



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Ms Katherine Williams
Planning Officer
Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands, Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 1SS

7th November 2025

Dear Ms Williams,

Subject: Objection to Planning Application DM/25/1593 – Woodlands Close, Crawley Down

I write to you in my capacity as the Member of Parliament for East Grinstead and Uckfield to formally object to the above-referenced planning application, on behalf of my constituents and particularly those residing at Woodlands Close in Crawley Down.

While it's acknowledged the strategic allocation of this site within the Mid Sussex District Plan, I must express serious concerns regarding the proposed access arrangements and the wider implications of this development and its unsuitability. The proposal to demolish existing dwellings at 9–11 Woodlands Close to create a new access road serving 48 additional homes is wholly inappropriate and frankly unacceptable to the community and those closely connected to this site will be significantly harmed.

Woodlands Close is a quiet residential cul-de-sac, designed to serve a small number of dwellings. The introduction of a major new access route through this location would fundamentally alter its character, increase traffic volumes to unsustainable levels, and severely impact the amenity of existing residents. The Transport Statement accompanying the application anticipates a significant increase in peak-time trip generations, which would exacerbate congestion on local roads and compromise safety.

Moreover, the proposed new access route directly contradicts Policy SA22 of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document, which clearly stipulates that any access should be provided via Sycamore Lane. This deviation from adopted policy undermines the integrity of the planning process and sets a concerning precedent.

I have reviewed the detailed objection submitted by Worth Parish Council and wish to express my full support for the points they have raised. Their analysis is rightly thorough and reflects the legitimate concerns of the local community. I would like to highlight and endorse the following specific objections on :

1. Scale and Character of Development

Worth Parish Council rightly notes that the proposed development exceeds the scale deemed appropriate under Policy CDNP05, which limits individual developments to no more than 30 dwellings. The introduction of 48 dwellings, including several three-storey

units, is out of keeping with the surrounding area, which is characterised by one- and two-storey homes. The uniform use of light brown brick further contributes to a homogenous and visually unappealing design that fails to respect the local vernacular.

2. Amenity Impacts

The proposal would result in 13 Woodlands Close being encircled by roads on all sides, creating a “traffic island” effect. This would subject residents to noise and disruption from all directions, significantly harming their quality of life. Additionally, the close proximity of certain units raises concerns about overlooking and loss of privacy, contrary to Policy DP29 and CDNP05.

3. Housing Mix

The proposed housing mix fails to meet the recommendations of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), with a notable under-provision of 1- and 2-bedroom market units and an over-provision of larger homes. The affordable housing mix is similarly inadequate, particularly in terms of affordable ownership options. This undermines Policy DP30, which requires developments to reflect current and future housing needs.

4. Highways and Access

The Parish Council’s objection to the proposed access via Woodlands Close is particularly compelling. The road was not designed to accommodate the volume of traffic that would result from this development. The cumulative impact of recent developments in the area, including those on Bramble Way and Acorn Avenue, has already placed significant pressure on local infrastructure. This proposal would exacerbate those issues and fails to comply with Policy DP21 and CDNP10.

5. Heritage and Environmental Concerns

The site’s proximity to the Grade II listed Burleigh Cottage is a matter of serious concern. The limited screening and urbanisation of the surrounding landscape would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of this heritage asset, contrary to Policy DP34 and CDNP05. Additionally, the proposed culvert and foul drainage strategy raise questions about compliance with environmental standards and the capacity of existing infrastructure.

On drainage I wish to reiterate and concur with the comments from Worth Parish Council which I include as follows:

We also have concerns regarding the likely impact on the village pond, from cumulative effect of nearby developments, including this proposal. The culvert running through the site connects to a network of streams leading to the pond, which, as a result of three previous developments, has become severely silted. This cumulative impact has significantly harmed local wildlife, and the pond now requires urgent remedial work and request that consideration of cumulative effects is provided as part of the consideration of this application.

I know other local residents share these concerns as they have been raised with me directly.

6. Ecological Impact

Residents have reported the presence of protected species on the site, including great crested newts, bats, and badgers. The ecological surveys submitted appear outdated, and I support the Parish Council’s call for updated assessments to ensure compliance with wildlife legislation.

7. Public Consultation

It is deeply concerning that some residents were not adequately informed or consulted about this application. Effective public engagement is a cornerstone of the planning process, and any failure in this regard undermines the legitimacy of the application.

Conclusion

In conclusion, while the site may be allocated for development, the current proposal fails markedly to meet the standards required by both local and national planning policy. The proposed access arrangements are particularly unacceptable and pose a serious threat to the character, safety, and amenity of Woodlands Close and the wider community.

I urge Mid Sussex District Council to give full consideration to the rounded objections raised and to refuse this application unless substantial revisions are made, particularly in relation to access, scale, and design.

I would also like to stress that these substandard proposed access arrangements are simply unacceptable to my constituents and I therefore I believe planning should be withheld until this issue amongst others is addressed.

Yours sincerely,



Mims Davies

Member of Parliament for East Grinstead and Uckfield