

Subject: Objection to Reserved Matters Application DM/26/0682
Reserved Matters Application Pursuant to Outline Planning Permission Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) Reference: DM/25/1630, Lewes District Council (LDC) Reference: LW/2510707 at Hurst Farm, for appearance, layout, scale and landscaping only.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to object to the above Reserved Matters application.

This objection is made because the submitted layout fails to address well-known drainage, flood risk, safety, design and heritage constraints that were identified through earlier applications and were expressly left to be resolved at Reserved Matters stage. In my view, the proposal conflicts with Policies DP26, DP34 and DP41 of the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031, and with the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

1. Failure to account properly for the underground culvert and known underground water flows

The proposed layout fails to take proper account of the 900mm underground culvert running beneath the central part of the site, which links important underground water flows between two above ground balancing ponds.

This culvert and its significance were known throughout previous applications, and it was clearly indicated that this matter would need to be resolved at Reserved Matters stage. It has also been made clear that construction cannot take place within 5 metres of the culvert. Despite that, the submitted layout appears to place development within, or in direct conflict with, that exclusion zone.

This is a fundamental flaw in the layout. It creates clear concerns about whether the development is actually buildable in the form proposed, and whether the established water regime can continue safely without increased risk of blockage, flooding, ground instability or redirection of flows.

2. Houses placed within the known failure route of the balancing pond

In another part of the site there is a balancing pond serving the bypass which, under excess load conditions, is designed to fail in a way that sends substantial quantities of water and soil downhill towards another pond.

The current layout places houses directly within this known failure route. That gives rise to an obvious and unacceptable danger to life, safety and property.

Again, this is not a new issue. The existence and function of this failure route were known from earlier applications. The Reserved Matters submission was the stage at which that constraint should have been respected in the layout. Instead, the submitted plans appear to ignore it.

3. Harm to the setting of the Grade II listed farmhouse*

The land next to the Grade II* listed farmhouse was, at an earlier stage, agreed should remain as open space so that the rural character of that land would continue to contribute positively to the setting of the farmhouse.

The current proposal instead shows this area as a heavily landscaped play park. That is not open rural space. It introduces a much more domestic and suburban form of use and treatment into land previously accepted as important to the heritage setting of the farmhouse.

That change would erode the rural setting of a highly graded heritage asset and causes clear concern in relation to heritage protection and the preservation of setting.

4. Increased runoff and flood risk to neighbouring properties

The plans show construction extending up to the edge of our property. They also appear to show runoff being directed down new hard-landscaped slopes to an area already identified as an overland flood route.

That overland route has already been identified as the above ground route for surface flows and also intended to carry excess water should the pond at Hurstwood Grange overflow. Directing further runoff into that same flood corridor will plainly increase the risk of flooding not only to our property but also to other existing properties lying along that established overland flood path.

In my view, that is unacceptable. A layout that channels additional water towards an already vulnerable flood route is neither safe nor properly designed, and it threatens existing neighbouring properties. It should be noted that the outline planning shows SUDs attenuation features in this location which have been removed.

5. These issues cannot be dismissed now after having been deferred to Reserved Matters

When the site was under the control of MSDC as the previous landowner, objections on these points were expressly dismissed from consideration on the basis that they were matters to be addressed at Reserved Matters stage.

Reserved Matters is not a rubber-stamping exercise; it is the stage at which the omitted details must be shown to work in practice and to comply with planning policy and site-specific constraints. Outline permission establishes only the general principle of development. Reserved Matters exists precisely so that the detailed issues left unresolved at outline stage — including layout, landscaping and the relationship of development to surrounding land and constraints — can be properly examined and determined.

Conclusion

For these reasons, I respectfully request that this Reserved Matters application be refused.

The submitted layout fails to resolve matters that were already known and expressly left to this stage, including:

- the underground culvert and the clear restriction on construction within 5 metres of it;
- the known balancing pond failure route and the resulting danger to life and property;
- the need to preserve the open rural setting of the Grade II* listed farmhouse; and
- the unacceptable risk of increasing runoff and flooding to neighbouring properties along the existing overland flood route.

The proposal is therefore contrary to sound planning, fails to address known site constraints, and causes serious concerns in relation to safety, flood risk, neighbouring amenity and heritage setting.

Please record this letter as a formal objection to the application.

Yours faithfully,

