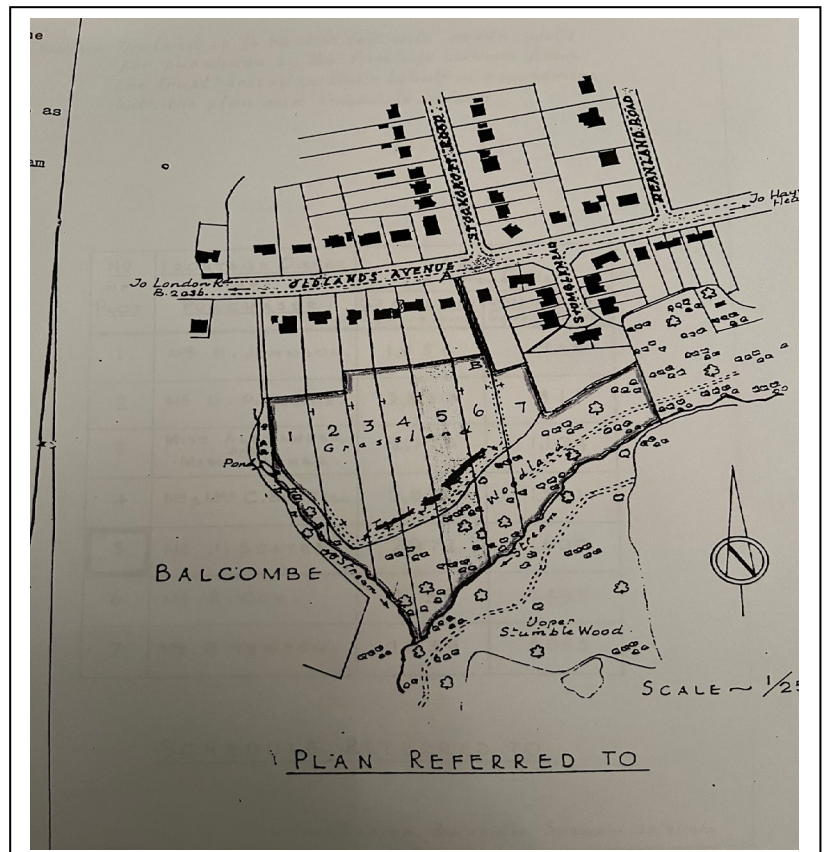


Objection to DM/24/2770 – Stumble Ridge, Oldlands Avenue, Balcombe RH17 6LP

My wife and I are the owners of Lamb Cottage, the adjacent property to Stumble Ridge, and we object to the application DM/24/2770. We object for a number of reasons, more detail of which is set out in the representation letter submitted by our agent.

Firstly, we object as the application harms the appearance and character of the area:

- The section of the southern side of Oldlands Avenue is the border between the Balcombe Built Up Area and the High Weald National Landscape. It is also the Balcombe Conservation Area and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In 1967, the seven houses on the south side of Oldlands Avenue (Stumble Ridge, Lamb Cottage, Hill Pasture, Cobbles, Tall Timbers, Winterfield, The Coppice) purchased their respective section of a field and woods (see picture) creating a link for each property between the Built Up Area and the National Landscape.



Since that time, no property has developed their section of the curtilage or National Landscape. This has resulted in over 50 years of continuing protected landscape with rolling garden flowing via an open boundary into the National Landscape. This application seeks to change the character of the entire section by not only developing a second dwelling unit, but one that extends from the curtilage into the protected National Landscape. The proposed change is not in keeping with the history, ethos or spirit of the protected area, or the other 6 associated properties, and creates an unacceptable intrusion into the protected/conservation areas

- The current grassed lawn has been extended beyond the Balcombe Built Up Area into the National Landscape and does not form the normal curtilage of the original dwelling as identified on the Land Registry Title Plan, which identifies the curtilage as the area marked in yellow. The extending of the lawn was an attempt to extend the curtilage into the National Landscape and should not be allowed

- The second dwelling unit creates an unacceptable intensification on the site as it is not required to meet the needs the Balcombe Neighbourhood Plan (2016) or the Mid Sussex District Plan (2018) given that there is sufficient capacity in housing land supply, such that the application is in conflict with these plans
- The second dwelling unit, extending across the boundary of the Balcombe Built Up Area into the National Landscape would create a dangerous precedent by allowing building in this part of the National Landscape where it has been precluded for over 50 years

Secondly, we object as the dwelling is mis-designated as a 3-bedroom house when it is actually a 4-bedroom house:

- The application proposes a 3-bedroom house, but the plans show that the dwelling is actually a 4 bedroom house with the 4th bedroom, containing a window, labelled as cinema room. The cinema room is easily modified into a 4th bedroom and therefore the planning assessments in terms of parking, etc should be those of a 4 bedroom house, not a three bedroom house
- The scale of the proposed dwelling is significant for the proposed site and will be crowded against the boundaries of adjacent houses, including those on 7-10 Stumble Mead.

Thirdly, we object as the access is inadequate to support a second dwelling unit:

- The proposal is to use an unlit, 10 ft wide, clay-ground, farm track as a driveway. The width of this trackway is insufficient for emergency vehicles or for construction vehicles. The clay ground is subject to significant rutting during inclement weather and there are trees on the side of the trackway that are protected by Tree Protection Orders (TP027, TP025, TP024, TP023 as designated on the application Tree Protection Plan). These trees are on adjacent land owned by Lamb Cottage and are not within the control of the applicant
- The Planning Design and Access Statement (sections 2.2, 6.35) and the Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement (sections 2.8, 2.10, 3.4, 3.6) misrepresents the ownership of the trackway by stating that it is of “shared ownership”. The trackway does not have shared ownership. Rather, the boundary between Lamb Cottage and Stumble Ridge is the mid-point of the trackway. There are right of way easements allowing passage over the respective trackway land by Lamb Cottage and Stumble Ridge, however the right of passage over land does not extend to the right to modify the land itself, as proposed in sections 2.8, 3.4 and 3.6 of the Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement. Absent these proposed modifications, the application does not comply with policy DP37 as no authorisation has been granted from Lamb Cottage to the application of temporary trackway or grass block ribbon tracks. In addition, the installation of water and electricity services has not been authorised on the land owned by Lamb Cottage.

- Currently, a locked gate (see picture) at the entrance of the track at Oldlands Avenue provides security for the 7 houses (referenced earlier) as it restricts access to the open field and woods (within the National Landscape) behind the houses. Taking away this gate and creating a drive opens the rear of each house to unauthorised access and creates a substantial security/nuisance issue. Securing entry to the track must be mandatory to provide security to each of the 7 houses.



Fourthly, we object to the substantial harm to the amenities of the houses on Stumble Mead and Oldlands Avenue that will occur should the application proceed:

- The establishment of a permanent dwelling residence will significantly change, and increase, the noise and light pollution to the properties adjoining the location. In addition, there is currently only intermittent access to the track and the proposed dwelling will result in significant traffic using the track, especially as it is an undeveloped, clay track subject to significant rutting during inclement weather
- The upper level of the proposed dwelling overlooks the residences on 7-10 Stumble Mead and the land, gardens, and back of houses on Oldlands Avenue, resulting in a significant lack of privacy. Further, as noted, should the track become unsecured, there is a substantial privacy and security concern from unauthorised access to the rear of the houses on Oldlands Avenue
- Lighting the trackway would create substantial light intrusion into the Lamb Cottage residence and curtilage.

We would also like to have the two previous planning decisions for this site included in this consideration:

- DM/24/1833 – Replacement of Blue Atlas Cedar with Deodar Cedar. This application was to remove a Blue Atlas Cedar located within, what is now, the proposed building site, and to replace it with a Deodar Cedar. The Decision Notice of No Objection, dated 23 August, 2024 was issued and the Blue Atlas Cedar was removed. However, there has been no corresponding replacement with a Deodar Cedar and the current application does not reference the replacement tree. If the original tree had been replaced, as required, it would impact the development site. The inclusion of the replacement tree, and the subsequent impact on the development site, should be considered within this application
- DM/20/2508 – Change of Use to Holiday Let. The Delegated Report, dated 25 November 2020, refers to the concern over “the creation of a second planning unit on the site, capable of full-time habitation”. In response, the planning decision imposed conditions to preclude permanent residence on the site and prevent the development of an

independent residential dwellinghouse. The same concerns expressed at that time apply to this application and those objections, along with the planning decision rationale at the time, should be considered for this application. For example, the report indicates that the lack of need for additional parking, the irregular use, the small size of the current building and limited number of visitors (1-2) were reasons for allowing the change of use whilst this application would necessitate additional parking, permanent use, a substantial increase in building size and an increasing number of residents.

For the reasons detailed above, and those included in the letter of our agent, this application should be refused. We reserve the right to provide further comments as we receive more information about the application.