

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 October 2026 07:58:26 UTC+01:00
To: "Andy Watt" <andy.watt@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application
DM/26/2433

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 12/10/2026 7:58 AM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land East Of College Lane Hurstpierpoint West Sussex
Proposal:	Erection of 100 dwellings, with associated access, car parking, refuse/recycling storage, landscaping, infrastructure and works.
Case Officer:	Andrew Watt

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address:	7 Wickham Drive Hurstpierpoint
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Comments Details

Comment er Type:	Neighbour or general public
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Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
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Reasons
for
comment:

Comment s:	I live approximately 30 metres from College Lane and use College Lane, Hurst Road, Hassocks Road and Hurstpierpoint High Street every day. My objection is therefore based not only on the planning history and policy position, but also on direct experience of how this road network actually functions.
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My principal concern is that this proposal would urbanise one of the remaining open areas between Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks, intensify traffic on a

constrained local road network and further erode the separate identity of the two settlements.

1. Previous refusal and the Local Gap

This site has already been the subject of a called-in application for 81 dwellings. The Secretary of State refused that proposal because the gap between Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks continued to serve an important planning purpose and because development would cause a significant diminution of openness. The current application is for 100 dwellings, materially more than the 81 previously refused.

I appreciate that planning circumstances can change, but the physical role of this land in separating Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks has not disappeared. The adopted District Plan and Neighbourhood Plan continue to seek to protect countryside and prevent coalescence. The applicant's own LVIA recognises Policies DP12 and DP13 as relevant and acknowledges that the site is not allocated in the adopted development plan.

The Council should therefore require a convincing explanation of what has materially changed since the previous refusal to justify a larger scheme on the same land.

2. The proposal causes acknowledged landscape harm

The applicant's own Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is not evidence of an absence of harm. It identifies the site as pasture and confirms that development would fundamentally convert it to housing.

There is also an important uncertainty within that document. The LVIA is dated 25 September 2026 and records that its final revision was "amended to new scheme", yet paragraph 1.6 states that it assesses 90 dwellings, whereas the application is for 100 dwellings.

I ask the Council to confirm that the final landscape conclusions genuinely assess the submitted 100-dwelling layout.

This matters because the site lies within the remaining countryside between Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks. Screening and landscaping may reduce views over time, but planting cannot recreate the openness of a field once it has been permanently developed.

3. Traffic and highway impact

The applicant's own Transport Assessment predicts 701 two-way vehicle movements per day from the development, including 67 vehicle movements in each of the AM and PM peak hours, which the report itself describes as approximately one additional vehicle every minute in the peaks.

That needs to be understood in the context of the road as residents actually experience it.

The applicant's automatic counter recorded a five-weekday mean of 1,708 vehicles per day on College Lane. It recorded 1,659 vehicles on the Thursday used for the detailed count, but 2,073 the following Friday, around 25% more. Then obviously decided to use the lowest vehicle count for their findings.

The same survey recorded an 85th-percentile speed of 33mph and found that

36.3% of weekday vehicles exceeded the 30mph limit.

These are not abstract concerns. College Lane is used by schoolchildren, residents, cyclists and drivers every day. It feeds directly into Hassocks Road, Hurst Road and ultimately the already constrained village network.

As somebody who lives beside this road and uses it daily, the modelling does not capture the full lived experience of passing conflicts, queues, school traffic, parked vehicles and pedestrian vulnerability.

4. The Road Safety Audit observation was not representative of the busiest conditions

The Stage 1 Road Safety Audit site visit lasted only 30 minutes, from 10:00 to 10:30 on 13 July 2026. The report records warm, sunny, dry conditions, minimal traffic flows and no pedestrians or cyclists.

A single 30-minute mid-morning observation cannot represent the conditions residents experience during school arrival and departure periods, commuter peaks, poor weather or the busiest parts of the week.

The fact that the audit team observed no pedestrians or cyclists during that short period should not be treated as evidence that pedestrian and cycle conditions are satisfactory.

The survey was also tactfully carried out when Hurstpierpoint college was not in term time. The developer had the whole of spring to do this survey.

5. Sustainable travel is not yet demonstrated

The proposal is being presented as sustainable, but the applicant's own documents show substantial reliance on private cars. The development provides for a large number of parking spaces and the Travel Plan depends on future behavioural change after occupation.

The applicant's current transport evidence therefore demonstrates the scale of car use expected before any hoped-for modal shift occurs.

In my view, that does not amount to convincing evidence that this is a genuinely sustainable location for 100 additional homes.

6. Cumulative impact

This application must not be considered in isolation.

The emerging plan proposes MM72 together with MM73 and MM75 in the same College Lane/Hurst Wickham area. The Council's own allocation policy for MM72 requires connections towards the adjoining sites 1172 and 582, demonstrating that these sites are physically related.

The cumulative effects on College Lane, settlement separation, countryside, drainage, pedestrian safety and village infrastructure should therefore be assessed as a whole.

The residents' planning note prepared for the allocation consultation made the same point: MM72, MM73 and MM75 lie within the same locality and should not be treated as isolated parcels where their combined effects are material. 2026 07 28 Land East of College Lane- Technical Note (1).pdf

7. Residents were consulted on a smaller proposal

Thakeham publicly consulted residents on a scheme of around 75 homes. Its own consultation publicity described that number.

The submitted application is now for 100 homes.

I am concerned that residents spent considerable time raising issues about traffic, pedestrian safety, settlement separation, infrastructure and the scale of development in response to a 75-home proposal, yet the final application has increased the number of homes by one third.

I would ask the Council to examine carefully how the final 100-home scheme responds to the concerns raised by residents and whether any fresh consultation took place on that materially intensified proposal.

8. This is not opposition to all housing

I recognise the need for new housing in Mid Sussex and do not object to development simply because it is development.

My concern is about the suitability of this particular site and the cumulative consequences of urbanising one of the remaining parcels of open land separating Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks.

Larger strategic sites can be planned with their infrastructure, access, public transport, green space and community facilities considered comprehensively. By contrast, continuing to add development to constrained village-edge roads risks creating cumulative problems that are then left for existing residents and future occupants to live with.

For these reasons I respectfully ask Mid Sussex District Council to refuse DM/26/2433.

In particular, I do not consider the applicant has demonstrated that 100 dwellings can be accommodated here without unacceptable harm to settlement separation, countryside character, sustainable travel and the functioning and safety of the local highway network.

The previous Secretary of State refusal, the site's continuing role in the gap between the settlements, the applicant's own traffic figures and the increase from the 75 homes on which residents were consulted to 100 homes now proposed all deserve substantial weight in determining this application.

Where did you hear about this application?	Not specified
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Kind regards