendations.

Connectivity

The country park will be connected to the Ansty Garden Community through an accessible pedestrian and cycle link, encouraging interaction with the open spaces throughout the site.



Careful consideration has been given to the design of the proposed development at Ansty Garden Community with the key principles of living with nature, cohesion and a sense of place and belonging. The team has been working alongside Create Streets with the design for the site.

Masterplan

The principles of a garden village have formed the rationale behind the design of the masterplan for the Garden Community. Key constraints and opportunities were reviewed to ensure sensitive boundaries, viewpoints and existing footpaths and watercourses were respected, with building directed away from these key areas of existing landscape and ecology.

A landscape-led approach has been a fundamental principle in shaping the proposed Garden Community to create a place that lives with nature. Existing landscape features form a key part of the proposed green and blue infrastructure networks with areas of proposed open space, green corridors and buffers helping to safeguard these features wherever possible. Landscape architects, ecologists and arboriculturists are working together to ensure Biodiversity Net Gain is achieved.

This work has played a crucial role in determining the locations for development and the alignments of both the main access road and travel network through the site. This approach ensures that the significant natural assets of the site, such as the existing woodlands, are treated with consideration, while simultaneously establishing essential and sustainable connectivity for the entire development.

The proposed development will comprise a series of four identifiable neighbourhoods in a range of tenures and densities, that draw on the style of Ansty and the wider Mid Sussex area. The local centre and Ansty Common will form the heart of the development, bringing the whole Garden Community together and complementing the existing facilities available in the local area.

Street design

The streets have been designed with careful consideration of their character, ensuring that the new neighbourhood promotes safe, attractive and direct routes for walking and cycling, prioritised over the movement of cars. Streets will be lined with verges and street trees wherever possible in order to link



CGI of a high-density area within the scheme

them into the landscape, and provide shading from sun and wind. The street materials will reference local materials, such as the red brick pavements within local village centres.

New homes

A detailed analysis of the local area has been undertaken to ensure the proposals and future applications reflect the existing character of Ansty and the wider Mid Sussex areas, whilst respecting the site's landscape characteristics.

It is intended that the proposed new homes on the site will include the key local material features, such as clay tiles, slate hanging and red brick but interpreted in a modern and sustainable style to complement the local area whilst reinforcing the site's distinct nature.

The proposed development will also feature varying building heights that respond to their position in the site and the varying topography. Heights will be maximised around the local centre and in the more visually enclosed areas, whilst heights will be restricted in areas sensitive to existing buildings, wider views and at the rural edges of the site.

A range of densities are also proposed, with higher densities located within the local centre and visually enclosed parts of the site, where a predominance of apartments and tenanted dwellings will be located. The higher densities are important in order to deliver enough homes to create a critical mass in order to support the new local facilities and services proposed within the scheme.

Where homes are proposed in more sensitive areas of the site, lower densities and reduced heights are proposed, with detached properties that are spaced out to create a more rural feel.



Indicative spine street



Indicative CGI of the B2036 entrance

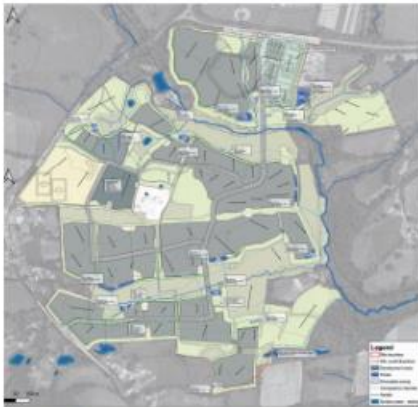


Indicative street scene



Indicative street scene





Sustainable Drainage

The site falls primarily within Flood Zone 1, therefore is not at risk of fluvial flooding, with the exception of the areas where the Copyhold Gill flows. This section of the site will be retained as a woodland buffer, where no development is proposed.

The proposed SuDS within the developed site will include swales, rain gardens, basins and ponds, that will:

- Capture surface water before releasing it at a rate lower than that which reflects natural systems.
 - Control the water at source and re-use where possible.
 - Offer opportunities to deliver landscape and wildlife enhancements, creating new wetland areas to encourage different species on site.
 - Naturally clean the water, before it enters the local watercourse system.
 - Follow the natural topography of the site and move water to attenuation basins located throughout the site.
- These SuDS features will also account for climate change, including 1 in 30 year event + 40% buffer for stormwater runoff.

Foul Water

As part of the preparatory survey works, South East Water have confirmed that additional works will need to take place to increase the capacity of the local network. These necessary works are entirely possible and will form an integral part of the proposals and are designed to ensure the local ecosystem is protected.





<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary roads Secondary roads Tertiary roads Local roads Footpaths Cycle paths Greenways Waterways Public transport routes Public transport stops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public transport routes Public transport stops Waterways Greenways Cycle paths Footpaths Local roads Tertiary roads Secondary roads Primary roads
--	--

Our whole idea in shaping this development is to think ahead about how residents and visitors will get around the area and to important nearby destinations. This involves 'Active Travel Modes' such as walking, cycling, and using public transport. This way, our future residents won't have to rely on their cars so much, which means less traffic. We're working closely with the local highways authority (West Sussex County Council) and National Highways (A23).

Active Travel

We've created a "20-Minute Neighbourhood" development, ensuring important destinations like the local centre and school are reachable within a 20 minute walk. This fosters a self-sufficient, eco-friendly community that minimises travel and traffic impact. Green paths and cycling routes are seamlessly integrated, promoting convenience, leisure and every day activities. These routes connect to existing pedestrian/cycle paths, including Public Rights of Way (PROW), and we are collaborating with the local highways authority to enhance these routes further.

Public Transport and Mobility Hubs

We have engaged in talks with local bus operators and leaders in mobility hub design in order to develop a cohesive and efficient public transport strategy, where a regular bus service will connect the site to the wider area. We are seeking to lead the way in the integration of "Mobility Hubs". Mobility Hubs are where bus stops are located along

the main walking and cycling routes and are accompanied by facilities such as cycle parking, waiting, or parcel delivery lockers. Each bus stop will be at least a "mini" mobility hub, with the bus stop next to the local centre, forming the heart of a "large" mobility hub which will have enhanced features, such as covered waiting or parking for publicly accessible car club vehicles. We want these hubs to be central to people's daily journeys.

Street Network

The site's route design prioritises pedestrian movement, initially establishing a street hierarchy - Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary - based on expected usage levels. Access to the street network will be through three new roundabouts situated at the site's northern, western, and southern boundaries, serving as gateway features. Street layouts prioritise walking and cycling over cars, separating footways and cycle routes from high traffic zones through landscaped verges. Adequate parking will be available within the development, and collaboration with the local highways authority will determine appropriate provision levels.





Indicative sustainability measures

Sustainability and living with nature are at the heart of the vision for the proposed Ansty Garden Community.

In addition to the vision set out in the travel plan, to encourage sustainable travel and transport throughout the site and to the wider area, a list of measures are proposed to ensure that the new buildings on site are future proofed.

The new homes and buildings on site will be designed and delivered to ensure they are compliant with the Future Homes Standard. This will ensure that all new buildings on site will be zero-carbon ready, with all new homes to be 'W' rated and other buildings 'A' rated for efficiency.

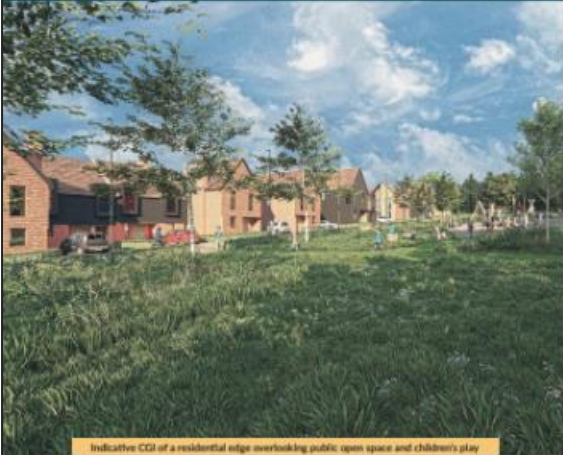
It is proposed that the site will be fully electric, with no gas installed, sustainable energy measures of the site could include:

- Heat pumps
- Traditional electric heating
- Solar panels throughout the development
- EV charging points for every home and at key points within the community facilities
- Mechanical Ventilation Heat Recovery for apartments
- Rainwater harvesting for irrigation
- Reduction in water usage through fixtures and fittings and flow restrictors
- Space for recycling and composting



Next Steps

Fairfax



Indicative CGI of a residential edge overlooking public open space and children's play

Next steps

Fairfax would like to thank you for visiting our public exhibition, displaying our proposals for Ansty Garden Community.

We hope that you found these consultation materials informative and we welcome your feedback. You can do so by completing a form here today or taking it away with you along with a freepost envelope. The survey can also be completed online at ansty.consultationonline.co.uk

Once the consultation period has closed on 9 October 2023, we will review the feedback received, and take it into consideration as we refine our proposals further.

If you provide us with your details, you will be kept up to date on our progress as the plans for the site move forward.

Please scan the QR code to complete our survey!

