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7th January 2026

Ref: Gypsy & Traveller DPD consultation – C4S (008) Water Lane Bearsted.

I wish to express my **objection** to the inclusion of the Lodge, Water Lane, Bearsted in the DPD for the following reasons:-

Highway considerations.

Water lane is predominantly a narrow rural roadway (apart from one wider section under the motorway, north of the proposed site). measuring no more that about 3.6 metres wide in places, especially to the south of the site towards Roundwell and the only viable access way to the site. Given that static caravans measure in width anything from 3 to 4 m (Depending on their length) and required clearance widths are between 3.6 to 4.6 m, it is clear to see that the lane is wholly unsuitable to accommodate these vehicles. I draw your attention to your Policy TR8: General site design and layout - Access, *Parking and Storage states at point 142 that “Highway layout should be designed with consideration of the movement of touring caravans or the delivery of static caravans in mind. Sufficient space and turning/manoeuvring area should be created to allow residents to easily take caravans on and off their pitches. Highways should be wide enough that a large static caravan can be delivered by a large goods vehicle to all pitches.”* Water lane was never designed for this purpose, and the site should not be considered for this reason alone.

Public safety.

The lane is used extensively by horses, pedestrians and cyclists alike (there are stables at the top of Water lane) and there are brown countryside access signs directing the public up Water Lane from the A20. There is no pedestrian pavement for the entire length of the Lane from the site entrance south to Roundwell. Given the sizes of the caravans as mentioned above, anyone meeting one of these on Water Lane will find their safety severely compromised. Given that Water Lane is a designated Access to countryside lane, putting pedestrians and cyclists at risk flies in the face of your policy TR8 which, under the heading *“movement and connectivity” states that layouts should encourage cycling and walking.* The site would have the opposite affect for people using Water Lane.

Site entrance.

The plan indicates that the entrance to the site will be just to the north of the shared entrance to The Lodge and Bridge farm, with an oak tree close to the proximity of the entrance. This oak tree is covered by a TPO order (T3). The proximity of this protected oak will make entry and exit of the site dangerous and more difficult, and will undoubtedly damage the oak, given the size of vehicles that will use this entrance. It must also be noted that the applicant applied for removal of this and other trees previously because they found exiting onto Water Lane to be very dangerous due to the trees and hedgerow obscuring the road. Therefore, by their own admission, they have found it difficult and dangerous exiting onto Water Lane in a car, It would clearly be so much worse with agricultural tractors towing large static caravans. The damage to the lane and tree would be unacceptable. The photo on page 2 shows the entrance and the protected oak, and demonstrates how narrow and unsuitable the turning area and lane is.



Environmental.

Water lane is situated at the base of the North Downs, and acts as a conduit for rain water running from the Downs and surrounding fields during heavy downpours. It is named Water Lane for good reason. The proposed site will require an extensive amount of road construction and hard standing to accommodate the caravans. This will in turn increase water run off directly onto the lane further increasing potential flooding into properties along Roundwell. It must also be noted that the natural flood plain at the bottom of Water Lane, Lilk Meadow which used to absorb much of this excess water, has now been built on, so there is no capacity to take the extra water. The images below illustrate how much water can flow down the lane at times of ground saturation and heavy rain. [Image 1](#), looking North from the start of Water lane near Roundwell. [Image 2](#), further up the lane just before the railway bridge looking north. [Image 3](#), looking south towards Bearsted and Roundwell, the junction in the distance.



The site sits at the base of the North Downs area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, on a rise that will make the site quite visible from the North Downs. The photo on page 3 shows the proposed access route in the foreground between the 2 fences and demonstrates how the land slopes upwards to the right where the caravans will be situated. It is evident that the site sits on a prominent position and therefore would be highly visible for the North Downs AONB. The North Downs, more than any other AONB is experiencing unprecedented pressures regarding urbanisation and population growth, and this ill considered site should be allowed to add to that burden.

From: Alan Thorpe - [REDACTED]



Bridge Farm. The above photo was taken from the property of Bridge farm and shows the more northly or “ Secondary route” access to the site. This clearly indicates that vehicles would be passing only 10 to 12 meters away from the occupants home which in planning terms is unacceptable.

The more southerly access only allows for domestic access to the Lodge and is not intended to be used for further development. Additionally, it would be impossible to screen and vehicles would again be running some 12-13 meters from the Bridge Farm dwelling, again not acceptable in planning terms.

I therefore reiterate that, for the reasons above, I strongly object to this proposal and the site should be withdrawn from the draft DPD.

Alan Thorpe – [REDACTED]