

Rambler Cottage
Shripney Lane
Bognor Regis
West Sussex
PO22 9NR

ACK

Dear Sir or Madam,

Planning application BE/151/11

This planning application should be rejected. I would like this letter to be drawn to the attention of the development committee.

Background – application BE/42/10

Before considering this application the development committee should be aware of the quite appalling decision of the planning officer regarding BE/42/10 on which this application is based.

This was actually the same application (with the addition of an economic report) that was rejected in 2009 (BE/77/09). In the 2009 report the officer said:

"The proposed development would have an adverse effect on an environmentally sensitive site. It would have a serious and adverse urbanising effect on the character and appearance of the rural area... It is therefore contrary to Arun District Local Plan policy GEN3, GEN7 and DEV35. National Policies..."

The applicant appealed. However a government inspector rejected the appeal on three grounds. I have laid out the grounds and the way in which application BE/42/10 addressed them.

Inspector's reasons for rejecting the application	Did BE/42/10 overcome those objections?
1. The site acts as a physical break between residential development and the caravan site and is therefore environmentally sensitive. The development would have 'serious and adverse effect which would urbanise the character of this rural location'	The application BE/42/10 was identical so no, it didn't overcome the objection
2. Insufficient evidence to justify mobile home accommodation is needed in the area	The planning officer attempts to explain that a report by Humberts showed there was a need for caravan sites. In fact it did no such thing and the officer didn't bother to send the report to anyone connected with economic development. The application itself states that no new jobs will be created.
3. There was no evidence that the accommodation could not be provided within the Built Up Area of Bognor itself.	No evidence provided. So no, the objection was not overcome

in
Conclusion

Regarding BE/42/10 the officer's report says...

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:-

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

"The proposal is considered to conflict with relevant Development Plan policies in that the site lies in an environmentally sensitive location and the justification has not been proven, therefore the proposal would have an adverse impact on the countryside by creating an intensification of structures in the countryside."

"It is considered there are no other material considerations to warrant a decision otherwise than in accordance with the Development Plan and/or legislative background."

So the development was contrary to the Development Plan and Local Plan with no material considerations otherwise - yet the officer concludes:

"This planning permission is granted because it complies with the policies listed below in that the development would not cause any material adverse effect on visual or residential amenity on the surrounding area and its character and there are no material considerations to indicate otherwise. Relevant policies LOCAL PLAN: GEN3, GEN7, DEV35. National policies..."

The officer decided to approve BE/42/10 without reference to a committee.

Unfortunately no local residents were aware of the application BE/42/10 because the site notice was either never put up or put up and immediately taken down. Enquiries to the planning department have resulted in four conflicting dates being given as to when the site notice was inspected – one of which was seven weeks after permission had been granted. The officer claims she saw the notice on the post at the entrance to the site. Unfortunately there was no post by the site entrance and the file notes state that there wasn't a site notice posted and that the officer had to do it.

It is disappointing to note that on this application (BE/151/11) when planning officers did attend to post notices, a person connected with the running of the site was observed to take them down within an hour.

The officer didn't make any consideration of the 21 objections that were made to the previous application BE/77/09.

Bersted Parish Council didn't object. They told me this was because they understood from the officer's report that the previous objection had been overturned by another government inspector. I can understand this as the officer's report is extremely confusing with errors regarding the history of the site, the layout of the site and sections that have been cut and pasted that make no sense. The parish council were astounded when I told them that the application had been decided by a planning officer not an inspector.

The officer's report on BE/42/10 stated that the Environment Agency had no objection to this application. Firstly, this is not quite true. The EA tell me that the officer didn't actually write to the Environment Agency about this application but simply substituted the information provided in the previous application. The Environment Agency have stated that they envisage any caravan owners who arrive to find they cannot gain access to their sites because of flooding at the end of Shripney Lane (which has been impassable for a period of time in almost all of the last ten winters) to park on the dual carriageway. This stretch of highway is not a safe place to park a car and was recently the site of the unfortunate death of a young man. The council will be responsible in future for any accidents on this stretch of road regarding cars parked there as the council is well aware that the road is, at times, impassable

Regarding whether the application complied with relevant policies. The same application apparently conflicted with the policies in 2009 but then didn't in 2010. The original refusal correctly reflects the planning guidance in that:

- Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism supports development that creates jobs – except this application states that no jobs would be created.
- Planning Policy Statement 7 says that development of caravan sites should be carefully weighed against the need to protect landscapes and environmentally sensitive sites but this was not mentioned in the officer's report.
- PPG7 specifically says the presence of grades 1 and 2 agricultural land should be taken into account when deciding on development. However the planning officer states this policy does not protect agricultural land. This is incorrect. I also note that the applicant does not know when the land was last used as a paddock – this is surprising since the paddock was used by the applicant and I believe he erected the stables.

With regard to traffic, West Sussex County Council has stated that there have been no accidents in the vicinity of the application. On further enquiry the Council stated that there was one accident. However an identical request to Sussex Police, who use the same database resulted in the following information:

12/09/10 car lost control on bend, hit oncoming car.

04/06/10 drink driver lost control into ditch.

19/11/09 one car lost control on bend and into ditch.

08/04/09 car on bend lost control and hit oncoming car.

10/03/07 car lost control and into ditch.

01/06/06 Stolen car collides with tractor.

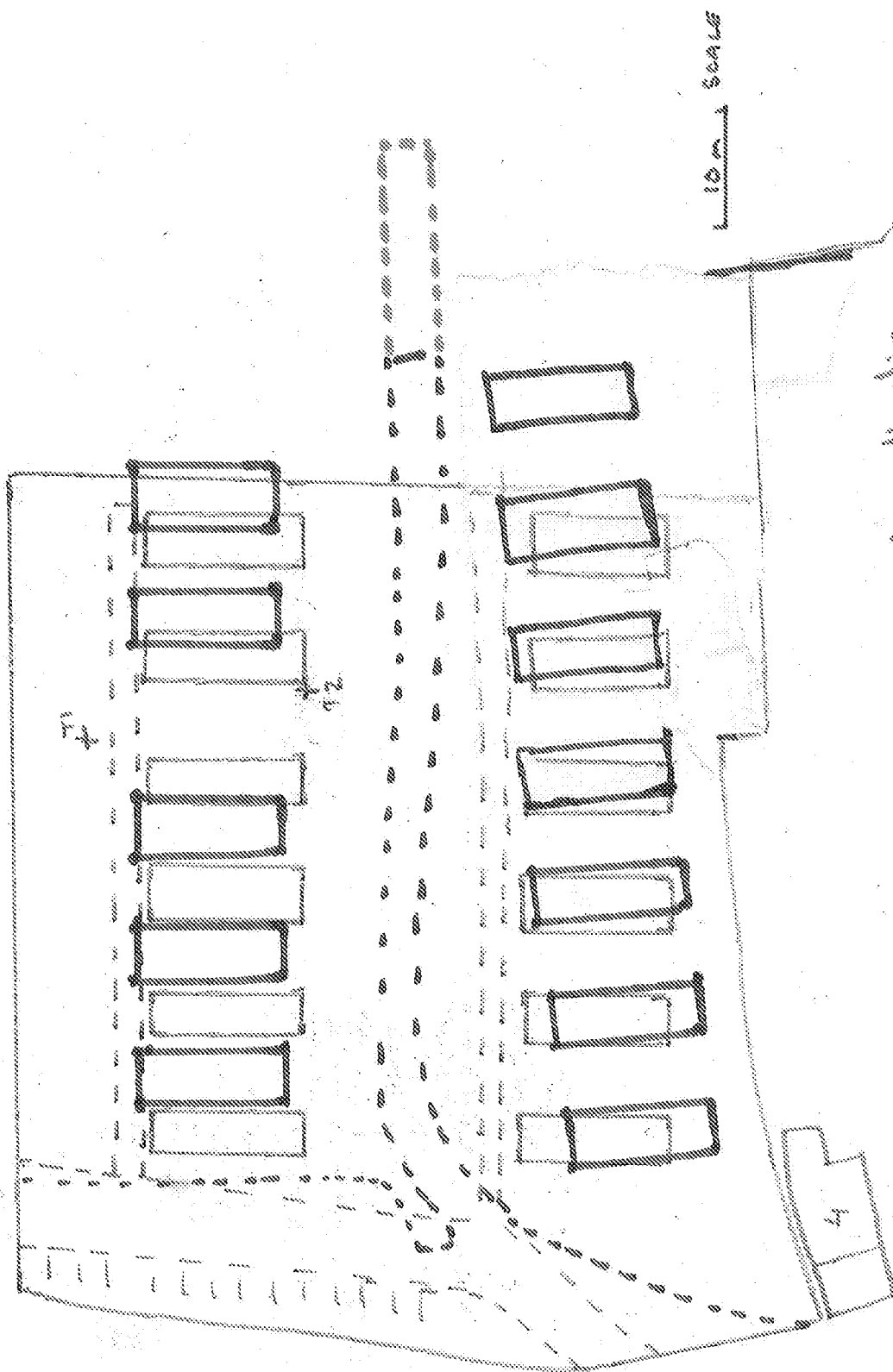
16/11/05 car into ditch.

16/10/05 HGV reverses into car.

Application BE/151/11

Understanding the history of the site is essential in determining this application and whether this is just a small change to a reasonable application or a significant change – in all respects worse than the original application.

1. The application states that there are no trees or hedges adjacent to the site that might be important as part of the local character. This is untrue. The whole length of the boundary to the south is a conservation area with a range of mixed trees and hedges. The new siting of the caravans encroaches significantly on this vegetation.
2. The Planning Design and Access Statement (PDAS) by Henry Adams reports that the planning officer states that the site would not adversely affect the visual amenities of the locality. It fails to mention that the same officer and a Government appointed inspector said exactly the reverse for the same application a year previously.
3. PDAS section 1.03 is, I am afraid totally untrue. I have submitted a composite of the original application plan and the new one. The new one shows the base to be significantly (approximately 4 metres) closer to the conservation area than the original. How is it that Henry Adams is so incompetent? Or is this simply a way to mask the actual development?
4. PDAS section 1.04 – 1.06. The report suggests the new siting of the caravan pads on the northern side of the site was to accommodate the car park (although the car park is almost exactly the same as originally proposed) and the two trees. The report fails to recognise that a number of trees have previously been felled



— = original application
 — = new application
 — = correct position

VIEW OF SITE FROM CONSERVATION AREA.
WIRE BOUNDARY IN FOREGROUND

