

Planning Application Consultation Response

Application Details

Application Number	DM/26/0833
Response Date	18/05/2026
Site Location	Chownesmead Chownes Mead Lane Cuckfield Haywards Heath West Sussex RH16 4BS
Development Description	Amendments to hotel layout approved under DM/18/2193 and DM/18/2201, new single storey extension to main building and erection of new detached two-storey spa building, provision of relocated secondary access to Chownes Mead Lane, new parking area and landscaping of the site..
Recommendation ¹	No objection subject to condition Advice

The submitted Flood Risk Assessment titled “Flood Risk Assessment – Chownes Mead Hotel & Spa, Chownes Mead Lane, Cuckfield RH16 4BS” prepared by GTA Civils & Transport Limited (Ref: 10403, January 2026) has been reviewed.

Flood Risk

Information

[The Planning Practice Guidance for Flood Risk and Coastal Change](#) requires all sources of flood risk to be considered consistently with how fluvial and tidal flood risk is considered within the [National Planning Policy Framework](#). This means that surface water flood risk extents should be considered comparable to flood zones when assessing a development’s vulnerability to flooding and the need for a site-specific flood risk assessment.

For clarity Mid Sussex District Council’s Flood Risk and Drainage Team (in line with advice from West Sussex Lead Local Flood Authority) utilise the below table when considering flood risk.

Annual exceedance	Flood Zone	Surface Water Flood Risk
Greater than 3.3% (>1:30-year)	3b	High
Between 1% and 3.3% (1:100-year and 1:30-year)	3a	Medium
Between 0.1% and 1% (1:1,000-year and 1:100-year)	2	Low
Less than 0.1% (<1:1,000-year)	1	Very Low

Application specific comment

The Environment Agency released updated flood risk mapping following the new National Flood Risk Assessment (NaFRA2) in early 2025. The updated mapping uses new and improved methods to assess flood risk. The site is in flood zone 1 and is at low fluvial flood risk (risk of flooding from Main Rivers).

¹ In line with guidance from the Planning Department the Flood Risk and Drainage Team, where considered appropriate, utilise conditions to address detailed drainage design and detailed design of flood mitigation measures.

The Risk of Flooding from Surface Water mapping suggests the site is shown to be at very low to high surface water flood risk (comparable to flood zones 1 and 3b) for the present day (2025) and to be at very low to high surface water flood risk (comparable to flood zones 1 and 3b) within the climate change range of 2040 – 2060.

The areas at high surface water flood risk (Flood Zone 3b) on the site are isolated low spots and are confined areas (existing ponds) that do not appear to be associated with a surface water flow pathways. No new built footprint or land raising will be located within the Flood Zone 3b extent for fluvial flood water.

The proposed development is a 'more vulnerable' development (NPPF, Annex 3).

Historical Flood Risk

Mid Sussex District Council's records do not contain records of the site flooding. Our records also contain no records of flooding within the area immediately surrounding the site.

Mid Sussex District Council's records are not complete, and flooding may have occurred which is not recorded. A site having never flooded in the past does not mean it won't flood in the future.

Sewers on Site

The Southern Water public sewer map does not show any public sewers located within the redline boundary of the site.

The submitted information confirms that there are no public sewers located within Chownes Mead Lane in the vicinity of the site.

There may be sewers located on the site not shown on the plan which are now considered public sewers. Any drain which serves more than one property, or crosses into the site from a separate site may be considered a public sewer. Advice in relation to this situation can be found on the relevant water authority's website.

Surface Water Drainage

Information

Surface water drainage will ultimately need to be designed to meet the latest national and local planning and drainage policies and guidance. The drainage system will need to consider climate change, the allowances for which should be based on the climate change guidance from the Environment Agency at the time of detailed design.

Detailed drainage design should consider the impact a flooded outfall could have on the proposed drainage system.

The recommendation for a drainage condition to be utilised for an application does not preclude the need for updated calculations or alterations to a drainage strategy. Recommendation for a drainage condition shows that the Flood Risk and Drainage Team are of the opinion that the development has shown that, in principle, drainage could successfully be provided on the site.

Application specific comment

The BGS infiltration potential map shows the site to be in an area with high infiltration potential. Therefore, the use of infiltration drainage such as permeable paving or soakaways may be possible on site. To ensure the drainage hierarchy is followed this will need to be confirmed through infiltration testing on site as part of detailed drainage design.

However, the submitted information confirms that infiltration testing was previously undertaken on a neighbouring site, which concluded that infiltration drainage is unlikely to be feasible. Whilst this testing was not site-specific to the application site, an alternative surface water drainage strategy has been proposed through the use of attenuation and discharge to a watercourse following the discounting of infiltration.

It is proposed that the development will utilise porous paving, attenuation tanks and a restricted discharge to the adjacent pond/watercourse at a rate of 1.7l/s, based on the calculated Qbar greenfield runoff rate.

The drainage calculations demonstrate that the proposed drainage system has been designed for the 1 in 100-year rainfall event including a 45% allowance for climate change.

The proposed drainage layout, attenuation features and drainage calculations are considered acceptable in principle at this stage.

The applicant is advised that, at the detailed design stage, full drainage details for the proposed extension to the listed building will need to be provided as part of the detailed drainage design submission.

Information into our general requirements for detailed surface water drainage design is included within our 'Detailed Drainage Design Checklist – Condition Discharge Stage' <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/media/yyxere1u/msdc002-detailed-drainage-design-checklist-v20-issued-071125.pdf>. This level of information will be required to address the recommended drainage condition.

To ensure the final drainage design meets with the latest design requirements we would advise the applicant to confirm the design parameters required in relation to climate change etc prior to undertaking detailed design.

Foul Water Drainage

It is proposed that foul drainage from the development will discharge to a new sewage treatment plant due to the absence of public foul sewers within the vicinity of the site.

The submitted information confirms that the sewage treatment plant will require specialist design to accommodate the proposed spa and swimming pool backwash flows. Backwash water contains chemicals and suspended solids and must not be discharged to surface water drainage systems, SuDS features, infiltration devices or watercourses.

The applicant is advised that any discharge may require an Environmental Permit from the Environment Agency and must comply with the Environment Agency's General Binding Rules. In addition, any proposed sewage treatment plant should be located within the application boundary.

Information into our general requirements for detailed foul water drainage design is included within our 'Detailed Drainage Design Checklist – Condition Discharge Stage' <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/media/yyxere1u/msdc002-detailed-drainage-design-checklist->

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Condition Recommendations

C18F - extensions

The development hereby permitted shall not commence unless and until details of the proposed foul and surface water drainage and means of disposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. No building shall be occupied until all the approved drainage works have been carried out in accordance with the approved details. The details shall include a timetable for its implementation and a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include arrangements for adoption by any public authority or statutory undertaker and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime. Maintenance and management during the lifetime of the development should be in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the proposal is satisfactorily drained and to accord with Policy DP41 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 - 2031 and Policy ...'z'... of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Advice

Ordinary Water course consent:

The applicant is advised that if new surface / foul water discharge points are proposed into the ordinary watercourse, it is therefore important that any requirement for Ordinary Watercourse Consent (OWC) is fully considered before works are undertaken. OWC application details, including a link to guidance as to what classifies as a consentable structure/activity can be found here: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/dealing-with-extreme-weather/flooding/flood-risk-management/ordinary-watercourse-land-drainage-consent/>

For and on behalf of the Flood Risk and Drainage Team
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