

From:

Address: 2 Ashenground Close, Haywards Heath RH16 4PT

23 August 2026

Dear Ms Grist

Notification of Planning Application = 7th August 2026
Application No: DM/26/1813

Proposal: Part retrospective and proposed work to the front garden wall with landscaping arrangement to front driveway with raised area to the front of the house including raising the rear fence with trellis for privacy due to the sloped gardens

Location: 4 Ashenground Close, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 4PT

I refer to the above-mentioned application and wish to make the following comments:

As background, for well over three years now my neighbours and I have been subjected to constant disruption and nuisance from building works being carried out at No.4 by the Applicant who purchased the property in September 2022. This includes:

- congestion in the whole Close from contractors' vehicles, ongoing frequent deliveries of building materials and equipment on HGV lorries, rendering access difficult or impossible at times especially for residents lower down in the Close;
- dust and dirt carrying across to myself and other neighbours from construction works to the house and garden
- substantial noise from diggers and other building machinery, ricocheting against other properties, sometimes before 8am.

During this whole time the property has been, and still is, an eyesore with machinery, pallets, weeds spreading everywhere, redundant white goods and discarded materials simply left in full view in the front garden at various stages of construction over nearly four years.

Ashenground Close comprises 17 dwellings, mostly a mixture of low level and chalet bungalows, plus a couple of larger properties nearer the top of the Close. Apart from one house built nearly twenty years ago, they were all constructed in the late 1950s and any extensions and improvements made to any of them since that time have been tastefully and unobtrusively carried out in sympathy with the character of other properties of their age in the Close, namely cottage style English properties.

I refer to the Planning Statement which states that the "Design is sympathetic to the existing building, maintaining the character and appearance of the neighbourhood". The design might well reflect the character of the renovated house which in itself is totally incongruous, but it most definitely does **not** maintain the character and appearance of the neighbourhood! I have not found one single property in the whole of the Ashenground area that even remotely resembles the new wall at No. 4.

The previous owner of No. 4 edged her front garden with shrubs inside a very low wall just a few red bricks high. These have all been removed, along with a beautiful small acer-type tree with gorgeous foliage, and I can now see directly into some of the properties situated at the bottom of the Close, whereas previously they were hidden from view. In place of shrubs, the Applicant has now erected two brick gateposts and a hideously unsightly solid high wall adjacent to the footpath. This thick wall measures over one metre at its lowest and as it extends round the corner it gets progressively higher to more than 2 metres. Not one property in this Close can avoid seeing this structure from wherever they stand. It sticks out like a sore thumb and is totally out of keeping with all the other properties in this Close which are either fronted by hedges, chain-link or wooden fences, vegetation or flower borders. No. 4, with its current bare ground frontage, gravel, massive amount of brickwork in the garden and high wall behind is reminiscent of a prison drill ground. The added brick binstore at the front does not soften the look either.

I understand that the Applicant wishes the property to have a Mediterranean feel. In my view it does not look in the least Mediterranean, even if she wishes to cover the wall with plants, which is what I believe is proposed. Besides, this is England (albeit in a drought) and not the Continent. Any plants would naturally be planted against the wall on the inside and only the Applicant would benefit as she would not have to look at the wall from within her own property but everybody else would only see the outside of the bare wall and if she allowed any plants to grow over the wall, they would infringe onto the footpath and into the adjacent property at No.5.

The Applicant has raised part of the ground level of her front garden. As a result, she does not see the impact of her high wall as the lower part is now buried below her new ground level. However, from the outside it is impossible to avoid seeing the whole depth of solid wall in its entirety.

Referring back to the Planning Statement, I note that the Applicant wishes to have privacy. A wall of this nature does not fulfil this request in my opinion. The Planning Statement also states that the Applicant has designed the front garden to “cater for her disability and futureproofing”. I am therefore very surprised that crescent shaped steps have been erected as these are a known major trip hazard unless guard rails are installed.

In terms of highway safety, the monstrously high wall abuts the fairly narrow footpath and therefore there might restrict manoeuvre for prams, mobility scooters, etc. I understand it is illegal for any wall next to a footpath or highway to be higher than one metre so I do not know how this wall has come to be built in the first place.

The Planning Statement Justification states that the “Looking at the Streetscene, gardens offer much variation with high hedges, walls and fences”. They do indeed offer variation but for those properties with any retaining structure at all, these are all very inconspicuous low-level brick walls.

I can see absolutely no economic benefits to the proposal. There are certainly no environmental benefits. We have a huge problem with drainage in Ashenground Close. We have very few storm drains and at times of extremely heavy storms, rainwater gushes downhill in torrents down Ashenground Close from Ashenground Road. The properties at the bottom end of Ashenground Close are badly affected at the best of

times but the effect is somewhat offset by some of the rainwater being able to be absorbed by lawns and vegetation in the gardens higher up the Close. I note that it is proposed to have permeable gravel in the front garden of No.4. However, the solid wall will now only have the effect of diverting even more water straight down into the lower properties. This could be disastrous.

With regard to the rear of the property, I note that the Applicant wishes to have privacy. All the gardens on this side of the Close are sloped. The Applicant should have been aware of the sloping nature of the gardens before she bought the property. No. 4's rear garden used to be more secluded as the previous owner had grown tall shrubs along both sides of her property adjacent to hedges/fences of the direct neighbours. All the shrubs on the left hand side of her property have now been removed and a wall currently the same height as No. 3's hedge has been erected. A similar breeze block wall has been erected on the right hand side of No. 4's property. I can see this from my garden. I do not have an issue with a trellis on the Applicant's left hand side provided it is not unnecessarily high. However, I am unaware of the existence of a fence (as stated in the Proposal) unless this is to be erected in front of the newly erected brick wall or on top of it? Whatever height it is, it could never be high enough to totally screen the garden from every other property that side of the Close. Equally, all of the gardens on our side have subsequently lost any privacy that they previously had, now that the Applicant's house now has an additional second floor level where she can look over at leisure.

In summary, I object strongly to the front garden wall. It is unsightly and totally out of keeping, to all intents and purposes illegal and surely in contravention of the Applicant's Title Deeds. It has completely destroyed the original rural character of this quiet cul de sac and most if not all residents in this Close are extremely upset about it. It is entirely unnecessary and has caused a lot of stress all round.

Regards

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the person writing the letter.