

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 September 2026 08:35:34 UTC+01:00
To: "Rachel Richardson" <rachel.richardson@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application
DM/26/2103

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 21/09/2026 8:35 AM.

Application Summary

Address: Land To The West Of Streatfield Place East Grinstead West
Sussex RH19 4RQ

Proposal: Construction of a four bedroomed detached dwelling

Case Officer: Rachel Richardson

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address: Fieldways Coombe Hill Road East Grinstead

Comments Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour or general public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

Comments: I live at Fieldways, which immediately adjoins the application site. Having looked carefully at the plans and supporting documents, I do not believe this is an appropriate site for a new dwelling, particularly given that the land is within the High Weald National Landscape and outside the defined built-up area of East Grinstead.

The existing character of the site

The applicant's own application form describes the existing use as

"Unused field/grassland" and states that it has "Always been field/grassland". It records no existing floorspace and 204 square metres of new floorspace proposed.

The proposal is therefore not the redevelopment or replacement of existing built development. It would introduce a substantial house, garage, driveway, parking and residential garden use onto land which is currently undeveloped.

I do not agree that the presence of housing around parts of the site means that this piece of land should effectively be regarded as part of the existing residential area. An open area can itself form an important part of the existing pattern of development, particularly where it provides a break between built development and the wider countryside.

High Weald National Landscape (AONB)

The application acknowledges that the site lies outside the East Grinstead settlement boundary, is designated as Countryside and is within the High Weald National Landscape.

The Council must consider the effect of development on its natural beauty, character, local distinctiveness and settlement pattern. It also has the statutory duty under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act to seek to further the conservation and enhancement of the National Landscape.

In this case, a presently undeveloped field would become a permanent residential plot containing a large dwelling, garage, driveway, vehicles, garden areas, fencing, lighting and the normal activity associated with a family home. I find it difficult to see how that change would further the conservation and enhancement of this part of the High Weald.

Policies DP12 and DP16 of the District Plan and EG1 and EG2a of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan also seem particularly relevant, as they seek to protect countryside character, the High Weald and the openness and pattern of development outside the built-up area.

Recent appeal decision at The Bulrushes

I believe considerable weight should also be given to the very recent appeal decision at The Bulrushes, Coombe Hill Road - Appeal Ref 6003631, which was dismissed on 4 June 2026.

This decision seems particularly relevant because it concerns the immediately adjoining property, the same local landscape and another proposed four-bedroom detached dwelling within the High Weald National Landscape.

Many of the Inspector's observations were about the physical character of this particular locality, and those circumstances have not changed.

The Inspector identified the existing pattern of detached dwellings in this part of Coombe Hill Road as having larger plots and larger gaps between buildings. The Inspector considered the existing open garden space to provide a visual break and concluded that filling that gap would fail to maintain the open rural and landscape character.

The Inspector also found that introducing a form of development which drew on characteristics of houses at Streatfield Place into the countryside location would not respect the character and local distinctiveness of the High Weald National Landscape.

The Inspector found conflict with Policy EG1 because the new dwelling did not fall within the limited forms of development identified by that policy. It is also worth noting that the previous appeal site contained several outbuildings, but the Inspector nevertheless concluded that it was not predominantly previously developed land for the purposes of Policy EG5.

The present application site has clearly never been developed. As noted above, the applicant's own form confirms that it has always been field/grassland.

For those reasons, I believe the Inspector's recent conclusions regarding openness, gaps between development, settlement pattern and the character of this part of the High Weald remain directly relevant.

Relationship with Streatfield Place

The Planning Statement refers several times to the existing development at Streatfield Place as part of the justification for the proposal. I do not consider the two situations to be directly comparable.

Streatfield Place resulted from redevelopment of the former Snooker Club site and therefore replaced existing built development. The applicant's own Planning Statement confirms that planning permission 12/01456/FUL involved demolition of the Snooker Club and construction of seven dwellings.

The present application would have a different effect. It would introduce residential built form onto land which has always remained field/grassland.

Streatfield Place quite properly forms part of the existing context against which this application should be assessed, but I do not believe its presence should establish a principle that the

remaining undeveloped land alongside it should also be developed.

In fact, I consider the existing edge of Streatfield Place and the open land beyond it to be part of the transition between the built-up area and the surrounding countryside. Allowing further development on the application site would move that built edge into land which is presently undeveloped.

It is also worth noting, and I am sure the council is aware, that there is an enforcement notice in place in Medway drive, in the same area of High Weald National Landscape where woodland has been removed and converted to residential use. The council is of the opinion that planning for this, had it been applied for, would not have been granted. My understanding is that this is currently under appeal.

Scale, landscape impact and the public footpath

Although the proposal is described as a single dwelling the physical development is substantial. The application records around 204 square metres of new internal floorspace, together with the attached garage, driveway and associated residential curtilage.

The Landscape and Visual Appraisal relies considerably on the site being visually contained by surrounding development, topography and mature vegetation. I do not think limited visibility from distant viewpoints necessarily means that there would be no harm to landscape character. The change from open grassland to residential development is itself relevant, irrespective of how far away the house can be seen.

No appraisal has been carried out on any visual containment from the perspective of my property Fieldways or indeed any other of the neighbouring houses in close proximity. I can assure you that from this perspective there is no containment and the overbearing effect would be significant.

There would also be an immediate change for users of Public Right of Way 26aEG, which runs directly alongside the site. The applicant's own Landscape and Visual Appraisal acknowledges near views from the footpath and proposes a new hedge and fence alongside it. In my view, the effect on people using the footpath should therefore be considered in terms of the change from an open undeveloped parcel to a residential plot, rather than only in terms of wider or more distant views.

Drainage

In many recent planning applications close by the lack of drainage has been a constant issue and has been cited, among other

reasons, as reasons to refuse. Notably the Toybox Nursery Field proposal as well as Bulrushes. This is already a constant worry for those of us in the vicinity and with the obvious effects of our climate changing this is going to become more of a problem in the future. Even more development filling in more space thus reducing the already challenged natural ability of the current open field is unlikely to benefit anyone in this regard

Existing mature trees

I also have some concern about the relationship between the proposed development and the existing mature trees.

In particular, the Arboricultural Assessment identifies that the garage, link and driveway would extend into the root protection area of T4, a large mature oak, and that special construction measures, ground protection and some pruning would be required to avoid damage.

T1 is another substantial mature tree and forms an important part of the existing tree cover. The report describes it as a large mature alder and notes that careful protection and ongoing management will be required.

The extent of the measures required for T4 does suggest that the proposed layout already creates a constrained relationship with the existing mature tree stock. I would ask the Council's Tree Officer to consider carefully whether the development allows for the satisfactory long-term retention and protection of these trees, particularly as that same mature vegetation is relied upon in the landscape assessment to help screen the development.

Effect on Fieldways

As the occupier of Fieldways, I am also concerned about the relationship between the proposed dwelling and my property.

The proposed block plan shows the new building coming to approximately 2 metres from the common boundary with Fieldways. The existing relationship is with open land. The proposal would replace that with the gable end and mass of a substantial 2 storey residential building at close quarters.

My concern is primarily the resulting substantial overbearing and enclosing effect and its impact on the privacy, outlook and amenity of Fieldways and its garden.

I believe the Council should properly assess the height, mass, proximity and overall relationship of the new building with Fieldways under Policy DP26. I would also request a site visit from the planning department to see this in person.

Planning balance

In my view the modest benefit of one additional dwelling does not outweigh the permanent loss of this undeveloped parcel of land, the extension of residential development into the Countryside and National Landscape, or the resulting effects on openness, landscape character and neighbouring amenity.

For these reasons, I would ask the Council to refuse planning application DM/26/2103.

Kind regards