

Caroline Grist

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 19 October 2025 19:46
To: Caroline Grist
Subject: Objection to DM/25/2478

[REDACTED]
Erection of a detached house and garage on land adjacent to Great Haywards,
Amberley Close (backing on to Wealden Way)

Dear Planning Officer,

I am writing to object to planning application DM/25/2478 for the erection of a detached house and garage on land adjacent to Great Haywards, Amberley Close.

Personal context

My husband and I recently bought our first home on Climping Close, just down the hill from this site. We were drawn to this area because of its unique character, sense of history, and abundance of surrounding green space. In particular, we were enamoured with the neighbouring Ashenground Wood, which houses several of the UK's dwindling ancient oak trees.

These trees are among the most ecologically valuable habitats in Britain. Numerous UK species — including over 300 found only on oak trees — depend on ancient oaks for food, shelter, and highly specific ecological niches. Examples include mammals such as the endangered barbastelle bat, birds like the pied flycatcher and treecreeper, and invertebrates such as goat moth larvae and a wide range of specialised lichens. The intricate microhabitats of ancient oaks — from hollows and loose bark to deadwood and fungi — support complex ecological communities that cannot easily be replaced once lost.

[REDACTED] I am deeply aware that we all share a responsibility to conserve the world's plants and fungi and protect the millions of lives that depend on them. The approval of this application would represent yet another critical loss of biodiversity, undermining both local conservation efforts and

the broader mission of environmental stewardship that institutions like Kew champion.

1. Harm to the heritage setting

The proposed development would have a significant negative impact on the setting of the fourteenth-century Grade II listed building, Great Haywards Farmhouse. The farmhouse's rural and historic character depends on its open surroundings, which would be permanently diminished by additional development. Previous refusals and dismissed appeals on this site were based on exactly these concerns, and no new evidence has emerged to justify a different conclusion now.

2. Loss of green space and ecological harm

The site serves as an important natural buffer supporting local wildlife, including an established badger sett and a range of plant and animal species. Although described as managed under a "Nature Management" scheme, there has been little active ecological maintenance. Further development would fragment habitat, increase disturbance, and reduce the area's ecological connectivity to nearby ancient woodland such as Ashenground Wood.

3. Conflict with planning policy

The proposal directly conflicts with both the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan and Mid Sussex District Plan policies that safeguard heritage assets, biodiversity, and open green space. With Bolnore Village's continuing expansion, the preservation of remaining undeveloped land in this area is essential to maintaining ecological balance and historical context.

4. Flooding and drainage concerns

This area already experiences localised flooding. The introduction of further hard surfaces and structures would exacerbate run-off and reduce natural absorption, increasing flood risk to properties further downhill.

5. Planning history and precedent

The planning history is clear. Consent granted in 2007 for two dwellings explicitly conditioned that no third dwelling should be permitted to protect the listed building. Subsequent applications in 2011 and 2015 were refused, with the 2015 refusal upheld at appeal. No material changes have occurred since, and those previous decisions should carry significant weight.

6. Cumulative and environmental impact

Each incremental development erodes the open, green character of Great Haywards, reduces biodiversity, and diminishes the setting of this historically and ecologically significant area. Approval of this proposal would set an undesirable precedent for further encroachment into remaining green space.

In summary:

This application would harm a listed heritage asset, cause loss of biodiversity, and contradict both local and national planning policies. It should therefore be refused.

Thank you for considering my objection.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the objector.

8 Climping Close, Haywards Heath

