

Our Ref: 3175/MY/LT20250612

23rd June 2025



Development Management  
Mid-Sussex District Council  
Oaklands Road  
Haywards Heath  
West Sussex, RH16 1SS

**Via Email:** [servicesupport@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:servicesupport@midsussex.gov.uk)

Dear Sir/Madam,

**DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLING AND THE ERECTION OF A CARE HOME (CLASS C2) AND ADDITIONAL CARE UNITS (CLASS C2): HIGHFIELDS, WEST HILL, EAST GRINSTEAD, RH19 4DL. MID-SUSSEX PLANNING REFERENCE: DM/24/3051**

We act for Igloo Care Ltd and EQ Care Group in relation to their joint planning application for a care home and related development at Highfields, East Grinstead. We write in relation to proposed amendments to the above planning application, specifically the proposed access arrangement.

Background

In the previous scheme here (DM/23/0007/OUT), the local highway authority confirmed its satisfaction with proposals for a new access onto West Hill. This was accompanied by drawings identifying the location of the access and visibility splays, along with a Safety Audit. The Committee Report concluded...

*"Overall, the Highway Authority considers that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in severe cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network through the creation of the new vehicular access."*

Given these robust findings, it is not surprising that our client's application (involving ostensibly the same development) places the proposed access in the same location, designed to the same standards. On this, the highway authority confirms (10<sup>th</sup> February 2025):

*"Access proposals to the site from West Hill remain exactly the same as the previous application, which were agreed and Safety Audited..., The LHA does not consider that the proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 116), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal."*

Notwithstanding this positive conclusion, the applicant's design team has further reviewed the delivery of the proposed access and has identified a number of improvements which can be made through a minor alteration to its position on West Hill.

This letter explains the rationale for the changes, describes these and reviews the implications and benefits, before confirming how the planning application is to be amended.

Amendments

The applicant's design team (comprising architect, transport consultant, engineer, landscape architect, arboriculturist and ecologist) was challenged to review the design of the previously proposed access arrangement, owing to concerns about its deliverability, including in terms of slope, geometry, materials and construction process/timescales.

These factors are especially important, as the proposed junction is required for construction access, and must be delivered as part of an initial phase of works.

A decision was taken, therefore, not only to amend the position of the junction but to enhance the level of detail, to the extent that the previously proposed condition (8) ("*...detailed plans showing the retaining wall to the front entrance including the materials to be used in its construction*") can be replaced with an 'implement in accordance with...' condition.

Four components to the amendments can be identified...

1. Reposition the junction position c.3.7m further northeast (up) West Hill.
2. Consequential alteration to the access road geometry (within the site).
3. Alternation to the understorey/tree clearance/removal strategy; and
4. Detailed slope retention and related landscape design details.

Rather than amend the complete planning application, a proportionate approach has been employed to ensure those components most relevant to the access design have been updated to reflect the latest layout. A schedule of the superceded/revised drawings and documents is provided at Appendix A (noting that drawings 11089-700 and 701 have been consolidated into revised drawing 11089-802 P1).

Whilst the repositioned junction results in some landscaping amendments, these are considered immaterial to the BNG Metric. The level of tree planting in this area remains consistent with the existing arrangement, whilst vegetation loss associated with the proposed land profiling works is offset by proposed shrub and other planting. In any event, the development already achieved a 14% net gain<sup>1</sup>.

The changes are not considered sufficient to warrant a review of the previous Road Safety Audit.

The applicant has also commissioned a computer-generated image of the proposed access design (see Appendix C). Whilst not a formal component of the planning application, this is intended to help the Council and other interests to visualise the appearance of the site junction.

### Benefits

The proposed access amendments secure a number of benefits, including:

- Reduced interference with RPAs, especially of trees T1858 (Common Oak – Category B) and T1859 (Sycamore – Category C), both located to the west of the access road<sup>2</sup>.
- The exit lane of the revised junction is now offset to the right of the dwelling opposite, with related improvements to visual amenity (e.g., headlights, etc).
- The minor elongation of the entry/exit road (i.e., caused by the increased turn) reduces the steepness of the incline, with resultant improvements to vehicle control, noise and drainage.
- The proposed combination of land profiling and gabion retaining walls, achieves a balance between deliverability and avoid the harshness of retaining walls proposed under DM/23/0007/OUT.

We commend the changes to the Council and look forward to written confirmation that the application file has been substituted with the relevant material.

Your sincerely,



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**Director**

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1. Noting that Place Services (Ecology) "...are satisfied that the submitted documents [for BNG] provide sufficient information at the application stage."  
2. The proposed retaining wall is now wholly outside the RPA associated with T1858.

Cc: Joanna Fisher - Team Leader, Major Applications (MSDC)

Appendices

A – Schedule of substituted drawings and documents

B – Overlay of current and proposed access positions

C – Computer generated image of proposed access