

## Planning Policy Advice

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|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Application Ref:                            | DM/26/2115                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Application Type:<br>(Pre-app/ application) | Application                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Address:                                    | Land To South Of, Crabbet Park, Equestrian Centre, Turners Hill Road, Turners Hill                                                                                                                                                    |
| Description:                                | Construction of a padel tennis facility (Use Class E(d)) with ancillary offices, changing facilities and studio, member shop and café (all within Use Class E), car and cycle parking, bin storage, with associated access and works. |
| Date:                                       | 29 September 2026                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Policy Officer:                             | Sarah Little                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| DM Officer:                                 | Hamish Evans                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

## Development Plan

The Development Plan comprises the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (2018) which is currently under review, and the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) (2022). The site falls within the boundary of the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan which was made in September 2021.

The saved policies of the Mid Sussex Local Plan (2004) and the Small Scale Housing Allocations DPD (2008) are not relevant to this development proposal.

Below are the Development Plan policies considered key to the consideration of the development proposal. The weight attributed to the following policies may be affected by the recent publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026).

### Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (2018)

- Policy DP1: Sustainable Economic Development
- Policy DP6: Settlement Hierarchy
- Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside
- Policy DP14: Sustainable Rural Development and the Rural Economy
- Policy DP21: Transport
- Policy DP22: Rights of Way and Other Recreational Routes
- Policy DP24: Leisure and Cultural Facilities and Activities
- Policy DP25: Community Facilities and Local Services
- Policy DP26: Character and Design
- Policy DP28: Accessibility
- Policy DP29: Noise, Light and Air Pollution
- Policy DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
- Policy DP38: Biodiversity
- Policy DP39: Sustainable Design and Construction
- Policy DP41: Flood Risk and Drainage
- Policy DP42: Water Infrastructure and the Water Environment

### Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan (2021)

The Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan was made in September 2021. Since then, the Mid Sussex District Plan (2018) and Site Allocations DPD (2022) have been adopted. If there is conflict between non-strategic policies in the District Plan and the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan, the District Plan takes precedence.

Below are the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan policies considered key to the consideration of the development proposal.

- Policy CNP1: General Development Requirements
- Policy CNP9: Agricultural Belt
- Policy CNP13: Our Economy
- Policy CNP14: Sustainable Transport
- Policy CNP15: Car Parking

### **Emerging District Plan**

The Mid Sussex District Plan has been reviewed to ensure it remains effective and consistent with national policy. The review process commenced in 2021 and the draft Mid Sussex District Plan (2021-2039) was submitted for Examination in July 2024.

Hearing sessions were held in February and March 2026. The Inspector has provided the Council with his interim conclusions and action points for the Council to complete in a Post Hearing Letter (IDJB-12). In his Post Hearings letter, the Inspector has asked the Council to test a higher housing figure in the range of 1,200 to 1,300 dwellings per annum. In response to this, the Council published its list of additional sites which were subject to in-combination testing (such as transport modelling and Sustainability Appraisal), as set out in MS-TP5. The list of additional sites proposed for allocation as well as a number of Main Modifications recommended by the Inspector to ensure the District Plan is legally compliant and sound, was consulted on for six weeks from late July to early September 2026. All comments received have been sent to the Inspector for consideration.

All latest Examination news and documentation can be found on our website here: <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/district-plan-review-examination/>

At this stage, policies within the draft District Plan have minimal weight.

### **Site location**

The site is outside of the built-up areas as shown on the adopted Policies Maps and therefore Policy DP6: Settlement Hierarchy and Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside are relevant.

This site lies immediately adjacent to the proposed allocation within the Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039 Submission Draft as site DPSC2: Land at Crabbet Park. The allocation is for around 2,000 homes and associated infrastructure.

Upon adoption of the District Plan, this site would fall within the built-up area boundary. However, due to the stage the emerging District Plan is at in the Local Plan process, policies within the draft District Plan are regarded as having minimal weight.

Considering the proposed use for the site as new small-scale economic development within the countryside, Policy DP14: Sustainable Rural Development and the Rural Economy is also relevant. The proposal seeks to form an extension to the existing leisure and economic

development cluster at Crabbet Park, supporting sustainable growth and the vitality of the rural economy.

#### **Policy DP1: Sustainable Economic Development**

Policy DP1 seeks to meet employment needs by allowing new small-scale economic development, in the countryside, including tourism (in accordance with Development in the Countryside Policies).

It is noted that the proposed use will be considered as small-scale economic development and provide employment for 6FTE staff members.

#### **Policy DP24: Leisure and Cultural Facilities and Activities**

Policy DP24 sets out that development that provides new and/or enhanced leisure and cultural activities and facilities, including allotments, in accordance with the strategic aims of the Leisure and Cultural Strategy for Mid Sussex will be supported.

#### **Policy DP21: Transport**

Policy DP21: Transport sets out that development will be required to support the objectives of the West Sussex Transport Plan and decisions on proposals must take account of a number of things including whether the scheme is sustainably located; whether opportunities to minimise the need for travel; and whether appropriate opportunities to facilitate and promote the increased use of alternative means of transport to the private car have been explored and taken up; and whether adequate car parking is provided.

The policy also requires development which generates significant amounts of movement to be supported by a Transport Assessment / Statement and Travel Plan; to provide appropriate mitigation to support new development on the local and strategic road network; and to avoid severe additional traffic congestion, individually and cumulatively, taking account of any proposed mitigation.

The site is located in close proximity to the A264 Copthorne Common Road and the B2028 Turners Hill Road. It is noted that the proposal will provide a total of 29 car parking spaces and 8 cycles spaces. The provision of 29 car parking spaces would be an under provision and would not accord with the WSCC car parking standards for 'Assembly and Leisure' uses. That being said, the applicant states that the proposed number of car parking spaces would be more appropriate based on the level of anticipated demand during peak hours calculated. The applicant has undertaken highways pre-application advice for the scheme and WSCC have considered that the proposed car and cycle parking provision will meet the requirements of the proposal based on the levels of anticipated parking demand.

#### **Policy DP38: Biodiversity**

Policy DP38: Biodiversity seeks to ensure that biodiversity will be protected and enhanced. There is no minimum requirements set out in this policy, however, the Environment Act 2021 now requires that new developments must provide a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity. The submitted Planning Statement concludes that proposals will not be able to achieve the statutory minimum 10% new gain biodiversity within the site given the limited amount of soft landscaping within the parcel. Therefore, the applicant proposes to make

financial contributions to secure ecological enhancements off-site as part of a s106 agreement.