

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 June 2026 13:14:29 UTC+01:00
To: "Joseph Swift" <joseph.swift@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application
DM/26/1186

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 12/06/2026 1:14 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land West Of Selsfield Road Ardingly West Sussex
Proposal:	Reserved Matters application for consideration of consider all outstanding matters (layout, scale, landscaping and appearance) in respect of outline planning permission DM/22/1575 (and the subsequent variation of conditions 2 and 11 through permission DM/23/3250).
Case Officer:	Joseph Swift

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Customer Details

Address:	Fairhaven Church Lane Ardingly
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Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour or general public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	
Comments:	We have lived in Ardingly for nearly 20 years and have greatly valued the opportunity to raise our children in what was originally a quiet rural village environment. During that time, we have seen a gradual increase in the scale and frequency of events at the Showground. While we recognise the importance of the South of England Agricultural Society and its role as a charitable organisation, the evolution of events over time has had a

noticeable impact on day-to-day residential amenity.

In particular, during the summer months it is often no longer possible to enjoy outdoor space in our garden at weekends due to high levels of noise associated with events. This impact typically extends from June through September, reflecting the intensive use of the Showground during its main event season. This is not always consistent with the expectations one might reasonably associate with a rural village setting. Moreover, certain elements of more recent events (including day long provision of helicopter rides overhead and car engine noises) appear to extend beyond the original character of activities envisaged for the Showground and within its legal Planning Constraints.

In addition, traffic associated with major events places significant strain on the local road network, with increased congestion and a higher number of drivers unfamiliar with narrow rural roads and local constraints. This can create challenging and at times unsafe conditions and has contributed to a noticeable change in the character and feel of the village.

We have not previously objected to the principle of development within the village, and we recognise that some growth is necessary to support local needs. However, if additional housing is to be provided, it is important that it is delivered in a way that responds appropriately to local character and community need. In particular, there is a strong case for ensuring a greater proportion of smaller homes, enabling younger residents and families to remain within the village and continue to contribute to its long-term sustainability.

The comments that follow set out our detailed concerns regarding the current proposal.

1. Inaccuracies within the Supporting Documentation

A number of statements within the application documents appear to be inaccurate or out of date, which calls into question some of the conclusions reached.

The submitted documents refer to the Ardingly Post Office as a local amenity available to residents. However, the Post Office closed in November 2021 and has not operated since. Any assessment of local services and facilities should therefore be updated to reflect current circumstances.

The Statement of Community Involvement suggests a level of engagement with local stakeholders that does not accurately reflect my experience. The document identifies consultation with the Parish Council, St Peter's Primary School and the Ardingly Scout Group. However, my experience was that this process was largely a one-way flow of information rather than genuine

consultation. It is also unclear why these particular organisations were selected and not others, and what the extent of that engagement was in each case.

2. Transport, Accessibility and Parking

The Transport Statement significantly overstates the sustainability of the location and underestimates the likely level of private car ownership.

The document refers to Balcombe railway station being accessible by bicycle within approximately 22 minutes and suggests convenient access to public transport services, including the 272 bus route.

Whilst this may be technically achievable for experienced cyclists, the assessment fails to acknowledge the challenging topography between Ardingly and Balcombe. The route contains several steep hills that would make daily commuting by bicycle impractical for many residents, particularly those expected to use folding bicycles in conjunction with rail travel.

Similarly, the assessment presents an overly optimistic picture of bus accessibility. Local experience demonstrates that the 272 service is often operating at capacity, particularly during school travel periods, with children regularly unable to board. Furthermore, the first bus service to Crawley does not arrive until mid-morning, limiting its usefulness for commuters.

The reality is that Ardingly functions as a predominantly car-dependent village, and the application should assess its transport impacts on that basis.

The village already experiences significant parking pressures. Existing public parking facilities, including the Mid Sussex District Council car park in the village centre and the Recreation Ground car park, are frequently at or near capacity. The Parish Council has invested in increasing parking provision at the Recreation Ground, yet demand continues to exceed supply. On-street parking is also heavily utilised.

Given these constraints, it is essential that every dwelling provides sufficient on-plot parking to accommodate likely levels of car ownership. This is particularly important given the number of larger family homes proposed, which are likely to generate multiple-car households. Any overspill parking would place unacceptable additional pressure on already overstretched village infrastructure.

The provision of two additional parking spaces above policy requirements within the visitor parking allocation appears unrealistic, as it relies on residents using garages solely for vehicle storage. In practice, garages are often used for storage,

workshops, home gyms or other domestic uses and cannot be relied upon to absorb additional parking demand. This increases the likelihood of spillover parking onto already constrained village streets and car parks.

The applicant should therefore demonstrate that parking provision reflects realistic demand arising from the proposed housing mix, rather than assumptions more appropriate to sustainable urban locations.

3. Housing Mix and Community Need

This is one of the most significant concerns with the proposal. The proposed housing mix is heavily weighted towards larger family homes, including a substantial number of four- and five-bedroom dwellings. Several properties also include additional rooms that could function as bedrooms, increasing occupancy and associated vehicle ownership.

The development contains very little provision for smaller homes and no one-bedroom flats. This is inconsistent with identified local housing needs and fails to support younger residents wishing to remain within the village. The Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan and the 2025 Village Survey both identify demand for smaller and more affordable housing. The current proposal does not adequately respond to that evidence.

Furthermore, development on the edge of the village would typically be expected to transition more sensitively into the surrounding landscape, with density and building scale reducing towards open countryside. Instead, the proposal maintains a concentration of larger dwellings more typical of a suburban extension than a rural village edge.

4. Water Infrastructure, Drainage and Flood Risk

The application does not provide sufficient reassurance regarding water infrastructure capacity and drainage impacts given it's an area which already has an established problem with flooding of the recreation ground, playground and multi-sport courts.

In addition, the introduction of significant areas of hardstanding and built development has the potential to increase surface water run-off. Given existing concerns, robust evidence is required to demonstrate that the development will not exacerbate this situation.

Moreover, it is known that the septic system is inadequate for the site with removal of waste by tankers when there is the South of England Show. The applicant should demonstrate that adequate sewage and foul water infrastructure exists to accommodate the development without increasing pressure on existing networks or

causing service failures.

The proposed pumping station also warrants further scrutiny. Given its proximity to existing and proposed community facilities, the applicant should demonstrate that there will be no adverse impacts arising from noise, odour, maintenance requirements or operational failures associated with its operation. The long-term management and resilience of the pumping station should be clearly explained, together with any contingency measures in the event of system failure.

5. Character, Appearance and Landscape Impact

The appearance of the proposed development is broadly respectful of the Ardingly vernacular. However, in terms of scale and massing, it represents a significant contrast with the existing village character.

In particular, the inclusion of three-storey dwellings is not generally characteristic of Ardingly and risks creating a development that appears overly prominent within the local landscape an area of outstanding natural beauty and a conservation area.

There are also concerns that the proposed landscaping and tree planting is insufficient to provide meaningful screening, particularly given the height of several of the proposed buildings. It is also significantly less screening than what was included within the original proposal.

And again, the site occupies an important edge-of-settlement location adjoining open countryside. The scale, massing and height of development should respond sensitively to this context and provide a more gradual transition between the built environment and surrounding green space.

6. Relationship with Existing Community Facilities

Future residents should be made fully aware of the site's relationship with existing recreational facilities. The development adjoins active community spaces, including the cricket ground, recreation ground and children's play facilities. Residents should therefore expect occasional noise associated with cricket matches, training sessions, community events, sports activities, balls leaving the field of play, and general use of the playground and recreation ground.

Appropriate disclosure and design measures should be incorporated to avoid future complaints that could undermine the operation and enjoyment of these valued community assets.

7. Impact on Community Infrastructure

The proposal will place additional pressure on local infrastructure, including highways, parking, pedestrian routes, community facilities and educational provision.

The addition of 35 new dwellings will inevitably increase demand for school-related infrastructure, parking provision and safe pedestrian access throughout the village. Particular consideration should be given to existing challenges around school drop-off and pick-up times, pedestrian movements between residential areas and the school, and the capacity of supporting community facilities.

The cumulative impact of the development should therefore be assessed not only in terms of housing delivery but also in terms of the infrastructure required to support a growing population and maintain the sustainability of village services.

Kind regards