



Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 1SS

Our ref: 03553
Date: 15 April 2026

For the attention of: Andrew Clarke

Application ref: DM/25/0590
Location: Little Reeds Farm London Road Hickstead Haywards Heath
Proposal/Description: Engineering works: 5m high earth noise bund with associated landscaping

Thank you for re-consulting with Place Services on the above application. This letter sets out our consultation response on the landscape impact of the application and how the proposal relates and responds to the landscape setting and context of the site.

This review is based on a desktop study without a site visit, of the above-referenced application and its submitted documents. Our Landscape comments are as follows:

1.0. Review of the proposal/submitted information:

- 1.1. An Addendum to the Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVA) has been submitted by Weller Designs Ltd in November 2025. We welcome the submission of this Addendum to address the comments raised in our previous response dated 7th May 2025.

Para 1.12 Impact Methodology

- 1.2. We welcome the submission of additional viewpoint photography from Hickstead Lane, as represented by Viewpoints A and B on Figure 1 (November 2025). This is a useful inclusion for representing further views to the west.
- 1.3. The LVIA still does not include an assessment on the landscape character effects to the site and immediate context, which would have resulted in much higher landscape character effects than that represented by the two receptors currently assessed.

Para 1.13 Assessment Conclusions

- 1.4. The assessed effects for both Landscape Character and Visual Impact have been amended. We judge that the revised judgements better reflect the effects associated with the proposed 5m bund.

- 1.5. We recognise that the existing surrounding vegetation, currently reaching approximately 4-5m in height, provides a degree of seasonal screening, particularly during the summer months. However, it is also important to note that the proposed use of the bund for horse grazing, where the use is likely to accentuate the artificial nature of this landform, thereby increasing its visual prominence within the landscape.
- 1.6. The steeper contours on the western site boundary are less of a concern, given their containment adjacent to the vegetation alongside the A23. The additional proposed vegetation included within the Landscape Plan (Dwg no. 1234.04s Rev. D) will contribute to reducing the visual effect of this steep landform.

Para 1.1.2 Other Matters

- 1.7. The introduction of planting on the eastern site boundary and the northern face, demonstrated on the Landscape Plan, is positive. This will contribute to screening and softening the proposals in the landscape. The proposed landscape planting is now proposed to be located on the lower slopes, which will contribute to de-emphasising the unnatural landform.
- 1.8. The Tree Protection Fencing has been moved outside of the root protection area (RPA) for vegetation along the western site boundary, which is welcomed.

2.0. Summary

- 2.1. The amendments to the submitted LVA are welcomed, where we have arrived at similar broad conclusions regarding the landscape and visual impacts associated with the proposals. This is based only on the receptors included within the assessment.
- 2.2. The inclusion of *the site and immediate context* as a landscape receptor would still have been welcomed. Effects on this receptor would be higher than any other included landscape receptors within the assessment, given the unnatural level changes and therefore magnitude of change.
- 2.3. A number of changes have been made to the submitted Landscape Plans, to address our previous comments and reduce the effects of the proposals through mitigation. Many of these amendments have been welcomed and help to reduce the visual effects.
- 2.4. While we acknowledge that introducing a shallower gradient along the eastern edge would help to reduce the perception of an overly engineered landform, we maintain that the overall extent, and partly height, of the proposed ground levels still appears disproportionate in the context of the surrounding landscape character.
- 2.5. Overall, the proposed clarifications and amendments are positive and contribute to reducing the effects, however some concerns remain regarding the extent of the site

proposed for level changes.

Please contact us if you have any queries in relation to this advice.

Place Services – Landscape Team

Email: landscape@essex.gov.uk



Place Services provide landscape advice on behalf of Mid Sussex District Council

Please note:

This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.

We are unable to respond directly to applicants/agents or other interested parties. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant/agent or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer at the relevant LPA, who will seek further advice from us where appropriate.

