

Written Submission to the Planning Committee — 9 July 2026

Application DM/25/2626 — 42 Hurst Road, Hassocks

Submitted on behalf of the residents of 44 Hurst Road — Objection

At a glance — why members can refuse

- The report itself accepts the site is countryside outside the built-up area, and that the scheme conflicts with the development plan read as a whole (paras 9.6, 12.3, 13.4).
- Conceded breach of Policy DP15 — a full-weight policy (para 12.25) — with no special justification for a new home in the countryside (para 12.8).
- The scheme fails DP6 criteria 1 and 2 (para 12.6), so it cannot properly comply with Neighbourhood Plan Policies 1 and 14, which protect the Local Gap.
- The real benefit is one net additional dwelling — the side dwelling is already permitted under DM/24/1748.
- The existing house's rear garden shrinks from over 100 metres to 18 metres; the dwelling sits in the open rural tract shared by six gardens, beyond the line no other dwelling crosses (Exhibits A and B; Exhibit C, Photo 3).
- The mitigation has not been shown to be deliverable: a maintained Tree Officer objection, un rebutted BRE lighting evidence, and drainage, parking and access all deferred or unassessed.
- These objections go to principle — they cannot be designed out by a revised drawing.

Members are respectfully asked to refuse this application **on grounds of principle and planning balance**. The officer's report concedes the central policy conflicts; the question is solely one of weight, and that judgement belongs to the committee.

Suggested reason for refusal

The proposed backland dwelling would be located on residential garden land outside the built-up area boundary, within the designated countryside and Local Gap. By reason of its siting, subdivision of the plot, intensification of residential use and erosion of the spacious garden pattern that contributes to the rural edge and separation between settlements, the development would cause unacceptable harm to the character, appearance and function of this countryside location.

The proposal would conflict with Policies DP6, DP12 and DP15 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and Policies 1 and 14 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan. It has not been shown to meet any special justification for a new dwelling in the countryside. The limited benefit of one net additional dwelling would not outweigh the identified development plan conflict, the harm to the character and pattern of the Local Gap, and the unresolved impacts on trees, landscaping and neighbouring residential amenity. The adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework as a whole.

Seven reasons, briefly

1. The report accepts the principle conflict. The site is countryside outside the built-up area (paras 9.6, 12.3); the scheme fails DP6 criteria 1 and 2 (12.6); it meets none of Policy DP15's special justifications (12.8); and it conflicts with the development plan read as a whole (13.4). DP15 carries full weight

(12.25). A conceded breach of a full-weight policy attaches to the site, not the scheme — no redesign, landscaping or condition can cure it.

2. The Neighbourhood Plan points against approval. HNP Policies 1 and 14 support housing in the Local Gap only where it accords with DP6 — which the report finds failed. The most recently adopted plan document cannot properly be treated as complied with, and members are entitled to give it real weight.

3. The real benefit is one dwelling, not two. The side dwelling is already permitted under DM/24/1748 and can be implemented regardless of this decision, subject to the normal expiry/commencement requirements — and it is included in this application unchanged (para 10.9). The report itself puts it plainly: this application 'would therefore result in an additional dwelling' (para 12.63). Counting 'two new dwellings' (paras 2.10, 13.9) double-counts; one net dwelling is the housing-benefit column.

4. Garden land carries no automatic brownfield credit. The NPPF does not give blanket support to the development of residential gardens. Paragraph 75 expressly supports policies resisting inappropriate residential garden development where it harms the local area. Here, the officer report itself identifies countryside and Local Gap policy conflict, so 'effective use of land' (12.27) cannot properly outweigh harm to the character and function of this rear garden tract.

5. A temporary shortfall should not licence permanent harm. The tilted balance rests on a transient housing supply position; the emerging District Plan concluded its examination hearings in March 2026. Subdivision of countryside garden land is permanent and irreversible. Members are not asked to defy paragraph 11(d) — only to weigh it honestly; the case officer's own written advice to residents (November 2025) confirms that a scheme of one or a few houses can be refused where the negatives outweigh.

6. The open tract, and precedent. In two years this plot has moved from one dwelling towards, if approved, three. The Edwardian house's rear garden of over 100 metres shrinks to 18 metres (10.12), smaller than its neighbours' (12.40). From mid-garden to the garden ends, the six gardens — No. 42's and five neighbours' — from the middle gardens we are divided only by open two-bar post and rail fencing, forming one continuous open rural tract; the proposed dwelling and most of its curtilage sit beyond that line, in open meadow (Exhibits A and B; Exhibit C, Photo 3). No other dwelling in this part of Hurst Road stands beyond it — and the same arguments would justify every large garden on the road.

7. The evidence base has not caught up with the proposal. The Tree Officer objected on 8 January 2026 and, after reviewing the applicant's Addendum, wrote again on 21 January: still no root protection calculation for the neighbouring ash (Exhibit C, Photos 1 and 2), future pressure on retained trees unaddressed, and 'with the information provided I cannot be confident that damage to trees would not occur.' The hedge, 32-metre access track, boundary fence and protected root zones must all share one narrow strip — a condition cannot create physical space that is not there. The applicant submitted no lighting assessment; the only lighting evidence on file is the residents' BRE report (Dr Ticleanu), which remains un rebutted, with lighting deferred to Condition 17. The ecological consultee's letter dated 25 November 2025 does not assess lighting or headlights. It is a conditional response based on the applicant's ecological appraisal. It refers to potential bat roost features in the retained dwelling, Hazel Dormouse records within 1km with Hazel on the northern boundary, Badger precautions because the species may use the site, and suitable reptile habitat with reptile records within 1km. It also records the applicant's own metric as showing an on-site biodiversity loss of 11.34%, to be offset by purchasing off-site units. That is not evidence that lighting, headlights and night-time domestic activity would cause no harm. The private foul pumping station shown on the applicant's own Site Plan, approximately six metres from No. 44's boundary, has been assessed by no one — the drainage response predates the

amended plans, never mentions it, and retains an unfilled template placeholder. The highways response records no site visit, shows seven parking spaces against the nine WSCC's own calculator requires, and confirms the new access still needs a crossover licence that permission does not guarantee. Even the front dwelling's own entrance would open onto the new through-track, unassessed (10.9–10.10). Members are being asked to decide on assumptions.

The planning balance

The report reaches a positive balance by classing every contested issue — design, amenity, trees, drainage (13.12) — as 'neutral'. Its own contents say otherwise: a maintained Tree Officer objection is not neutral; unrebutted expert lighting evidence is not neutral; a dwelling the report accepts 'may be out of keeping' (12.39) is at best neutral. Corrected for the double-counted dwelling, the balance is **one net dwelling** against an admitted breach of a full-weight policy, conflict with both Neighbourhood Plan principle policies, harm to the Local Gap's character and function, an unresolved tree objection, and unanswered expert lighting evidence. On any honest weighing, the negatives outweigh.

Residential amenity — in brief

The residents of No. 44 will address amenity directly at committee. In summary: having redesigned their home around the 2024 permission — bricking up side windows and placing living and sleeping spaces at the rear — they now face a 32-metre access track within feet of those rooms, in a setting whose darkness is shown photographically at Exhibit B (Photo 3, taken from the affected balcony) and supported by the BRE evidence; the proximity of those rooms and the outdoor dining area to the line of the track is shown at Exhibit C. The previous permission was an ancillary pool house; this is a permanent four-bedroom dwelling — a wholly different pattern of use.

Conclusion

This is not a case where refusal would rest on matters correctable by a revised drawing. The central objection is one of principle: a new backland dwelling on countryside garden land in the Local Gap, contrary to the development plan and without special justification. The officer's report identifies the conflict; members are entitled to give it decisive weight. We respectfully ask the committee to refuse application DM/25/2626.

Amber and Tony Parr

44 Hurst Road, Hassocks

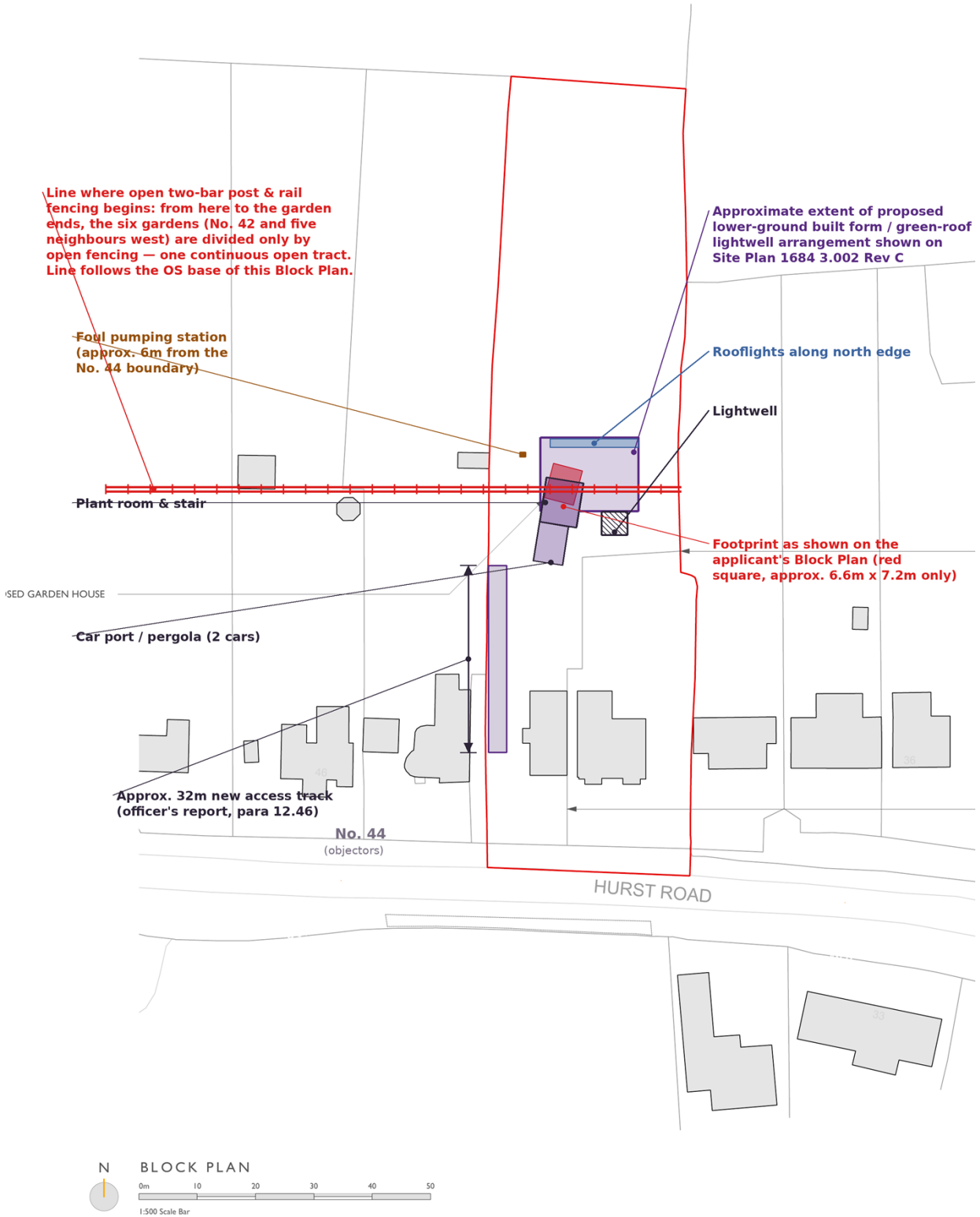
July 2026 — for the Planning Committee meeting of 9 July 2026

Exhibit A — Proposed 'Garden House' superimposed on the applicant's 'As Proposed OS & Block Plan' (1684 3.001 Rev B)

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EXHIBIT — Proposed 'Garden House' superimposed on the applicant's 'As Proposed OS & Block Plan' (1684 3.001

Dwelling, rooflights, lightwell, car port, pumping station and access track transferred from the applicant's 'As Proposed Site Plan' (1684 3.002 Rev C) at the stated scales (1:200 onto 1:500), registered to the site boundary. Indicative only.



Prepared by the residents of 44 Hurst Road — July 2026.

Base plan: applicant's "As Proposed OS & Block Plan", drawing 1684 3.001 Rev B. Overlay annotations taken from applicant's "As Proposed Site Plan", drawing 1684 3.002 Rev C. Overlay is indicative only and registered to the site boundary.

Exhibit B — Photographic exhibit: site character and dark-sky context

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PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBIT — site character and dark-sky context

Photographs taken by the residents of 44 Hurst Road, 4–5 July 2026



Photo 1 — view north from No. 44
Open two-bar post & rail fencing at the garden end, with open paddock beyond. This fence line runs across six gardens: No. 42 and five neighbours to the west (shown red on Exhibit A).



Photo 2 — the application site
The land proposed for the backland dwelling: unmanaged meadow grassland beyond the established garden ends.

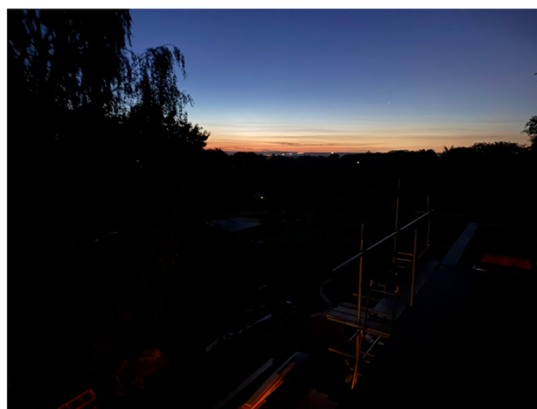


Photo 3 — last light, 4 July 2026
Taken from the first-floor balcony of No. 44 looking across the rear gardens. The only lighting visible is on the distant horizon — corroborating the BRE assessment of a relatively dark site (Dr C Ticleanu, ref P131417-1000).

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Companion to: Written Submission and Block Plan superimposition exhibit. Viewpoints available on request.

Exhibit C — Photographic exhibit: proximity of the proposed access track to No. 44's living areas, and the boundary ash



Photo 1 — The boundary ash — the tree for which the Tree Officer records no root protection calculation — with No. 44's outdoor dining area, kitchen and bedroom immediately behind. The ash stands on the shared boundary: the proposed 32-metre access track would pass on its far side, a few feet from these rooms. (The blockwork is No. 44's own wall, awaiting cladding.)



Photo 2 — The same boundary viewed along its length, showing how close No. 44's living accommodation sits to the line the track would follow. The applicant's hedge, fence, track and the ash's root protection zone must all share this strip.



Photo 3 — The middle and lower sections of No. 44's garden, looking out to the open fields beyond — part of the continuous open rural tract described at paragraph 6, into which the proposed dwelling and its curtilage would intrude.

Photographs taken 6 July 2020 from within No. 44 Hurst Road.