

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk
Sent: 03 June 2026 11:08
To: Caroline Grist
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application DM/26/1315

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 03/06/2026 11:07 AM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land West Of Gatesmead Wickham Way Haywards Heath West Sussex
Proposal:	Proposed 49 new homes together with open space and associated infrastructure.
Case Officer:	Caroline Grist

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address:	56 Gatesmead Haywards Heath
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Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Local amenity society or association
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

Comments: Objection to planning application DM/26/1315 - Land West of Gatesmead, Wickham Way, Haywards Heath.

Save Wickham Fields is the community campaign opposing the proposed development of Wickham Fields. We object to DM/26/1315 in full, on the following grounds.

1. The unresolved legal status of DMMO 3/22.

A Definitive Map Modification Order application affecting this site (DMMO 3/22) has been undetermined by West Sussex County Council since 15 November 2021 - over four-and-a-half years. The application was filed jointly by Haywards Heath Town Council and Lindfield Rural Parish Council as a user (evidence-based) application under Schedule 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and remains at investigation stage on WSCC's register.

Because DMMO 3/22 has not yet been determined, the legal status, position, alignment and

width of the alleged public right of way over or adjacent to the site are not yet established in law. We recognise that, where the position of a right of way is known and settled, a development can sometimes be designed around it. That is not the position here. There is, at present, nothing settled for the application to be designed around. In other Mid Sussex cases where a public right of way has been successfully integrated into a development, the legal status of the route was already resolved before the planning decision was made. That procedural step has not yet happened here.

We therefore object on the basis that DM/26/1315 cannot be properly determined while DMMO 3/22 remains undetermined. To determine the application now would risk a planning decision made on incomplete legal information that would be difficult to remedy if WSCC subsequently confirms the route. Given that DMMO 3/22 is one of only two user applications in WSCC's entire backlog, we ask the Council to make representations to WSCC for an expedited determination ahead of any recommendation to committee on DM/26/1315.

2. Loss of open green space and biodiversity.

The application would destroy approximately 11 acres of open grassland forming part of the open countryside on the eastern edge of Haywards Heath. Local residents have documented protected species on the site, including black redstart - a Schedule 1 protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, with fewer than 100 UK breeding pairs - and slow worm (also protected), alongside green woodpecker, great spotted woodpecker, buzzard, sparrowhawk and red kite. The presence of multiple birds of prey indicates a functioning, undisturbed habitat. The applicant's submitted ecological evidence should be tested against an independent survey before any determination, and the precautionary principle applied to species the survey may have missed.

3. Access via Gatesmead.

All vehicular access to the proposed development is via Gatesmead, a residential street not built for the volume of traffic generated by 49 new homes. The cumulative impact on highway safety, junction visibility at Wickham Way, construction traffic, refuse vehicle access and the school run has not, in our view, been adequately addressed in the submitted material. We invite the Council's highways consultees to consider not only theoretical capacity but the lived conditions of the road at peak times, which residents have reported in their individual objections to this application.

4. Harm to designated heritage assets.

Wickham Farmhouse (a late-16th-century lobby-entrance house, c. 1580) and Sunte House (c. 1700s) are both Grade II* listed - a designation applied to only around 5.8% of listed buildings in England. The remnant countryside setting of both buildings forms part of the significance for which they are listed. The NPPF requires that great weight be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets and that clear and convincing justification be provided for any harm. The applicant's own consultants have previously acknowledged that development of this site "may affect the significance of these designated built heritage assets". We do not consider the public benefit of 49 homes on this particular site outweighs the harm to the setting of two Grade II* listed buildings, when other sites are available within the District. We ask that Historic England be consulted formally.

5. Local infrastructure capacity.

Local schools, GP services and drainage infrastructure in Haywards Heath are already under acknowledged pressure. The application does not, in our view, adequately demonstrate that the additional demand from 49 new homes can be accommodated without further degradation of services for existing residents. The cumulative impact alongside other candidate sites in the District Plan additional-sites process compounds this concern.

Conclusion.

For the reasons set out above - and in particular the unresolved legal status of DMMO 3/22 - Save Wickham Fields objects to DM/26/1315 and asks that the application be refused. If the

application is to be determined, we ask that it be considered by Planning Committee rather than under delegated powers, given the significance of the site, the unresolved legal status of the alleged right of way, the impact on two Grade II* listed buildings, and the strength of community feeling reflected in objections from residents and the joint DMMO applicant councils.

We are grateful for the Council's consideration.

[Redacted signature]

Kind regards