

Date: 15 October 2025  
Our ref: 529571  
Your ref: DM/25/1467



Mid Sussex District Council  
rachel.richardson@midsussex.gov.uk

**BY EMAIL ONLY**

Hornbeam House  
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Dear Rachel Richardson,

**Planning consultation:** Demolition of existing buildings and the development of 40 dwellings (including affordable housing) with open space, access, parking, drainage, landscaping and other associated works as well as the creation of a new community car park and replacement parking for Lion Lane residents. Amended transport plans, technical note and travel plan received on 15.08.2025.

**Location:** Land At Old Vicarage Field And The Old Estate Yard Church Road Turners Hill West Sussex

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 08 October 2025

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

**DESIGNATED SITES [EUROPEAN] – NO OBJECTION SUBJECT TO SECURING APPROPRIATE MITIGATION**

This advice relates to proposed developments that fall within the 'zone of influence' (ZOI) for one or more European designated sites, such as **Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA)/ Special Area of Conservation (SAC)**. It is anticipated that new residential development within this ZOI is 'likely to have a significant effect', when considered either alone or in combination, upon the qualifying features of the European Site due to the risk of increased recreational pressure that could be caused by that development. On this basis the development will require an appropriate assessment.

Your authority has measures in place to manage these potential impacts in the form of a strategic solution. Natural England has advised that this solution will (in our view) be reliable and effective in preventing adverse effects on the integrity of those European Site(s) falling within the ZOI from the recreational impacts associated with this residential development.

This advice should be taken as Natural England's formal **representation on appropriate assessment** given under regulation 63(3) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). You are entitled to have regard to this representation.

Natural England advises that the specific measures (including financial contributions) identified in the strategic solution can prevent harmful effects from increased recreational pressure on those

European Site within the ZOI.

Natural England is of the view that if these measures are implemented, they will be effective and sufficiently certain to prevent an adverse impact on the integrity of those European Site(s) within the ZOI for the duration of the proposed development.

The appropriate assessment concludes that the proposal will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of any of the sites as highlighted above (in view of [its conservation objectives](#)) with regards to recreational disturbance, on the basis that the strategic solution will be implemented by way of mitigation.

Having considered the assessment, and the measures proposed to mitigate for all identified adverse effects likely to occur as a result of the proposal, Natural England advises that we concur with the assessment conclusions. If all mitigation measures are appropriately secured, we are satisfied that there will be no adverse impact on the sites from recreational pressure.

If the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) has not been produced by your authority, but by the applicant, it is your responsibility (as the competent authority) to produce the HRA and be accountable for its conclusions. We provide the advice enclosed on the assumption that your authority intends to adopt this HRA to fulfil your duty as competent authority.

**Natural England should continue to be consulted on all proposals where provision of site specific SANGS (Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space) or other bespoke mitigation for recreational impacts that falls outside of the strategic solution is included as part of the proposal. We would also strongly recommend that applicants proposing site specific infrastructure including SANGs seek pre application advice from Natural England through its Discretionary Advice Service. If your consultation is regarding bespoke site-specific mitigation, please reconsult Natural England putting 'Bespoke Mitigation' in the email header.**

Reserved Matters applications, and in some cases the discharge/removal/variation of conditions, where the permission was granted prior to the introduction of the Strategic Solution, should also be subject to the requirements of the Habitats Regulations and our advice above applies.

### **Ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees**

**You should consider any impacts on ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees in line with paragraph 193 of the NPPF.** Natural England maintains the Ancient Woodland [Inventory](#) which can help identify ancient woodland. Natural England and the Forestry Commission have produced [standing advice](#) for planning authorities in relation to ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees. It should be taken into account by planning authorities when determining relevant planning applications. Natural England will only provide bespoke advice on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees where they form part of a Site of Special Scientific Interest or in exceptional circumstances.

You can also use the following inventories in your decision-making:

- the Woodland Trust's [ancient tree inventory](#) (ATI)
- Natural England's [wood pasture and parkland inventory \(includes ancient sites\)](#) on the Magic map system.

Further general advice on the consideration of protected species and other natural environment issues is provided at Annex A.

For any queries regarding this letter, for new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk).

Yours sincerely

Shannon Bowes  
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Natural England