

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 January 2026 12:33:10 UTC+00:00
To: "Rachel Richardson" <rachel.richardson@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application
DM/25/3191

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 23/01/2026 12:33 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land To The South Of Burleigh Lane Crawley Down West Sussex
Proposal:	Outline application with all matters reserved except for access from Burleigh Lane, for the erection of up to eight self-build/custom build dwellings, drainage and ancillary works.
Case Officer:	Rachel Richardson

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Customer Details

Address:	Thyme Cottage Sandhill Lane Crawley Down
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Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour or general public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	
Comments:	<p>We are very concerned about this proposed new estate South of Burleigh Lane, outside the Area designated as suitable for development in the Local Plan. Our concerns come under five main headings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Spread of village into designated countryside area2. Environment / Ecology3. Safety of users of the Public Footpath4. Adverse effects on drainage for Burleigh Lane and other parts of Crawley Down

5. Approach to Grade II Listed Burleigh Cottage adversely impacted

1. The proposed development is outside the area of the village and the planned development area, as highlighted in the reasoning for permitting the proposed development to the North of Burleigh Lane (DM/25/1593) and other recent planning approvals. The proposed development doesn't just add houses along Burleigh Lane, which would itself be objectionable, but it requires the construction of a whole new estate, including a new road. This is not in line with the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan, and it is unacceptable urban sprawl into open countryside. It reduces the gap between Crawley Down and Turners Hill, which is contrary to specific Prevention of Coalescence Planning policy.

2. The land is used by bats, badgers, deer, foxes, buzzards and barn owls and their prey; and by numerous smaller mammals and birds. As immediate neighbours of the proposed development site, we have seen and heard all these species either on the site or immediately adjacent to it, with clear evidence they access the site. We refute DMH Stallard's statement that "No evidence of badgers was identified on site". It is highly likely the site is also used by great crested newts, as these have been seen in the gardens of properties in Sandhill Lane. This development would encroach on the area available to this wildlife, pushing it further out of the village and narrowing the corridor available to it between villages. The provision of a few bat boxes and such-like can in no way mitigate the harm done by building over designated countryside areas.

3. Burleigh Lane is a public footpath, heavily used by people with young children, dog walkers, horse-riders and Duke of Edinburgh teenagers, with a smaller number of people (mainly children) on bicycles and scooters. From living on the junction of the two lanes, we believe Reeves Transport Planning's Transport Report gives a misleading representation concerning several issues about both Burleigh Lane and Sandhill Lane.

Burleigh Lane is generally 3m wide, which means that people have to stand off to one side to let a car past, and that, for most of the approximately 140m length between the junction of Sandhill Lane and the development site, there is no space for larger vehicles to pass people, unless the people get into the ditch (which is frequently flooded) on one side or the brambles on the other side.

Whilst the Transport Report states that 'There are numerous informal passing areas along the length of the lane', there are actually only 4 places along this length where people can readily get off the road: the entrance to Burleigh Cottage, the old drive way to our house (Thyme Cottage), a small area of land abutting an old gate on the North side of the Lane at the South-West

corner of the proposed development site DM/25/1593, and the rear drive-way to the applicants' house (Sandhill House). The longest section of this is 55m between accessible passing points. Currently, this length of Lane, beyond Burleigh Cottage, serves a total of 6 residential properties, and there are only very occasional large vehicle movements.

We believe this makes a nonsense of the Transport Report when it states "It is recognised that Burleigh Lane is too narrow to enable pedestrians to walk side-by-side when a vehicle is passing. However, the presence of verges and the existing low vehicle speeds provide adequate space for pedestrians to navigate the lane while allowing vehicles to pass. As Burleigh Lane serves only a small number of dwellings, such interactions are expected to occur infrequently."

Once completed, this development of 8 large new houses will more than double the number of car journeys along the lane. Worse still, during construction, there will be thousands of lorry movements necessary: we have estimated that just to remove the wet clay necessary to permit construction of the estate road and house foundations will require 400 lorry-loads (800 lorry movements along the lane). A similar number will be required to bring in road construction materials and concrete for the foundations. Only after that can construction above ground commence, with hundreds more lorries to bring in bricks and blocks, roof trusses and other timber, roof tiles, plumbing and electrical materials and finishes; and every day, all the tradesmen will be coming and going in their vans. All the lorries and vans will inevitably pick up the wet clay on their wheels and spread it along the lane, making the surface slick and slippery.

On busy days, there can be well over 100 teenagers participating in the Duke of Edinburgh Award walking along the lane, generally in groups of 6 to 8 with perhaps 100m spacing between successive groups; these people join with the regular horse riders, dog-walkers and families out for a walk in the countryside. If the Lane is used by scores of large vehicles each day, it is highly probable that there will be clashes between people unable to get past these vehicles: the pedestrians would need to return to a passing place, or the vehicles would need to reverse. Vehicles would also need to reverse when two met each other. If the Lane is also slick with mud, we fear that there could be one or more serious accidents to members of the public during the construction of the houses. Put simply, the Lane is completely unsuitable for this development.

The Transport Report states "Both lanes are clearly signed as private and with an advisory 10mph speed limit. Sandhill Lane also benefits from regular speed reduction measures along its whole length. The horizontal alignment and width of Burleigh Lane helps maintain low vehicles speeds for existing users of the lane and the local environs. There are no dedicated footways or street lighting on Burleigh or Sandhill Lane. The lack of dedicated footways is common in rural settings and does not represent a

material public safety hazard." In fact, vehicles frequently go much faster than 10mph, especially along Burleigh Lane which has no traffic calming measures. Its width, lack of lighting and the speed of vehicles makes it even more unsafe to walk along after dusk, and residents almost always drive as a result.

The Transport Report states "cycling has the potential to replace trips made by other modes, typically up to 10km, although some people will cycle greater distances. For walking, the distances travelled are generally shorter, typically up to 2km. There are several local amenities located within two kilometres of the land, including Crawley Down Health Centre, Co-Operative Food, Crawley Down Post Office and other small eateries and retail units." While the facilities mentioned are within walking distance, in practice very few of the existing residents walk and virtually none cycle to get to local facilities. Additionally, the lack of street lighting makes this an unattractive route in the dark. During the Winter months it is likely that most people would choose to drive, even to the closest amenities, increasing the predicted traffic. The Transport Report states "The existing passing bays can be improved and formalised, with additional signage introduced where appropriate." This cannot be done without the permission of the owners of both the Lane and of the adjacent land that is used for passing places. This is unlikely to be granted as the owners object to this proposed development.

Table 5.1 of the Transport Report predicts only 3 vehicle movements during each of the two peak hours from the 8 houses. These figures are not credible based on the number of vehicle movements currently at these times along the two Lanes.

4. Burleigh Lane already floods in heavy rain, with the ditch on the North side filling with water unable to drain through the culvert under the Lane as fast as it fills, resulting in water flowing across and along the Lane itself. Increased run-off from the development due to areas of hard surfacing and roof areas is inevitable. This run-off will flow along the Lane into the approved development DM/25/1593 to the North of the lane and from there into areas of existing housing already concerned by flooding further North and West within the existing village.

5. The approach to Burleigh Cottage remains rural in character but we believe this will be changed, contrary to DMH Stallard's Heritage Statements that "there would be no element of the building's intrinsic architectural or historic interest that would be changed or any ability to appreciate those interests lost as a result of the proposed development"; and that "The Application Site lies within the setting of the Grade II listed Burleigh Cottage but due to the distance and relationship of the Application Site from the property ie on the opposite side of Burleigh Lane, together with the intervening vegetation means that the impact on the setting of the heritage asset would be neutral, but even if considered to result in any harm it would be at the lower end of the spectrum of less than substantial harm and the benefits set out above would

more than outweigh this small degree of harm".

We refer specifically to the determination of a Planning Application made by the previous owners of our house. This was refused and the grounds for refusal are applicable to the current application as well. We quote from the report by Emily Wade MA MSc (Conservation Officer Planning Services) in response to the Application for two houses adjacent to Thyme Cottage DM/19/4609:

"As a former farmhouse, and part of a historic farmstead, the surviving rural and semi-rural setting to the east and south east of Burleigh Cottage, together with the semi-rural character of the approaches to the building along Burleigh Lane, make a strong positive contribution to the manner in which its special interest is appreciated, particularly that part which relies on its historical illustrative and aesthetic value.

The site as existing, notwithstanding the presence within it of evergreen hedging, retains an open and verdant character. It is a constituent part of the rural setting to the south east of Burleigh Cottage which makes a positive contribution to the manner in which its special interest is appreciated. Furthermore, the trees and bushes along the southern side of Burleigh Lane, along the boundary of the site, contribute to the rural character of views along Burleigh Lane including Burleigh Cottage, and of the approaches to it. The site therefore at present makes a strong positive contribution to the setting of Burleigh Cottage and the manner in which its special interest is appreciated.

Residential development on the site would fundamentally alter its existing open and verdant character, such that it would become another suburban extension of Crawley Down village.

Development of this nature is therefore likely to be considered harmful in principle to the setting of the adjacent listed building.

The harm caused by the current proposal is exacerbated by its relatively intensive nature, and by the insertion of a new vehicle entrance within the vegetation lining Burleigh Lane.

For these reasons I consider that the proposal will cause harm to the setting of Burleigh Cottage and the manner in which its special interest is appreciated. This would be contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34. In terms of the NPPF I would consider the harm caused to be less than substantial, to the medium level of this scale, such that paragraph 196 would apply."

In addition, we have a couple of further observations:

1. Traditionally, self-builders usually seek unique plots outside estates: demand for self-build houses is generally high on single individual plots and much lower on new-build estates, making DMH Stallard's demand statement open to debate.
 2. All the proposed plots are substantially smaller than the existing house plots (both those to the North and to the South) accessed off Burleigh Lane, so not only is the proposed development removing an area of countryside, but it is doing so at an increased housing density compared with nearby housing.
 3. There are frequent power outages in the Lane and the wider
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village. Adding more load to the network will exacerbate the problem.

Kind regards