

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 17 June 2026 14:24:55 UTC+01:00
To: "Caroline Grist" <caroline.grist@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application
DM/26/1315

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 17/06/2026 2:24 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land West Of Gatesmead Wickham Way Haywards Heath West Sussex
Proposal:	Proposed 49 new homes together with open space and associated infrastructure.
Case Officer:	Caroline Grist

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address: 52 Gatesmead Haywards Heath West Sussex

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour or general public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	
Comments:	Objection to planning application DM/26/1315 - Land West of Gatesmead, Wickham Way, Haywards Heath. I am a resident of Gatesmead and a supporter of the Save Wickham Fields community campaign, which opposes the proposed development of Wickham Fields. I have lived in Haywards Heath for more than 6 years, having previously lived in Wealden District, and East Grinstead. I have been a local resident of Sussex for over 30 years.

I object to DM/26/1315 in full, on the following grounds.

1. The unresolved legal status of DMMO 3/22.

A Definitive Map Modification Order application affecting this site (DMMO 3/22) has been undetermined by West Sussex County Council since 15 November 2021 - over four-and-a-half years. The application was filed jointly by Haywards Heath Town Council and Lindfield Rural Parish Council as a user (evidence-based) application under Schedule 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and remains at investigation stage on WSCC's register.

I have used the broad grassy open footpath to which DMMO 3/22 relates almost daily since moving to Haywards Heath 6+ years ago. It provides an important pedestrian and rural route to town, as well as a recreational open air space for locals, including children and families. It is well used on a regular daily basis.

Because DMMO 3/22 has not yet been determined, the legal status, position, alignment and width of the alleged public right of way over or adjacent to the site are not yet established in law. I acknowledge that, where the position of a right of way is known and settled, a development can sometimes be designed around it. That is not the position here. There is, at present, nothing settled for the application to be designed around. In other Mid Sussex cases where a public right of way has been successfully integrated into a development, the legal status of the route was already resolved before the planning decision was made. That procedural step has not yet happened here.

I therefore object on the basis that DM/26/1315 cannot be properly determined while DMMO 3/22 remains undetermined. To determine the application now would risk a planning decision made on incomplete legal information that would be difficult to remedy if WSCC subsequently confirms the route. Given that DMMO 3/22 is one of only two user applications in WSCC's entire backlog, we ask the Council to make representations to WSCC for an expedited determination ahead of any recommendation to committee on DM/26/1315.

2. Loss of open green space and biodiversity.

The application would destroy approximately 11 acres of open grassland forming part of the open countryside on the eastern edge of Haywards Heath. Local residents have documented protected species on the site, including black redstart - a Schedule 1 protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, with fewer than 100 UK breeding pairs - and slow worm (also protected), alongside green woodpeckers, great spotted woodpecker, buzzards (who nest in pairs annually), sparrowhawk and red kite. The presence of multiple birds of prey indicates a

functioning, undisturbed habitat.

In addition, deer regularly use the field as part of their travel / feeding routes. I have on regular occasions, mostly in winter when food is scarcer, seen small groups of deer traversing the field, across to the existing footpath and into the existing meadow on Gatesmead where they graze.

The applicant's submitted ecological evidence should be tested against an independent survey before any determination, and the precautionary principle applied to species the survey may have missed.

3. Access via Gatesmead.

All vehicular access to the proposed development is via Gatesmead, a residential street not built for the volume of traffic generated by 49 new homes. The cumulative impact on highway safety, junction visibility at Wickham Way, the multiple bends on the road, construction traffic, refuse vehicle access and the school run has not, in my opinion, been adequately considered or addressed in the submitted material.

There are at least 4 blind bends on the existing Gatesmead road, where it is almost impossible to see oncoming traffic. There is a blind hump in the road between the original Gatesmead and the newer part of the development. It is impossible to see over this hill, and even with the existing traffic calming measures, drivers regularly meet each other head-on. There are also kerb-side parked cars along the road.

All of these dangers are exacerbated by regular delivery vans, refuse lorries etc.

The winding and hilly topography of the road means that it is already difficult to navigate safely for residents, including many with young families. Those risks would be exacerbated by the addition of transport associated with 49 houses. It would also result in serious safety risks from construction traffic during the construction period.

We invite the Council's highways consultees to consider not only theoretical capacity but the lived conditions of this long cul-de-sac road at peak times.

4. Harm to designated heritage assets.

Wickham Farmhouse (a late-16th-century lobby-entrance house, c. 1580) and Sunte House (c. 1700s) are both Grade II* listed - a designation applied to only around 5.8% of listed buildings in England. The remnant countryside setting of both buildings forms part of the significance for which they are listed. The NPPF

requires that great weight be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets and that clear and convincing justification be provided for any harm. The applicant's own consultants have previously acknowledged that development of this site "may affect the significance of these designated built heritage assets". I do not consider the public benefit of 49 homes on this particular site outweighs the harm to the setting of two Grade II* listed buildings, when other sites are available within the District. We ask that Historic England be consulted formally.

5. Local infrastructure capacity.

Local schools, GP services and drainage infrastructure in Haywards Heath are already under acknowledged pressure. The application does not, in our view, adequately demonstrate that the additional demand from 49 new homes can be accommodated without further degradation of services for existing residents. The cumulative impact alongside other candidate sites in the District Plan additional-sites process compounds this concern.

6. Conclusion.

For the reasons set out above - and in particular

- a) the unresolved legal status of DMMO 3/22 ;
- b) the significant highway risks of the long winding cul-de-sac road ; and
- c) the loss of green space and biodiversity -

I object to DM/26/1315 and ask that the application be refused.

Kind regards