

Submission from

Christopher Smart

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Section. Landscape Character

Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

Page 359

Q180. What are your views on the Council's proposed policy on trees, woodlands and hedgerows?

Answer Consideration should be given to the following:

Existing wildlife corridors.

The importance of how these corridors act as a link from one environment to another and how they connect many habitats should not be underestimated. They allow the abundant wildlife here in Fairlight to move freely and safely between these environments, without threat from predators or traffic.

These passages allow animals to access their homes and follow their typical migration patterns without interruption from an increasing urban development.

It would be very easy to expect that the disturbance caused by the building work as well as the greater human footprint in the development area would have a significant negative impact on wildlife moving through the section of the 'corridor' between Waites Lane and the heavily wooded eastern end of Fairlight.

Q181. Are there any alternatives or additional points the Council should be considering?

Answer The above

Section. Landscape Character

Dark Skies

Page 365

Q182. What are your views on the Council's proposed policy on Dark Skies?

Answer Consideration should be given to the following:

Like many small villages along the Sussex coastline, Fairlight Village has a no street light policy, this is intended to preserve the dark skies that we have.

Scientific evidence suggests that artificial light at night has negative and deadly effects on many creatures including mammals, amphibians, birds, insects, and plants. Light pollution radically alters their night-time environment by turning night into day.

This is very important to the local ecology as many nocturnal mammals are dependent on insects flying at night. A recent study identified that in and around Fairlight, at least 10 different species of bats currently feed on these insects!

In addition to bats, scientific evidence suggests that artificial light at night has negative and deadly effects on many other creatures including amphibians, birds, insects, and plants. Nocturnal animals sleep during the day and are active at night. Light pollution radically alters their night-time environment by turning night into day.

Any development, if approved would introduce additional light pollution to the village and this would most certainly be exacerbated by new security lighting that people may feel necessary to install. This would endanger many feeding and migratory habits.

The National Planning Policy Framework, Para 185. Says, Planning policies and decisions should:

“limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation”.

Furthermore, The DaSA para 6.88 states

Dark night skies are a valued characteristic of the district’s countryside and contribute in particular to the special landscape qualities and natural beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Additionally, Core Strategy 2014, Policy EN1: states

High quality natural landscape character is to be achieved by ensuring the protection of **Tranquil and remote areas, including the dark night sky**

Losing the Dark.

As a keen astronomer, as are many of the villagers, visitors to my house are stunned by the intensity of the stars. I, like many of my neighbours moved to Fairlight because of these exceptional dark skies

The scale on which darkness is measured ranges from Class 1, the darkest skies available on Earth, through to Class 9, inner-city skies. This is referred to as the Bortle scale.

To put this into perspective, the skies of Las Vegas and Westminster have a Bortle designation of 9, while the mountain areas of Tenerife are a Bortle 3. Fairlight Cove and Village has a classification of a class 4 sky. This scale perfectly demonstrates just how unique the skies are here compared with the rest of the UK and possibly dark enough to qualify for Dark Sky Sanctuary or Reserve status.

Very little additional lighting would be required to change the current Bortle 4 into a Bortle 5 or more. This may seem negligible but be assured any small increase would not be insignificant.

Fairlight astronomers are the envy of less fortunate astronomers across the country, and we have all invested in equipment to assist us with observing the night-time skies and star gazing.

I would like to draw your attention to the following.

The International Dark Sky Association (IDSA) has said, *"The unusual and unique dark skies over the High Weald AONB and surrounding areas have been identified as worthy of conservation!"*

Or as the International Dark-Sky Association also puts it

"A lost view of the stars extinguishes a connection with the natural world and blinds us to one of the most splendid wonders in the universe.

Children who grow up without the experience of a starry night miss invaluable opportunities to speculate about larger questions and to learn about the environment and larger world."

Q183. Are there any alternatives or additional points the Council should be considering?

Answer The above