

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk
Sent: 03 June 2026 13:59
To: Caroline Grist
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 03/06/2026 1:59 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:	21 Wickham Way haywards heath
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Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour or general public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

Comments: wish to object to planning application DM/26/1315 for 49 new homes on land west of Gatesmead, Wickham Way, Haywards Heath.

I live locally on/near Wickham Way and know this site well. The fields form an important and well-used local green space at the top of Wickham Way. They have been used by local residents, dog walkers and families for many years as part of a wider access route into the surrounding countryside. While I recognise the need for housing, I do not consider that this proposal is acceptable in planning terms for the reasons set out below.

1. Loss of valued countryside, green space and local character

The application would result in the urbanisation of open fields that currently provide a valued green edge to this part of Haywards Heath. The land is not simply unused land; it contributes to the openness, rural setting and character of the area and provides everyday access to nature for the local community.

Mid Sussex District Plan Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside identifies the countryside as a valued asset and seeks to protect it by minimising land taken for development and preventing development that does not need to be there. The proposal would replace open countryside with a substantial residential estate and associated infrastructure, causing clear harm to the character and amenity of this part of Haywards Heath.

The Council's District Plan also emphasises the importance of protecting valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities, and creating places that encourage healthy lifestyles. In my view, the proposal conflicts with those objectives.

2. Harm to public access, recreational routes and local enjoyment of the countryside

The site and surrounding routes are used extensively by local residents for walking, dog walking and informal recreation. Wickham Way is also a public bridleway, and the fields provide a well-established access route to the surrounding green area.

Policy DP22: Rights of Way and other Recreational Routes states that rights of way and recreational routes should be protected, and that development should not result in the loss of, or adversely affect, a right of way or other recreational route unless an equivalent route is provided. It also supports safe and convenient links to the countryside.

The proposed development would materially change the nature of this access. Even if a formal route is retained or re-provided, the experience would be fundamentally different: residents would lose open countryside access and instead be routed through or beside a residential estate. This would reduce the quality of the recreational route and the sense of access to nature that currently exists.

I ask the Council to give significant weight to the long-standing public use of this land and to require clear evidence from the applicant showing how existing informal and formal recreational access would be protected, enhanced and not merely displaced.

3. Highways, parking and pedestrian safety impacts on Wickham Way

Although the proposed vehicle entrance appears to be through Gatesmead, there is a real likelihood that Wickham Way will be used as an informal access, parking or drop-off route by residents, visitors, delivery vehicles, tradespeople and others seeking to avoid the longer route around Gatesmead.

Wickham Way is a private residential road and public bridleway. It is not suitable to absorb overspill parking or increased vehicle movements associated with a 49-home estate. Increased parking or stopping on Wickham Way would create conflict between pedestrians, dog walkers, cyclists, residents' vehicles and service vehicles.

Policy DP21: Transport requires development to provide adequate parking, protect the safety of road users and pedestrians, and avoid severe additional traffic congestion, individually or cumulatively. It also requires developments generating significant movement to be supported by effective transport assessment and mitigation.

I therefore ask the Council and West Sussex County Council Highways to scrutinise whether the application properly assesses:

the likelihood of overspill parking on Wickham Way;
whether parking provision within the scheme is genuinely sufficient; and
whether physical measures are needed to prevent Wickham Way being used as an informal parking/access route.

Without robust and enforceable mitigation, the proposal would have an unacceptable impact on local highway safety and residential amenity.

4. Residential amenity: noise, disturbance and construction impacts

The proposal would introduce a significant level of new activity into a quiet residential and semi-rural edge-of-town location. Construction of 49 dwellings, roads, drainage and associated infrastructure would create prolonged noise, dust, vibration, traffic and disruption for nearby residents.

Once occupied, the development would also increase footfall, activity and general disturbance along Wickham Way and surrounding routes. I accept that some foot traffic is associated with a public bridleway, but the scale and nature of the proposed development would intensify use significantly beyond the current quiet recreational use of the area.

Policy DP26: Character and Design requires development not to cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents, including impacts on privacy, outlook and other amenity considerations. I do not consider the application has adequately demonstrated that these impacts can be avoided or mitigated.

If the Council is minded to approve the application, strict conditions should be imposed controlling construction hours, construction access, contractor parking, dust suppression, noise control, wheel washing and site management. However, my primary position is that the application should be refused.

5. Pressure on local infrastructure, including Harlands Primary School

The proposal would add 49 new households to an area that has already experienced substantial residential growth, including recent development nearby. Local services, including Harlands Primary School, have already had to adapt to increased demand from recent housing growth.

Policy DP20: Securing Infrastructure states that development should be accompanied by the necessary infrastructure so that it is adequately served without overstressing existing infrastructure. It specifically refers to transport, education, health, green infrastructure, community services and utilities.

The applicant should be required to demonstrate that local infrastructure, including school places, GP capacity, transport and community facilities, can accommodate the cumulative impact of this development alongside other recent and proposed developments in the area. If that cannot be demonstrated, the application should be refused or at the very least should not proceed without binding and sufficient infrastructure contributions.

6. Cumulative impact and precedent for further loss of open fields

This application should not be considered in isolation. The surrounding area has already seen significant development pressure, and there have been previous proposals affecting nearby open land, including land associated with Haywards Heath Golf Club and other greenfield sites.

Approving this application would risk setting a precedent for further incremental development of remaining open fields around this part of Haywards Heath. The cumulative effect would be the erosion of the green setting of the town, loss of informal countryside access and increased pressure on local roads and services.

The Council's planning policies seek to balance housing delivery with environmental protection, countryside character, infrastructure capacity and community wellbeing. In this location, I do not consider that balance has been achieved.

7. Request for refusal

For the reasons above, I respectfully request that Mid Sussex District Council refuse planning permission for application DM/26/1315.

If the Council is not minded to refuse the application, I request that the matter be referred to Planning Committee and that any permission be subject to robust conditions and legal obligations covering highways mitigation, protection of Wickham Way, public access,

construction management, school and infrastructure contributions, biodiversity protection and long-term management of open space.

Warm regards,

[Redacted signature]

Kind regards