

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 22 June 2026 17:34:41 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 22/06/2026 5:34 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: 30 Gatesmead Haywards Heath West Sussex

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour or general public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	
Comments:	I object to this application on the following grounds: Planning Even as mitigated, the development would cause permanent harm to the settings of Sunte House and Wickham Farmhouse, both Grade II * Listed Buildings. These assart fields are the remnants of the field layout

established in the Middle Ages, and are visible from the railway on one side and the sunken path, formed by centuries of animal-droving, on the other. They form the last unaltered corridor between the listed buildings and the ancient woodlands to the north. Their loss might not on its own rank highly in planning terms, but they have regional cultural significance and would be destroyed for ever.

The development would take place in land designated in the District Plan as Green Corridor land, and would be contrary to several plan policies, notably DP12, DP15 and DP22.

There is an outstanding Definitive Map Modification Order application (DMMO 3/22) before West Sussex County Council which should be resolved before this planning application should be considered.

Access over the original part of Gatesmead

All the traffic to and from the proposed development would travel over the original part of Gatesmead. There are two hills with gradients of 1 in 90 and a right-angle bend and with at least one junction at the top and bottom of each hill. The layout combines coincident horizontal and vertical curvature with restricted visibility. The absence of additional width for swept path envelopes makes the hazards worse, and this part of Gatesmead is only 5.5 metres wide.

In 2019, the original street was extended by Crest Nicholson's Birchen Oaks development, connected by a single-lane carriageway over the roots of a protected tree at the summit of another steep hill, which then goes down to the new houses.

Through traffic, of which was none before 2019, would more than double as a result of this proposal. According to the Manual for Streets, the principal function of this part of the highway would change from that of a "street", which is mainly used for access to buildings etc., to that of a "road", which is mainly used for through traffic.

Bearing in mind the change in the street's principal function and its tight and sinuous geometry, the additional through traffic would significantly worsen road safety by increasing the likelihood of collision, especially in slippery conditions. Residents would also suffer from more potholes, noise and pollution.

Priority over the single lane connection is given to traffic leaving Birchen Oaks, and these proposals would increase the likelihood that vehicles queuing on the hill would block the driveways of nearby homes.

The presence of tree roots beneath a road surface can increase

the frequency of renewal and repair. In order to avoid cutting off Birchen Oaks from emergency services' vehicles when the single lane connection is closed for repair etc., a single lane, a Grasscrete road surface was built as a diversion across the adjacent field. That road is not designed for use by residents, so their vehicular access is denied during such periods. That denial of access would also apply to all the residents of the new development.

Access into the proposed site

A similar single-lane length of highway is proposed at the entrance to the proposed site as well, raised on an embankment to cross a ditch and to protect tree roots. There is no apparent viable diversion. Thus, when that part of the road were to be blocked, there would be no access for any vehicles, including the emergency services'.

Access over the wider road network

90% of the traffic to and from the site would travel over the roundabout at the junction of Portsmouth Lane and Sunte Avenue etc., which is already an accident blackspot.

The predictions of delay to traffic exiting Birchen Lane into Portsmouth Lane understate current experience. It is not clear whether the present models include the effects of the Town Wood Close and other developments in the area, and the increased use of Portsmouth Lane by large vehicles avoiding Lindfield High Street.

Impact of construction on the community

When Crest Nicholson built Birchen Oaks, some residents suffered months of stress, road safety was compromised and damage was caused to kerbs and verges. Amongst other problems, large and articulated vehicles had to turn round by reversing in the public highway that was already constricted by the excess parking.

Sustainability

A hosepipe ban was in force here for seven months until February 2026 and residents were asked to conserve water voluntarily only three months later. South East Water's plan to provide an unrestricted water supply will take until the mid-2030's. The development would exacerbate the water shortage.

The proposed ratio of affordable housing to other housing does not support the sustainability of the community in the long term or reflect its housing needs: older people cannot find local homes into which to down-size, thereby inflating prices by restricting

supply; younger people are leaving the area because they cannot afford to live here.

The pressure on health care facilities, parking and schools in Haywards Heath and Lindfield would be exacerbated.

Environment and ecology

The site is home to significant varieties of wildlife and plants. The loss of these fields would further restrict habitats, especially for owls and raptors which need wide, open spaces in which to hunt.

Conclusion

The application should be rejected, because the possible benefits of the development are significantly outweighed by the likely disbenefits.

Kind regards