

I wish to object to the following Planning Application:

Y/3/22/OUT

This area is allocated in neither Arun District Council's Local Plan, nor the Yapton Neighbourhood Plan.

The above-mentioned plans represent a considerable financial investment to ensure the sustainable evolution of our community, maintaining our local identity and environment. This is our protection against speculative, profit-led development for future generations.

This open, plan-led process is part of our democratic right as members of this community and, thus, any deviation from these agreements should, first, be made in consultation with the local community. Such locally-led development offers the best outcomes for people and nature, ensuring that the right development is in the right place.

Such speculative developments undermine local voices, preventing communities from managing our own future.

My objection to the above planning application is based on the following material considerations coming from our Local Plan:

Policy SD SP1a : Strategic Approach

- *To maintain the District's unique character as a coastal location **set against the South Downs**.*
- *Provide for growth of the **sustainable** villages whilst maintaining their setting within the **open countryside**.*

This specific field represents Yapton's only remaining visual link to the South Downs. Development of this site will remove this link and detract from its identity. This area is the final area of open countryside between Yapton and Bilsham. Development on this site will remove Yapton's setting within the open countryside.

The current Village-wide development in Yapton is putting a huge burden on local amenities (including roads / schools / Doctors / Medical Services). The key objective of any planning process is to ensure that communities remain sustainable. I suspect that, with this additional spread of the boundary to the south of the Village, this will be a sustainable move for the village as a whole.

Settlement structure, Green Infrastructure and landscape

Policy SD SP2: Built-up Area Boundary

The Built-up Area Boundary and the countryside

*Key to the protection of the countryside and landscape is the identification of the **Built up Area Boundary** – a policy definition which defines urban areas from that of the countryside.....**the countryside is recognised for its intrinsic character and beauty**.
..... **prevent coalescence of settlements**.*

Arun District Council has identified a '**Built-Up-Area-Boundary**' which will **strictly control development in the countryside**.

- provides a useful tool to **protect against inappropriate development**, and
- preserves the **setting of existing settlements** by protecting the surrounding countryside from unnecessary development.

This development lies outside the Built-Up Area Boundary.

This development would completely remove the gap between Yapton and Bilsham (2 areas of entirely different character) and coalesce these two settlements.

The setting of both settlements will be affected.

The proposed development is inappropriate.

Managing the 'Rural Urban Fringe'

- *It is a valuable resource can contribute towards the **health**, wealth and **well-being** of ... communities and foster more sustainable lifestyles.*
- *...the Council will target positive management on those areas where significant new development is proposed.*

It may not be recognised as such by those less familiar with this specific area, but the site of this development is extremely important to the health and wellbeing of our community.

Even more so since the start of this pandemic, this area is used as an outside space to meet up, walk, exercise by a considerable proportion of the local community.

This space, connection to the countryside (including far reaching views to the Downs), and local wildlife has (I can personally attest) been essential to the mental and physical health of people who might otherwise find themselves isolated.

Although I do not speak personally (yet!) this is particularly the case for the more elderly, less mobile and less able-bodied members of our community who can use such a widespread local area of countryside as a welcome break from solitude.

This may sound “emotive” but I can assure you that it is true.

Whilst noting that this development does allow for open space, it is also entirely apparent that it is nowhere even close to the current environment.

Policy C SP1: Countryside

Outside the Built-Up Area Boundaries land will be defined as countryside and will be recognised for its intrinsic character and beauty.

The above development lies outside the Built-Up Area, in the Countryside. It fulfils none of the required criteria from the Local plan required in order to build outside the Boundary, in the countryside.

Settlement Structure and Gaps Between Settlements

It is important to retain the settlement structure of Arun District and recognise the value of gaps between settlements for preventing the coalescence of individual settlements and for retaining the separate identity ... of settlements. Development will only be permitted within the gaps if.....It would not undermine the physical and/or visual separation of settlements.

The position of this development would remove the gap between Yapton and Bilsham and undermine both the physical and visual separation of these very different settlements.

Landscape

Certain parts of Arun District are of particular special landscape character due to their lack of development, retaining unspoilt, open character with scenic value.

This is the last open, unspoilt area of Yapton with a clear view to the South Downs. Developing this area will remove the link of this Settlement with its surroundings and have a direct and detrimental effect on its identity.

Policy SO DM1: Soils

Unless designated by this Plan or a Neighbourhood Development Plan, the use of Grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification for any form of development not associated with agriculture, horticulture or forestry will not be permitted unless need for the development outweighs the need to protect such land in the long term.

This area has been used for agricultural purposes for at least 26 years (at least as long as I have lived in the area). In recent times it was part of a vast area growing lettuce.

In a time where local produce, eating less meat is lauded as a method to drastically reduce carbon emissions, protection of valuable farmland has to be recognised.

Now more than ever it is imperative that we are able to produce our food domestically.

The area also provides employment to farm workers.

Policy OSR DM1: Open Space

Open space.....(is) important in enhancing people's quality of life. These also perform wider roles in helping to build inclusive communities, promoting healthy lifestyles and protecting green spaces.

As previously explained, this area is of obvious importance to the physical and mental wellbeing of the existing community.

Policy ENV DM3: Biodiversity Opportunity Areas

Development shall: Retain and sympathetically incorporate locally valued and important habitats, including wildlife corridors and stepping stones.

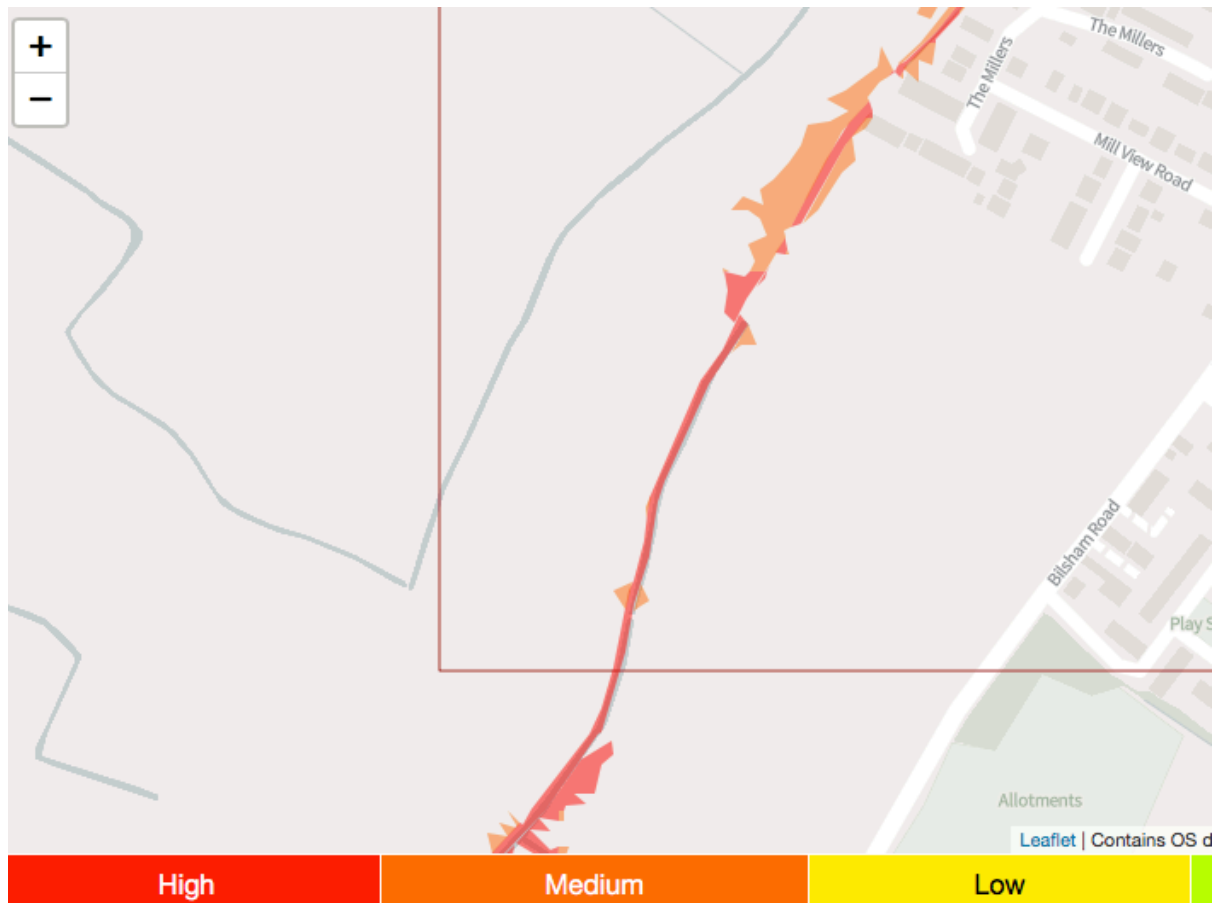
This area links with the other key areas along the South Coast to form a wildlife corridor that is used by diverse species.

My family are keen nature and wildlife enthusiasts and we have seen many important species using this area regularly over the years.

Flooding

All of Arun District is at some level of risk from flooding.

West Sussex Flood Assessment: There are known areas at risk from flooding from surface water, for example.....Yapton,



Living in this area, I am aware of the risk of flooding at this specific site.

I have also experienced the noticeable increase in flooding on the roads in Yapton specifically in areas where large developments have been allowed.

In the face of climate, nature and health crises we must move forward, not backwards. Rather than manipulating housing figures, we should be thinking about our legacy to the next generation.

What are the future impacts of this development:

It will, almost certainly, lead to further development towards Bilsham, the Rife and the Flood Plain? (If you doubt this statement simply look at the evidence in this specific area to see how one development spawns another.....and another!)

In conclusion: I have lived in Yapton for almost 30 years. During this time, I have seen the Village evolve. Yapton is a diverse and inclusive community. As such, I am not averse to controlled, community-led development.

I think this inclusive attitude is reflected throughout the Village. This is very apparent from current level of housing development throughout our community.

However, it seems that this, specific, development may be a step too far for many people. I am seeing an underlying change in our community. A sense of isolation, like we are being targeted for development. Maybe, perhaps, the planning process is not sufficiently applied in our case.

In recent days the people of Yapton even took to the streets to protest this application. I have never seen this in all the years I have lived here! Personally, I find it worrying.....

As I understand, even above any statements in our Plans, any final decision on this application would be made by the Council (or Court) based on whether they can find a benefit from this development.

In my, considerable, experience in this community, I am confident that (apart from the obvious financial aspects) there will be no long-term benefit from developing this site. Development would cause anxiety and malice in the existing community, it would remove a cherished open space and would strip our Village of its identity for future generations. It would also send a message that Councils and Governments will ignore community-led initiatives when the time comes.

Taking a long-term view, it is impossible to see how this proposal can achieve the sustainable development of our community

Regards

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