

Caroline Grist

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk
Sent: 04 September 2026 23:28
To: Caroline Grist
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application DM/26/0481

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 04/09/2026 11:28 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Natwest 15 London Road East Grinstead West Sussex RH19 1AJ
Proposal:	Change of use of first and second storey floorspace of the existing building from commercial (Class E) use to 7 x HMO bedrooms (Sui Generis) use with associated communal facilities, single storey rear extension, new rooflight and windows, extension of existing wall and a new flat roof to the rear. (Revised Flood Risk Assessment received 18.06.2026. Revised plans received 31.07.2026. Revised description agreed 18.08.2026)
Case Officer:	Caroline Grist

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Customer Details

Address:	Flat 1 Cynthia House, 11A Cantelupe Road East Grinstead
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Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour or general public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	
Comments:	Dear Planning Officer, I wish to formally object to the above planning application. Whilst I recognise the need for additional housing accommodation, I have significant concerns regarding the proposed conversion of the upper floors to a 7-bedroom HMO and the associated physical alterations outlining my concerns below. 1. Attached fire escape ladder I am the owner of Flat 1 Cynthia House, 11A Cantelupe Road, I note that the proposed

external fire escape ladder appears to be attached to my property at Flat 1, Cynthia House. This raises significant concerns regarding the practical and physical impact upon my property. As the owner of the flat, nobody has requested my permission. This could potentially cause damage to my property either via structural issues with the brickwork or the drilling of holes that could allow water to penetrate into my property. The ladder would obstruct access for maintenance, create visual intrusion, likely reduce natural light to my window, and introduce privacy and security concerns due to increased access to the roof area overlooking neighbouring properties. Which could also lead to a devaluing of my property value. Not only this, but I also worry that the proposed retractable ladder would become permanent once all the plans have gone through thus adding to the privacy and safety concerns. My understanding, a sliding ladder goes against building regulations as a suitable fire escape!

Furthermore, the application does not appear to demonstrate that the proposed escape route represents an appropriate long-term fire safety solution for all potential occupants, including the elderly, or those with limited mobility. The applicant should provide further justification that the proposed emergency escape arrangements are suitable, safe and fully compliant with current regulations.

2. Privacy and safety concerns

The proposed roof access arrangements, together with the external escape ladder, would enable occupants and visitors to access areas immediately adjacent to neighbouring skylights. I worry that it would also give people an entry point onto the roof and an opportunity to burglarise my property and or my neighbour. Both properties have skylights (rooflights). For my property these rooflights are above the kitchen and bathroom. I would have no privacy while using the toilet or undressing to shower, the proposal therefore raises concerns regarding overlooking, loss of privacy and increased opportunities for unauthorised access to mine and neighbouring properties. There are serious safety concerns, as these skylights are another access point into my property and potential thieves could easily use the roof access to burglarise mine or neighbours' property.

The application provides insufficient information regarding measures to prevent access beyond emergency use and to protect neighbouring residential amenity.

3. Parking and Highway Concerns

The proposal would introduce seven additional bedrooms (6 doubles) accommodating 13 people; therefore 3 cycle storage units is below Mid-Sussex council requirements, without adequately demonstrating how associated parking, visitor parking and cycle storage requirements will be met. Even where occupants are not expected to own vehicles, HMOs commonly generate demand for parking, delivery services, visitors, and cycle storage.

4. Accessibility of bins and waste removal

With new residential dwellings there will also be a requirement for three or four large new separate containers for waste and recycling. I could not see on the plans where these containers are to be placed, if at all considered. Currently Flat 1-4 Cynthia House does not have any rubbish or recycling bins, but adding a seven-bedroom HMO will generate a considerable volume of waste and recycling. The application does not appear to provide sufficient details regarding storage arrangements, servicing, and collection, raising concerns about the potential for clutter, vermin issues, and harm to the street if littering occurs making East Grinstead far untidier.

My front door is to the rear of the building, I would not want to walk past bins every day, nor do I want the smell of bins coming into my ground floor apartment. These bins must be housed far enough away as to not cause offence. In the absence of such information, there is a risk of bins being located close to neighbouring residential entrances, causing visual clutter, odour nuisance and potential vermin issues. The Council should be satisfied that adequate waste storage arrangements can be provided without adversely affecting neighbouring residents or the appearance of the area.

Noted in the environmental report by WSCC - Minerals and Waste Safeguarding company, site application does not meet the criteria for Mid Sussex County council as set out in the

minerals safeguarding guidance. My tenant has a 16-year-old low functioning autistic daughter that stays over, her health is paramount, the environmental hazard could create health issues. Another major concern will be the smell of the waste entering my property; therefore, windows would need to be continuously closed infringing on the tenants' rights.

5. Loss of Commercial Floorspace

The proposal would result in the loss of commercial Class E floorspace. Insufficient justification has been provided to demonstrate that the commercial accommodation is no longer viable or that its loss would not negatively affect local employment opportunities and the vitality of the area.

6. Noise and disturbance

This is considerable work to undertake to convert the commercial premises and add an additional extension onto the property which would be estimated to take many months. Not only this, but the plans state that additional skylights are to be installed. The noise and disturbance is expected to be extreme. Firstly, I will have workers walking on top of my roof fitting new sky lights onto the neighbour's property. The extension is also adjacent to my building, and all noise will travel through the building. Only recently a downstairs building was converted (by the same Freeholder/developer that has proposed these plans) into a hairdresser and the noise and disturbance was terrible. I had workers vans parked directly outside my property blocking light, but I also had a massive skip parked directly outside for weeks causing an eyesore and hindering walking access which I had to walk past daily. This will also cause considerable upset to my tenant's daughter, especially considering the builders regularly worked on Saturdays past 1pm.

7. Concerns regarding residence of the HMO

There are concerns regarding who will be the residents of the HMOs. The plans make no mention regarding who the target market of this residence will be. Is the HMO to service the council or for private purposes? There are serious safety and privacy concerns to be answered regarding who is to be living in the neighbourhood.

8. Lighting and other concerns

There is no provision for lighting in the rear of the building on the plans, there is no lighting in the parking area or the walkway shown on the plans. This is especially of note as the planner seems to have jumped the gun already leaving building materials in the walkway leaving trip hazards especially at night. Lighting concerns will need to be addressed before work can commence.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, I believe the proposed development would result in an over-intensive form of HMO accommodation that has not adequately addressed the impacts upon neighbouring residential properties. In particular, I have serious concerns regarding the proposed external fire escape arrangements, impacts on privacy and security, insufficient provision for waste and cycle storage, and the overall effect upon residential amenity.

The application, as currently submitted, fails to provide sufficient information to demonstrate that these matters can be satisfactorily resolved. I therefore respectfully request that the Council refuses planning permission. Should the Council be minded to approve the application, I request that it first requires substantial amendments and imposes robust conditions to protect neighbouring residents and properties.

I therefore respectfully request that the Council refuses planning permission for this application.

Yours faithfully,

[Redacted Signature]

Owner of Flat 1 Cynthia, 11a Cantelupe Road, RH19 3BE.

Kind regards