

Objection to Planning Application

DM/26/2178

Site: Land between 149 and 161 College Lane, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex

Proposal: Erection of 6 dwellings with associated access, landscaping, parking and areas of open space

Objector: [REDACTED] 128 College Lane, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex, BN6 9AJ.

Dear Planning Officer,

I am writing to object to application DM/26/2178. The application covers about 0.48 hectares of undeveloped land on the eastern side of College Lane and proposes six two-, three- and four-bedroom houses, with 20 parking spaces and 12 cycle spaces. Having followed the earlier application on the adjoining land and the subsequent proposals affecting College Lane, I do not believe this is simply a minor infill scheme. In practical terms, it would be a further residential development extending into the countryside. It also needs to be considered alongside the seven houses approved immediately to the south under DM/24/1139, the later house-type changes under DM/25/1379, SHELAA Site 19, Site 575 and other development likely to affect College Lane.

Grounds of objection

I have set out my main concerns below. They cover the principle of building outside the settlement boundary, whether this can properly be called infill, the effect on the countryside and nearby properties, highway safety, drainage, local infrastructure, biodiversity, housing need and the way the application should be decided.

My main concern is that the site is outside the adopted built-up area boundary and that six houses, with their own access, parking and open space, are not genuine infill. The development would push the built-up edge further into the countryside. Important questions also remain about the setting of the nearby Grade II listed building, safe pedestrian access, cumulative traffic and drainage problems, pressure on local infrastructure and the future of the neighbouring sheep-rearing smallholding. In my view, the limited benefit of six additional market houses has not been shown to outweigh these concerns.

1. Development outside the built-up area and conflict with the plan-led strategy

The adopted Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031 is still the main local plan against which this application should be assessed. I understand that the emerging District Plan 2021–2040 is still under examination: consultation on the proposed Main Modifications closed on 7 September 2026 and the examination hearings are due to resume on 3 November 2026. It may therefore carry some weight, but it has not replaced the adopted plan. In particular, I ask the Council to apply Policies DP6 and DP12, confirm where the site sits in relation to the adopted built-up area boundary and explain how building six houses on this countryside site would comply with those policies.

2. The proposal is not genuine infill

I do not believe the site becomes infill simply because houses exist, or have recently been approved, to the north or south. It is not a small gap in an otherwise continuous row of houses. The proposal is for six dwellings with a new internal access, parking and open space, so it would read as a separate residential development rather than the modest filling of a gap in the frontage. The permission for seven houses at 147–149 College Lane did not move the adopted built-up area boundary or establish that the next piece of countryside should also be developed. If each new permission is then used to justify the next one, the village edge will continue to move outwards in stages and the settlement boundary will lose its purpose.

3. Harm to rural character, landscape setting and settlement edge

The applicant describes the scheme as a continuation of the approved houses and a transition to the countryside. From a local resident's point of view, it would instead bring another line of houses, lighting, vehicles, parking and domestic activity onto land that is currently open and rural. I ask the Council to require clear plans, viewpoints and section drawings showing the proposed roof heights, finished floor levels, boundaries and lighting alongside College Lane, the surrounding fields and the final approved form of DM/24/1139 and DM/25/1379. This is needed to judge whether the houses would sit comfortably in the landscape or create a harder and more prominent village edge under Policies DP12 and DP26. The comparison with the lower and more set-back development to the south is especially important because this site appears more elevated and exposed in views from College Lane and the surrounding land.

The Council should also assess the relationship between the proposed dwellings and the existing homes adjoining the site. The submitted plans should demonstrate the separation distances, relative ground and finished-floor levels, orientation of principal windows, garden boundaries and screening between the development and neighbouring properties. Particular attention should be given to overlooking, loss of privacy, overbearing effects, artificial lighting, vehicle movements and noise from

access, parking and domestic activity. These effects should be assessed cumulatively with the final approved form of DM/24/1139 and DM/25/1379 rather than by considering each development in isolation. If an acceptable relationship with existing residents cannot be demonstrated without relying on immature or unenforceable planting, permission should be refused or the layout materially revised.

4. Cumulative impact and incremental loss of countryside

This application should not be considered in isolation. The adjoining seven-home permission under DM/24/1139, this six-home proposal under DM/26/2178, the promoted Land East of College Lane site identified as SHELAA Site 19, and Land South of Chalkers Lane/Little Park Farm identified as Site 575 would together alter the character and function of the lane, increase traffic and infrastructure demand, and progressively erode grazing land and wildlife habitat. No current planning-application reference has been identified for SHELAA Site 19, and the available promotion material contains differing iterations of approximately 35, 60 and potentially 125 dwellings depending on boundary and phasing. The Council should confirm the operative boundary, development quantum and status and treat Site 19 as promoted or pre-application land unless and until a formal application is submitted. The formal history for Land South of Chalkers Lane/Little Park Farm includes outline application HP/13/03305/OUT for 57 dwellings, while the current emerging-plan evidence identifies the wider promoted land as Site 575. The planning officer should confirm whether any later application, allocation or revised promotion applies and include its latest development quantum and transport evidence in the cumulative assessment. Although Site 575 would take direct vehicular access from Chalkers Lane, its realistic wider traffic distribution must still be assessed. The narrow and congested route through Hurstpierpoint High Street is a longstanding constraint, and no practical local alternative route is capable of readily absorbing substantial additional traffic. College Lane may therefore become a principal route toward Hassocks railway station and destinations to the south. The transport assessment should model combined peak-hour and daily movements from all committed and reasonably foreseeable development in the corridor. It should test realistic route choices and examine the constrained section beside the historic estate workers' cottages, junction capacity, opposing vehicle movements, queuing and displacement, school-time conditions, pedestrian and cyclist safety where no footway exists, emergency and service-vehicle access, and increased car dependence. It should not assume that traffic can disperse onto unspecified alternative routes where none provides a practical equivalent. Approval may also leave adjoining land less viable for smallholding or grazing use, increasing pressure for later redevelopment. These cumulative consequences are material and should be assessed before the application is determined.

Agricultural use and viability of the neighbouring smallholding

The application site reportedly forms an important part of an established smallholding on the adjoining land. Sheep have been reared there continuously for more than 30 years, and the holding relies on rented use of the application land for supplementary grazing, particularly because its own grazing area has already been reduced by the seven-dwelling development approved under DM/24/1139. The Council should establish the extent and duration of this agricultural use, the practical availability of the grazing arrangement, the stocking and seasonal grazing requirements of the flock, and whether loss of the application land would make the remaining holding materially less viable or bring the established sheep-rearing activity to an end. These matters are relevant to the cumulative loss and fragmentation of agricultural land, the effect on an existing rural enterprise and the changing character of the countryside edge. The long-established presence of grazing sheep and newly born lambs each spring also helps residents and children experience and understand the area's living rural character. Although that community value is not advanced as a standalone reason for refusal, it reinforces the evidence that the site is functioning countryside supporting an established agricultural use rather than vacant land without rural value.

5. Highway safety and unsustainable car dependence

The application shows 20 car-parking spaces and 12 cycle spaces, but there is no footway along this part of College Lane. Anyone walking to or from the site would have to use the edge of the carriageway, and this becomes particularly difficult at the narrow section by the old estate workers' cottages. The road is often congested there, with parked cars and very limited room for two vehicles to pass, leaving little safe space for pedestrians or cyclists. In my view, this makes the site heavily dependent on cars and is not solved simply by providing cycle spaces. I ask the Council and highway authority to inspect the whole route at school and commuter times and record the road widths, passing places, visibility, parking and pedestrian conditions. The assessment should include children, older people, wheelchair users and people with pushchairs, as well as the extra traffic from DM/24/1139 and other nearby development. If the submitted evidence does not properly reflect the missing footway and the bottleneck by the cottages, permission should not be granted without a safe and workable solution.

I am also concerned about the blind bend just beyond the application site, close to the entrance serving the seven-house development approved under DM/24/1139. Drivers approaching from either direction have a limited view of oncoming traffic, and the risk is greater for pedestrians and cyclists because there is no footway or separate safe space. A person walking or cycling around the bend may not be seen until a vehicle is already very close, especially where parked vehicles, vegetation or the road alignment reduce visibility further. The Council and highway authority should inspect this bend from both directions, measure the available forward visibility and assess the combined effect of

traffic entering and leaving both developments. This should include conditions at school and commuter times and the needs of children, older people and less confident cyclists. In my view, permission should not be granted unless the Council is satisfied that the additional movements can be accommodated safely at this specific point, rather than relying only on general traffic numbers for the wider road.

The Council should confirm precisely what vegetation, hedgerow, trees, banks or boundary features would need to be removed, lowered or regularly cut back to provide and retain the claimed access visibility splays. The highway, arboricultural, landscape and ecological assessments should use the same access drawings and should address the permanent effect of those works on rural character, habitat connectivity, screening and the setting of nearby heritage assets. Any visibility area that depends on land outside the applicant's control or on future maintenance that cannot be secured for the lifetime of the development should not be treated as deliverable. Replacement planting should not be assumed to provide an immediate substitute for an established rural boundary.

In addition, the planning officer is requested to verify whether any room shown on the submitted floor plans as a "study" has the dimensions, layout, access, daylight and ventilation that would make it realistically capable of use as an additional bedroom. If so, has the dwelling's effective bedroom capacity been understated, and have the applicable residential parking requirement and the assessment of likely occupancy, traffic generation, refuse provision, drainage demand and residential amenity been calculated on the correct basis? The assessment should consider the room's practical function rather than relying solely on the label used on the plan.

6. Inadequate transport and health infrastructure

In DM/24/1139, the highway authority raised no capacity objection when considering seven dwellings in isolation. That response does not establish that the network can safely accommodate DM/26/2178 together with the approved development and the other promoted sites now identified. The Council should require a new cumulative assessment using the final approved layout and realistic occupancy of DM/24/1139, the proposed six dwellings, SHELAA Site 19 and Site 575. It should explain whether the earlier highway conclusion remains valid once the absence of a footway, the constrained cottage section, school and commuter peaks, station-bound traffic and the lack of practical alternative routes are included.

Housing growth in Hurstpierpoint and the surrounding area must be considered alongside the capacity and timely delivery of the infrastructure on which new residents would depend. No corresponding increase in public parking capacity at Hassocks railway station has been identified in the material reviewed despite considerable development. The Council should verify current capacity, occupancy and overspill

conditions and establish whether cumulative housing growth is supported by funded improvements. Future travel behaviour also requires realistic assessment. Hybrid working may concentrate commuting on particular weekdays and peak periods, including journeys toward Brighton, Crawley, Gatwick, Croydon and London. Given the site's poor pedestrian accessibility and likely reliance on Hassocks station, the transport evidence should assess resulting demand for local roads and station parking rather than rely on historic or average assumptions that may pre-date recent working patterns. Health infrastructure requires the same cumulative approach. Local experience indicates difficulty obtaining GP appointments and an absence of a readily accessible NHS dental practice accepting routine patients. The planning officer should obtain current evidence from the relevant NHS bodies on GP list capacity, appointment demand, dental access, funded expansion and mitigation for additional demand. Burial provision should likewise be assessed against growth from DM/24/1139, DM/26/2178, SHELAA Site 19, Site 575 and other committed or reasonably foreseeable schemes. Site 19 remains promoted land without an identified current planning-application reference and has differing development iterations of approximately 35, 60 and potentially 125 dwellings. Site 575 has a formal history including HP/13/03305/OUT for 57 dwellings, but no newer formal application reference has been identified. The Council should distinguish promoted land from applications and permissions while including schemes with a reasonable prospect of proceeding in a proportionate cumulative assessment. The local burial ground is reported to have reached capacity. The responsible burial authority should confirm remaining capacity, accessible alternatives and any funded extension or replacement provision. The issue is whether the total scale and timing of nearby development is supported by credible and adequately funded community infrastructure, not whether these six dwellings alone create a determinative requirement. If adequate transport, health and community-facility capacity or necessary mitigation cannot be demonstrated, the proposal would add to existing and foreseeable pressure and conflict with Policies DP20, DP21 and DP25.

Broadband is another everyday concern for people living in this part of College Lane. Full-fibre broadband is not available here, and residents already experience slow speeds and regular breaks in service. This has become much more noticeable as more people work from home. Reliable broadband is now an essential household service for work, education and access to online services, rather than a luxury. I ask the Council to check with the relevant network providers and Ofcom what service is actually available to addresses on the lane, including typical upload and download speeds, known faults or outages, remaining network capacity and any firm plans for a full-fibre upgrade. The applicant should also explain how six more homes would be connected without making the existing service worse. If an upgrade is needed, it should be identified and put in place before the new houses are occupied.

7. Drainage, sewerage and flood-risk uncertainty

I am particularly concerned about the condition and capacity of the combined foul- and surface-water sewer serving this area. Residents report that during heavy rain its contents still surcharge or escape onto the agricultural field at the northern end of College Lane. The issue therefore goes beyond localised flooding because it may affect the soil, nearby water and livestock grazing the land. I ask the Council to obtain evidence from Southern Water, the lead local flood authority and, where relevant, the Environment Agency and environmental-health or animal-health bodies about the history, frequency, extent and contents of these incidents. The drainage proposal for the six houses should show clearly how foul and surface water would be dealt with, whether there is enough downstream capacity and whether the development could increase flooding or pollution. This assessment should include DM/24/1139 and other development using the same network. If the existing system is already surcharging, permission should not be granted unless the necessary improvements are funded, secured and completed before the houses are occupied. These are basic questions about whether the site can be served safely and should not be left unresolved until after permission is granted. Policies DP41 and DP42 are directly relevant.

A recent local incident provides further evidence that the resilience of the wider sewerage network should not be assumed. In March 2026, a burst Southern Water sewage pipe at Malthouse Lane—on the continuation of the College Lane corridor—polluted Pook Bourne and an adjoining area of woodland. Contemporary reporting records that the Environment Agency confirmed the pollution and that sewage had reportedly entered the stream and woodland for several days before the repair response; Southern Water subsequently deployed tankers while repairing the pipe. Separately, published event-duration-monitoring data identifies the Malthouse Lane pumping-station overflow to Pook Bourne and records discharge activity during 2026. The Council should require the exact number of monitored spills, their total duration, the reporting period and the relevant asset identifier to be placed on the application file. The pipe failure and monitored storm-overflow operation are different mechanisms and should not be conflated. Taken together, however, they justify an evidence-led assessment of network condition, hydraulic capacity, resilience and pollution risk before additional foul flows are accepted. Southern Water and the Environment Agency should disclose the incident reference, investigation findings, affected watercourse classification, repair and resilience measures, water-quality and ecological monitoring, and whether the assets serving DM/26/2178 connect to or interact with the same network or downstream receiving environment. If no such connection exists, that should be demonstrated transparently; if it does, the cumulative implications must be addressed before determination.

The committee report for DM/24/1139 records that the Council's Drainage Engineer regarded a pumped drainage system as the only solution for that site and recommended approval of detailed foul- and surface-water arrangements by condition. For DM/26/2178, the Council should publish the approved drainage details for DM/24/1139, confirm whether that system has been installed and is operating as designed, and assess both developments together against the capacity of the same downstream network. A conclusion that pumping was acceptable for one isolated scheme is not evidence that repeated pumped or constrained connections can be accommodated without increasing surcharge, flood or pollution risk.

It is also not clear whether the drainage system approved for DM/24/1139 was designed only for that seven-house development or whether it included any allowance for runoff from the adjoining land now proposed for six houses. DM/26/2178 would replace part of the existing permeable grazing land with roofs, access roads, parking and other hard surfaces, reducing natural infiltration and potentially increasing the amount and speed of water reaching the lower end of the site. I ask the Council to require a combined levels and drainage plan, supported by calculations, showing where surface water from both developments would flow and whether any of it would enter, cross or depend on the pumped system serving DM/24/1139. The assessment should confirm the capacity of the pump, pipes and attenuation storage, the permitted discharge rate and what would happen during an extreme storm, pump failure or power failure. It should not be assumed that the drainage system for the seven houses has spare capacity for this further development. Permission should not be granted unless the evidence shows that each scheme can be drained safely, both separately and together, without increasing ponding, sewer surcharge, flooding or pollution on either site or farther downstream.

Request for evidence from Southern Water and environmental authorities

To Southern Water, West Sussex County Council as lead local flood authority, the Environment Agency, the relevant environmental-health authority and any competent animal-health or agricultural authority:

Please provide the following evidence to the local planning authority, and make it publicly available on the application file, before application DM/26/2178 is determined. The information is requested because the proposed dwellings may connect to infrastructure serving an area where the combined sewer is reported to surcharge or discharge onto agricultural land during heavy rainfall.

1. **Incident history:** records of flooding, surcharge, overflow, pollution events, complaints, call-outs, investigations and enforcement concerning the sewer network and agricultural land at the northern end of College Lane for the most recent available ten-year period, together with the incident reference, investigation, repair records, pollution assessment and follow-up monitoring for

the March 2026 burst sewage pipe at Malthouse Lane that polluted Pook Bourne and nearby woodland.

2. **Location and cause:** identification of the relevant sewer, manholes, outfalls, pumping assets and receiving waters; whether the reported material is foul sewage, combined sewage, surface water or a mixture; and the established or suspected cause of each event.
3. **Frequency and severity:** dates, rainfall conditions, duration, estimated volumes, affected area, photographs, sampling results and any assessment of recurrence risk.
4. **Environmental testing:** available analysis of pathogens, ammonia, nutrients, suspended solids or other contaminants in discharged material, soil, ditches or nearby water, together with any assessment of effects on soil, surface water, groundwater, habitats and biodiversity.
5. **Livestock and food-chain risk:** any advice, investigation or risk assessment concerning grazing animals, veterinary exposure, withdrawal from grazing, contamination of fodder or produce, and implications for animals entering the human food chain.
6. **Existing network capacity:** current hydraulic capacity, dry- and wet-weather flow, known restrictions, infiltration, pumping constraints, maintenance history and any verified instances where capacity has been exceeded.
7. **Cumulative development:** a hydraulic assessment including DM/24/1139, DM/26/2178 and all other committed or reasonably foreseeable development expected to use the same catchment, with assumptions and model outputs disclosed.
8. **Proposed connection:** the intended point and method of foul- and surface-water connection, additional design flows, discharge rates, phasing and confirmation that surface water will be separated from the foul or combined system wherever feasible.
9. **Improvement works:** details of any funded network reinforcement, storage, pumping, separation or pollution-prevention works, including delivery programme, responsible body and whether completion would occur before occupation.
10. **Regulatory position:** details of permits, consents, statutory nuisance investigations, pollution reports, notices, remedial requirements and any unresolved recommendations relevant to the reported events.

Please also confirm expressly whether the authorities consider that the proposed development can be accommodated without increasing the frequency, duration, volume or severity of sewer surcharge, flooding or polluted discharge. If that conclusion cannot presently be reached, please identify the further investigation or infrastructure works required and advise the Council not to determine the application until those

matters have been resolved. Any necessary upgrade should be secured by an enforceable mechanism and completed before occupation, rather than left to a general condition requiring later approval of details.

I request that the planning officer consult each relevant body on these specific questions, publish all substantive responses, and explain in the officer report how the evidence has been assessed under Policies DP41 and DP42 and applicable water-quality, pollution-control and public-health requirements.

8. Biodiversity, trees and loss of open land

A stated biodiversity net gain of ten per cent does not, on its own, show that the development will avoid ecological harm. I ask the Council to publish the completed biodiversity calculation and the surveys used to assess the existing grassland, hedges and trees. It should be clear which habitats will remain, how lighting and day-to-day domestic activity may affect the boundaries, where any new habitat will be created, who will own and manage it and how the promised gain will be monitored and enforced over the required period. The assessment should also consider the combined loss and fragmentation of habitat caused by DM/24/1139 and other nearby development. Existing habitat should be retained wherever possible rather than treated as something that can simply be replaced by new domestic landscaping. The proposal should comply with Policies DP37 and DP38.

A further concern, which also arose with the seven-house development, is that the claimed biodiversity benefits may depend on new planting and habitat reaching full maturity. That can take many years, following the construction period and a further period while planting becomes established. During that time there may be a real loss of habitat, shelter and wildlife connections, even if the calculation shows a gain at some future date. The two sites should therefore be considered together, because construction and establishment across both developments could create a significant short- and medium-term reduction in biodiversity. That reduced surrounding habitat may also make the promised longer-term gains harder to achieve, as new planting would be trying to establish within a smaller and more fragmented ecological area., with reduced animal and insect habitat. I ask the Council to require a year-by-year account of habitat losses and gains, including the construction and establishment periods, together with clear interim mitigation, monitoring and replacement measures if habitats fail to establish as predicted. The assessment should not rely only on the position once the sites are said to have reached maturity.

9. Limited public benefit and housing mix

I recognise that six additional market houses would add to the overall housing supply. However, the Council should explain how much weight that contribution deserves when there are already substantial commitments, proposed allocations and other possible

developments around Hurstpierpoint. The officer report should state the Council's current housing-land-supply position and identify the particular local need these houses would meet. If the District's housing requirement and local need can be met through planned sites in more suitable locations, the benefit of releasing this unallocated countryside land should carry limited weight against the landscape, transport, drainage, ecological and infrastructure concerns set out above. No on-site affordable housing is proposed. I am not suggesting that a scheme of six houses must provide affordable housing, but these two-, three- and four-bedroom market homes should not be presented as meeting an identified need for genuinely affordable homes. Nor does the location and access suggest these houses would be suitable for the elderly, disabled or children. Their mix should be tested against the latest local evidence under Policy DP30.

10. Decision-making route and request for committee scrutiny

I understand that an application for six houses does not automatically have to go before a planning committee. Mid Sussex District Council says that its District Planning Committee deals with the largest schemes of 50 or more dwellings, while smaller applications may be referred under the relevant delegation arrangements. However, the adjoining application for seven houses, DM/24/1139, was considered by the Planning Committee, where members heard concerns about countryside policy, highway capacity, drainage, the heritage setting and the loss of a paddock. The present application raises the same issues, but now in a more developed cumulative context and with additional concerns about the lack of a footway, reported sewer surcharge and wider promoted development. I therefore ask the Council to confirm which delegation rules will apply when the decision is made and ask the ward members to consider referring the application to committee if the rules allow. If it is decided by officers, I ask that the officer report explains why its treatment differs from DM/24/1139 and addresses the material objections and consultation responses.

Relevant planning history

The way the adjoining application DM/24/1139 was considered is important here. The Council's Conservation Officer found that it would cause less than substantial harm to the setting of the Grade II listed building opposite the site entrance and would conflict with Policy DP34. This proposal would add more buildings, traffic, lighting and domestic activity in the same setting. I therefore ask the Council to obtain an updated heritage assessment looking at the combined effect of both developments. The officer report should explain what additional harm would arise and whether the public benefits of another six houses are enough to outweigh it. The conclusion reached for the earlier seven-house scheme should not simply be repeated now that the surrounding position has changed.

Concerns have also been raised about vibration from the large construction vehicles serving DM/24/1139 and the possible effect on the nearby Grade II listed building. The present proposal would mean a further period of heavy lorry movements along the same narrow lane, including deliveries, excavation and removal of materials. I ask the Council to establish whether any vibration complaints, inspections or structural concerns were recorded during the seven-house development and to assess the combined risk before allowing another construction phase in the same location. This should include a baseline condition survey of the listed building, a construction traffic route and delivery plan, suitable vehicle and time restrictions, vibration limits and monitoring, and a clear procedure for stopping work and investigating if those limits are exceeded. The effect of construction traffic on the blind bend, the narrow section by the cottages and pedestrians and cyclists should also be considered. In my view, these safeguards should be agreed and enforceable before work starts rather than left to informal arrangements with the developer.

The Council approved seven dwellings at land at 147–149 College Lane under DM/24/1139, following consideration by the Planning Committee on 10 October 2024, and subsequently permitted amendments to the house types under DM/25/1379. The officer report, committee minutes, decision notice, approved plans and later variation should be examined together for findings about the built-up area boundary, the intended relationship between the approved development and adjoining countryside, heritage setting, landscape effects, highway safety, drainage and sewer capacity. The present proposal materially changes the cumulative position and requires a fresh assessment rather than an assumption that the earlier permission established the principle of further northward development. Any appeal decisions relied upon by the applicant or Council should be identified by their full reference, site, decision date and relevant findings, with differences in scale, policy context and site circumstances clearly explained.

The Council is also requested to invite and retain dated photographs, videos, incident logs and witness accounts relating to pedestrian conditions, traffic congestion, vehicle passing movements, station-parking overspill, sewer surcharge and flooding. Where these records identify dates and locations, they should be compared with rainfall data, school and commuter periods, highway observations and statutory undertaker records. Such local evidence should not replace technical assessment, but it may identify recurring conditions that a short site visit or modelled average would otherwise miss.

Schedule of matters requiring resolution before determination

In preparing this objection I have referred to the application documents and consultation responses for DM/26/2178; the officer report, committee minutes, decision notice and approved plans for DM/24/1139; the amendments approved under DM/25/1379; the Council's information for SHELAA Site 19 and Site 575; historic

application HP/13/03305/OUT; the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031; the made Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan; the emerging District Plan examination material; available Southern Water and Environment Agency information about the March 2026 Malthouse Lane incident and event-duration monitoring; and local photographs, videos, incident records or witness accounts where available. It would be helpful if the officer report stated the date and version of the main documents used in reaching the decision.

Before the application is decided, I ask the Council to confirm that it has reached a clear conclusion on each of the following points: the site's position relative to the adopted built-up area boundary; the cumulative effect on the Grade II listed building considered during DM/24/1139; the final approved form and realistic occupancy of DM/24/1139 and DM/25/1379; cumulative traffic from those schemes, SHELAA Site 19 and Site 575; safe pedestrian access where there is no footway; whether rooms labelled as studies could in practice be used as bedrooms; combined-sewer capacity and reported surcharge incidents; the March 2026 Malthouse Lane pipe failure and pollution of Pook Bourne and nearby woodland; the effectiveness of any pumped drainage solution; the biodiversity baseline and long-term management arrangements; the site's established grazing use and importance to the neighbouring smallholding; the current availability, speed, reliability and capacity of broadband serving College Lane and any funded full-fibre upgrade; and the availability of mitigation for station parking, health services and burial provision. Matters central to whether the development is acceptable should be resolved before permission is granted, not left to a general condition.

The strongest reasons for refusal are, in my view, the conflict with the adopted settlement and countryside policies, the lack of demonstrated safe pedestrian access, the effect on the rural edge and heritage setting, and the unresolved cumulative highway, drainage and pollution issues. I have included station parking, health services and burial capacity as part of the wider picture of infrastructure pressure and the sustainability of further unplanned growth, rather than suggesting that any one of those matters alone should decide this six-house application.

Requested decision

For these reasons, I ask the Council to refuse planning permission if it finds that the scheme conflicts with the adopted settlement strategy and countryside policies, is not acceptable infill, harms the rural edge or the setting of the nearby Grade II listed building, threatens the viability of the neighbouring sheep-rearing smallholding through further loss of grazing land, or has not shown that its cumulative effects on roads, pedestrian safety, drainage, pollution, biodiversity and local infrastructure are acceptable. Before reaching a decision, the Council should publish and consider the relevant landscape, heritage, highway, drainage, sewerage and ecological evidence; the

biodiversity information; the realistic bedroom and parking assessment; evidence about the agricultural use of the land; and the cumulative position created by DM/24/1139, DM/25/1379, SHELAA Site 19, Site 575 and other likely development affecting College Lane. If an important point remains unresolved, permission should not be granted on the assumption that it can simply be dealt with later by condition.

The Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan, made by Mid Sussex District Council on 18 March 2015, also forms part of the statutory development plan. The Council should identify expressly the neighbourhood-plan countryside, landscape, housing and transport policies that apply to this site and explain whether the proposal accords with them. This is particularly important because the Neighbourhood Plan establishes a locally endorsed strategy for restrained development and protection of the parish's countryside.

Key development-plan documents include the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031, particularly Policies DP6, DP12, DP20, DP21, DP25, DP26, DP30, DP34, DP37, DP38, DP41 and DP42, and the made Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan. Relevant policies in the emerging Mid Sussex District Plan 2021–2040 should be given only the weight appropriate to a plan that remains under examination following consultation on proposed Main Modifications. The application must also be assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework in force at the date of determination.

Yours faithfully,

[Redacted signature]

128 College Lane, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex, BN6 9AJ

[Redacted contact information]