

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 16th March 2026

LATE REPRESENTATIONS SUMMARY

3(a) 25/01279/FUL - 43 affordable dwellings of mixed size and tenure along with associated infrastructure and open space - Land North of Sewage Pumping Station, Station Road, Warboys.

There are no late representations for this item.

3(b) 24/02116/FUL - Change of use of land for the stationing of two mobile homes and four touring caravans to include establishment of hardstanding and fences on a temporary or permanent basis (part retrospective) - Land at Rosefield, Parkhall Road, Somersham.

There are no late representations for this item.

3(c) - 3(j) 21/01481/FUL, 23/02167/FUL, 21/01476/FUL, 21/01477/FUL, 21/01478/FUL, 21/01479/FUL, 21/01480/FUL & 21/01475/FUL – Gypsy and Traveller Pitches – Harpers Drove & Middle Drove, Ramsey Heights

Given that these 8 items relate to applications on Harpers Drove and Middle Drove in Ramsey Heights, and the late representations received appear to relate to all the applications, Officers are therefore reporting the late representation under a heading for all the items.

Given how much time has passed since the original consultations on the applications, Officers deemed it appropriate in this case to carry out a re-consultations (this included site notices and Town Council).

Attached are two representations (Appendix 1 & 2) from a Ramsey Heights resident. These can be summarised as:

- The expansion results in a level of urbanisation which is detrimental to the openness of the countryside and is indeed now dominant to Ramsey Heights. The “Tipping Point “has been exceeded.
- The applications in general do not specify that the accommodation is required for travellers

- The applications make no reference to provision of infrastructure, services or drainage.
- The scale, Location and appearance of the development is now increasing in visual prominence and fails to be compatible with the rural location or to enhance the character of the landscape. (This is seen when approaching Ramsey Heights from either direction and from the end of Chapel Lane.
- The Environment Agency has already set out concern, as has the middle level drainage authority in relation to the issue of raw human sewage directly into the watercourse albeit via multiple cess pits.
- The expansion occupies a low lying area and goes against the site specific Flood Risk Assessment
- The unchecked expansion is attracting observed and widely reported criminal activity.
- The extensiveness and increased visibility of the expansion is adversely impacting local resident's enjoyment of their own homes, gardens and local environment.
- The desirability of the area is being eroded, impacting saleability of properties and indeed, their value.
- Retrospective nature of the planning applications

Updated comments have been received from Ramsey Town Council on the applications:

'REFUSE: RTC previous comments stood including being situated in flood risk zone 3. The application would have significant adverse effect on the amenity of nearby residents by restricting their access to walks on the right of ways for worries over safety. The application would affect and is affecting the character and appearance of the wider landscape is being harmed. Close to a site of special scientific interest Woodwalton Fen. The council had huge concerns over the health and safety for contamination due to no sewage access. The concern was shared with the Environment Agency who previously asked for conditions for sewage to be in place to enable approval. The traveller/gypsy community now dominates the number of settled community. Council had huge concerns over the lack of infrastructure including the electricity, gas, and water supplies and road. Local school places are stretched. Increased traffic movement. When static homes arrived, the transporters couldn't access the droves and blocked the main roads for residents. The Drove is not fit for purpose for this much traffic. The intimidation of residents who live near the droves and are fearful of reprisals if their objections are made public. Concerns over the increased criminal activity which has been highlighted with police raids recently. It also affected the desirability of the area which then impacted the saleability of properties and their value.'

A number of these points raised have already been addressed in the Officer reports. As always, these late representations should be read in conjunction with the Officer reports that accompany each application. Officers will respond to any new points below.

All the applications seek planning permission for the gypsy and traveller pitches.

Firstly, Article 1 of the First Protocol (Human Rights Act) sets out that a person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions and that no one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest. Article 8 of the Human Rights Act states that everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life and his home. Refusing would represent an interference with the home and family life of the proposed occupiers, such that both Articles would be engaged. There is also a positive obligation imposed by Article 8 to facilitate the gypsy way of life.

Occupants of gypsy and traveller pitches are an ethnic minority and thus have the protected characteristic of race under s149(7) of the Equality Act 2010. The proposal would meet the needs of those persons with a relevant protected characteristic, by reason of race, and so, as required by section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010, the public sector equality duty is applicable.

As outlined in the reports, Officers have assessed the cumulative impact of the applications and the existing authorised gypsy and traveller pitches. Officers cannot comment further on the alleged unauthorised development or any matters that be subject of current investigations as Officers do not wish to prejudice the position of the Local Planning Authority.

The applications are all retrospective. Carrying out works without planning permission is not, in itself, criminal offence; it is an unauthorised activity, but not illegal. In this case, the applicants have sought to regularise the situation by submitting planning applications. Retrospective planning applications must be treated the same as standard applications. It is also acknowledged that there has been a significant delay in determining these applications.

The concerns raised by the Town Council and the local residents about the recent police activity on the Drovers is noted. The fear of crime can be a material consideration. Paragraph 96 of the NPPF requires that developments "safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder and the fear of crime do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience'. In this case, there are no significant concerns over the design or location of the proposed development in respect of fear of crime which amounts to conflict with the NPPF in this regard.

Officers have sympathy with the concerns raised, and the impact the recent police activity has had on all local residents. There is no substantive evidence in front of officers which links the applications to the alleged criminal or anti-social behaviour. In any event, such issues are best addressed through other legislation and are not inherent in the use of the land being applied for. Such issues fall under the responsibility of other agencies such as the Police.

Officer recommend the inclusion of condition on all the applications for a site development scheme which will include details of foul drainage/waste alongside a number of other things.

Negative effects on property value is not a material planning consideration. The planning system operates in the public interest and therefore a private loss, such as devaluation of a neighbouring property, cannot be considered to be a material planning consideration. Should there be any doubt that property devaluation is not a material planning consideration, a claim that failing to take into account impact on a neighbour's property value infringed article 1 of the first protocol of the Human Rights Convention was rejected by the High Court in *Rank v East Cambridgeshire District Council* [2002].

Likewise, the loss of a private view is not considered to be a material consideration.