

[REDACTED]

From: Cllr. June Hamilton [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 January 2020 09:52
To: Simon Davis <Simon.Davis@arun.gov.uk>
Cc: 'Nicola Swann' [REDACTED]
Subject: Newlands Nursery Pagham Road PO20 1LL - Objection

Dear Simon, (If I may),

I write regarding the above application for “continuance” rights allegedly for accommodation for farm workers who are going to work in the greenhouses on the site. I live nearby and am the ward councillor for this patch, Pagham North, so I know a bit about it.

I gather that officers advised the applicant to withdraw the first application which I read (and found intellectually dishonest and self-contradictory). I also understand that it was subsequently withdrawn and has now re-appeared in a slightly different format.

So if this application has now been allocated a new number, would you kindly apply this objection to the new number.

The proposed site was a set aside site for the regeneration of wildlife when the site was originally given development permission for the greenhouses and as far as I am aware, this has not changed. There is much wildlife in the immediate surroundings, including water voles, hedgehogs, badgers and brown hares. I see them on a daily basis, although they are becoming fewer.

It comprises a very narrow strip of set aside land with banks and drainage ditches nearby, but no sewage facilities or running water or electricity. To have 30 caravans on this tiny strip, each accommodating six working adults, is a recipe for disaster and would very disturbing and unsettling for the resident families who live in the half dozen rural homes in the hamlet. This is a quiet and peaceful hamlet of law-abiding tax-payers and to inflict an overcrowded caravan site full of foreigners from a different culture who do not speak English and who have no access to normal facilities, would be an affront, and highly inappropriate.

Mr Newey’s greenhouses at this site are well known for being fully automated, indeed the newspapers were full of the stories of one of his employees losing a limb in his machinery, a while back. My former gardener used to work there and told me about it and confirmed that those greenhouses were fully automated and serviced by local people. Therefore one has to conclude that the intended workforce coming in from Eastern Europe is going to be

operating as hired out gangs, I am advised locally that they will be sent to work at Almondington. If this is correct, they they should stay in the Almondington area. In this tiny hamlet at Lagness there are no shops, no transport services adequate to get them to work and back, no entertainment and no cafes or pubs within easy reach and they will not have their own vehicles. There are no medical facilities available for them, either. All this is a recipe for mischief and anger from all quarters. The Pagham road is one of the most dangerous roads in the country and it is completely unsafe to ride a bicycle along it and the heavy traffic is dire, and well-documented.

For the workers, it is the equivalent of slave labour. They are hired out to other farmers at minimum wage rates, which sounds good in Eastern European terms, until they realise that they have to pay their gang-master for their accommodation, for which the gang-master is free to charge them whatever he likes. It's a win-win situation for him, but dismal for the people he would bring into the country for this. Mr Newey is also registered as an employment agency.

There is a similar set up near Park Farm, where you can see the results of this type of arrangement. Litter, bin-liners, human waste and plastic rubbish is spread all over the Fields and road side ditches - even old mattresses are visible. This sort of rubbish does not come from local residents, it comes from temporary visitors who don't know any better because they are not accustomed to proper rubbish collection in their own countries and because they are not given adequate access to all the facilities they need when they get here. If you don't believe me, please take a car journey along the farm tracks that run behind Park Farm.

The application is a dishonest one, it is not for workers at Newlands Nursery, it is for gang-master's accommodation for his hired out gangs going to work at other places. One suspects it and is intended to avoid making a full planning application, probably because they expect that quite rightly, it would probably be turned down.

There would be no justification for permitting a "continuation" permit for something that is not already taking place and has never taken place. I trust you will see the wisdom of advising Mr Newey to house his gangs where they are going to work, but not at a place where there is no community for them become part of.

Yours sincerely
June Hamilton