

The Planning Inspectorate

COMMENTS ON CASE (Online Version)

Please note that comments about this case need to be made within the timetable. This can be found in the notification letter sent by the local planning authority or the start date letter. Comments submitted after the deadline may be considered invalid and returned to sender.

Appeal Reference: APP/C1435/W/24/3343260

DETAILS OF THE CASE

Appeal Reference

Appeal By

Site Address

SENDER DETAILS

Name

Address

Company/Group/Organisation Name

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

In what capacity do you wish to make representations on this case?

- Appellant
- Agent
- Interested Party / Person
- Land Owner
- Rule 6 (6)

What kind of representation are you making?

- Final Comments
- Proof of Evidence
- Statement
- Statement of Common Ground
- Interested Party/Person Correspondence

Other

YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

Etchingam Parish Council wishes to register its continued objection to overnight tourist accommodation at Bewl Water, and in particular the current proposal for four yurts with associated facilities (APP/C1435/W/24/3343260). The original application had the reference WD/2021/2424/FR. While supportive of the decision to link this application with one other, the Parish Council agrees with the Northern Parishes Group in Rother that this is the latest in a whole series of applications designed to alter the character of the tourist facilities offered and would have wished all outstanding applications to have been handled by the same inspector. Effectively when Bewl Water was operated directly by the Water Company the recreational facilities offered were focused on daylight activities, sailing, rowing, cycling, walking etc, that were altogether compatible with the Nature Reserve established (currently an SNCI but with an overwhelming case to become an SSSI) and the importance of this large stretch of water to both migrating and resident birds. What has become clear over the years that this is one of the most important gull roosts for common and black-headed gulls and this cannot be over-emphasised at a time when seabirds have been badly affected by avian flu. These roosts are vulnerable to disturbance from unexpected noise and light, which was why the planned emphasis was on daylight recreation. The activities of motor craft were kept to the bare minimum necessary and that need has altogether diminished in recent years. It should be emphasised that these recreational facilities were greatly valued and well used, although sailing was hit, once commercial interests became involved, by a substantial increase in rent. EPC is concerned that, contrary to the NPPF, to the policies for protecting the landscape in the High Weald AONB (National Landscape) and to Wealden's own policies, a sustained attempt is being made to alter the nature of tourist provision at Bewl Water to overnight accommodation of one kind or another and that this is bound to affect what is now an internationally important home for birds. The Parish Council is fully supportive of the recent submissions made by the Northern Parishes' Group and would wish that more attention was being given by those responsible for the lease to the daylight activities that are an important part of Rother's Health and Well Being strategy.