

Sarah Valentine

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 October 2026 07:09
To: planninginfo; Joanne Fisher
Subject: Objection to Planning applications numbered DM/26/1926 and DM/26/2085

[REDACTED]
Dear MSDC Planning Officer,

RE: Panattoni Park, 3 Gothard Green Way, Goddards Green, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 9ZJ

I write to object to planning applications DM/26/1926 and DM/26/2085, submitted by Infinity House Group through its planning agent Parker Dann.

My objections concern the development proposed in these applications, including its visual and landscape impact, transport and parking implications, potential noise and disturbance, biodiversity impacts, the adequacy of the information supplied and the need to assess the two applications together rather than in isolation.

I understand that Unit 3 is currently vacant. DM/26/1926 proposes a substantial security installation comprising 2.4-metre anti-climb perimeter fencing incorporating flat razor wire, a security gatehouse and cantilever gate. DM/26/2085 proposes additional windows and access doors together with an increase in car parking from 46 to 87 spaces, while cycle parking remains at 20 spaces. These applications appear to be related elements of a wider scheme to prepare the currently vacant premises for occupation.

I therefore ask the Council:

- 1) to assess DM/26/1926 and DM/26/2085 together and consider the cumulative impacts of the development, rather than determining each element in isolation;
- 2) to obtain sufficient information about the operational requirements of the development to establish whether the proposed security measures, additional accesses and substantial increase in parking are necessary and appropriate;
- 3) to establish whether the proposed works are associated with a material change or intensification in the use of the currently vacant premises and whether this requires further planning consideration;
- 4) to ensure that the visual, landscape, biodiversity, transport, noise, lighting and other environmental implications have been adequately assessed before either application is determined; and
- 5) given the significant public interest and concerns raised by these applications, to refer them to the appropriate planning committee rather than determining them under delegated powers.

DM/26/1926 – security fencing, gatehouse and gate

I object to the scale and character of the proposed security arrangements. The combination of 2.4-metre anti-climb fencing, flat razor wire, a security gatehouse and controlled entrance has the

potential to create a harsh and heavily secured appearance. The Council should assess the cumulative visual impact of these features, including views from the adjacent public footpath and A2300 corridor, against Policy DP26 (Character and Design). The existence of other security installations elsewhere on the estate does not itself demonstrate that this particular proposal is appropriate.

The application also needs to be properly assessed against DP37 (Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows) and DP38 (Biodiversity). The applicant's own information identifies immature trees, whips and recently planted hedgerows around the boundaries. These boundary features may also include a habitat, foraging, roosting and commuting for bats, which can only be established through an appropriate bay survey before the application is determined.

Construction of the fencing and associated infrastructure could involve machinery, excavation, soil compaction and disturbance to this relatively new landscaping. Its value should not be discounted simply because it has not yet matured.

There also appears to be insufficient information about any additional security lighting, cameras or associated equipment. If these form part of the security arrangements, their intensity, direction and operating hours, together with effects upon wildlife, landscaping and users of the adjoining public footpath, should be assessed under Policy DP29 (Noise, Air and Light Pollution) before permission is granted.

DM/26/2085 – parking, windows and access doors

I am particularly concerned by the proposed increase in car parking from 46 to 87 spaces, an increase of almost 90%, while cycle parking remains unchanged at 20 spaces.

The application does not adequately explain anticipated staffing levels, daily vehicle movements or why such a substantial increase in car parking is necessary. Under Policy DP21 (Transport), the Council should require evidence demonstrating the anticipated parking demand and should consider whether the proposal encourages unnecessary reliance upon private cars and whether walking, cycling and public transport provision is adequate for the anticipated workforce.

The additional access doors and significant increase in parking also raise questions about the intensity of activity at the premises. Depending upon the proposed operation, this could result in additional staff movements, deliveries, loading and unloading, plant or machinery and associated noise and disturbance. The Council should establish the likely operational effects and whether noise, transport, air-quality or other assessments are required under DP29.

The two applications should be considered together

These applications concern the same vacant building, have been submitted by the same applicant through the same agent, and propose complementary alterations: one establishes substantial perimeter security and controlled access while the other alters the building and almost doubles its parking provision.

The Council should therefore establish whether they comprise elements of a single wider scheme to prepare Unit 3 for a particular industrial operation and assess their combined implications for traffic, parking, landscape, visual amenity, security, noise and the surrounding environment.

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I also understand that the application does not contain full information because of “issues of national security”. While I accept the Council's position that the identity of the prospective occupier is not itself a material planning consideration, if information has been withheld because the nature of the proposed operation gives rise to particular security requirements or other physical and operational consequences, those planning consequences must still be properly understood and assessed. The Council should therefore establish whether the withheld information relates to the unusually extensive security measures proposed under DM/26/1926, the operational requirements of the premises, or the alterations proposed under DM/26/2085, and should not determine either application until it is satisfied that it has sufficient information to assess all material planning impacts of the development.

Community and neighbouring-business impacts

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I recognise that the identity of an occupier is not, by itself, a material planning consideration. However, the reasonably foreseeable land-use consequences associated with the development are relevant where they result in material impacts such as traffic, noise, disturbance, security requirements or effects upon neighbouring businesses and amenity.

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If the exceptional security arrangements proposed in DM/26/1926 are required because of the activities intended to take place at Unit 3, the Council should understand those requirements and their associated effects before determining the application. Likewise, if occupation would foreseeably generate regular protests or other activity affecting access, traffic, noise, neighbouring businesses or operation of the wider Panattoni Park, those are potential land-use consequences which should not simply be disregarded because the identity of the prospective occupier is not itself a planning matter.

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I therefore ask MSDC to consider whether the proposed development and its foreseeable consequences conflict with the District Plan's objectives of achieving sustainable, attractive and inclusive communities and promoting a place which remains attractive to a full range of businesses and where local enterprise thrives.

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Following the Supreme Court judgment in R (Finch) v Surrey County Council [2024] UKSC 20, environmental effects of a development are not necessarily confined to emissions occurring within the physical boundary of the development. Where EIA is required, downstream environmental effects may also need to be assessed where there is a sufficient causal connection between the development and those effects.(4)

I recognise that the causal connection here is less direct than that considered by the Supreme Court in Finch. Nevertheless, I ask the Council to consider whether these proposals require EIA screening and, if so, the appropriate scope of any assessment, including any indirect greenhouse-gas effects that can properly be regarded as effects of the development.

Bat Survey Required

The trees and hedgerows that currently exist around the site may provide habitation, foraging and commuting routes for bats, and the proposed security infrastructure application of DM/26/1926 raises the possibility of additional external security lighting. All bat species are legally protected, and Natural England's standing advice states that a bat survey should be requested where a development is close to trees, shrubs or other habitat providing commuting or foraging opportunities for bats, or where lighting of buildings or green spaces is proposed close to habitats bats may use.

I therefore ask the Council to establish whether the site and its boundary vegetation are used by bats and, where appropriate, require a bat activity survey before determining the application. Any proposed external lighting should also be fully detailed and assessed for its potential impact on bat commuting and foraging routes. If bats are present, appropriate mitigation should include maintaining dark corridors along important habitat features and ensuring lighting does not illuminate bat routes or foraging habitat.(5)

This is also relevant to Policy DP38, which requires development to protect and enhance biodiversity and recognises the importance of ecological networks beyond formally designated nature conservation sites.

Conclusion

For the reasons above, I object to both DM/26/1926 and DM/26/2085 and ask the Council not to determine either application until it has sufficient information to assess their individual and cumulative planning impacts.

In particular, I ask the Council to obtain any further information necessary concerning the justification for the security infrastructure, parking demand and transport implications, operational intensity, noise and lighting, landscaping and biodiversity, and the relationship between the two applications.

Given the unusual nature of the security proposals, the substantial public interest and the objections now being raised, I also ask that both applications are referred to the appropriate planning committee rather than determined under delegated powers.

Please add this representation to the files for both DM/26/1926 and DM/26/2085 and take it into account before either application is determined.

Yours sincerely,

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Sources:

[Redacted sources]