

To: Mid Sussex District Council – Planning Department

Re: Planning Application DM/26/0851

Site: Tyes Place, Brantridge Lane, Staplefield, Haywards Heath

Dear Sir/Madam,

We write in response to the above application as residents of The Old Lodge, Ditton Place.

While we note that the application site is not prominently visible from our property and is therefore unlikely to have a direct or significant impact on our immediate outlook or day-to-day residential amenity, we understand that all applications must be considered against wider planning policies and principles. On that basis, and noting that there is a clear precedent for residents to comment on planning proposals irrespective of direct outlook or immediate impact, we wish to make the following observations, limited to material planning considerations.

Having recently progressed our own planning applications, we have become very familiar with the level of scrutiny rightly applied by the Local Planning Authority—particularly in respect of ecology, biodiversity net gain, landscape character, and visual impact. We therefore trust that the same level of diligence will be applied in this instance.

Character and Visual Impact

We note that considerable weight is typically given to ensuring that development remains subordinate, sympathetic, and does not result in visual harm to the rural character of the area.

Given previous concerns raised locally about development creating a “shanty town” appearance, we would respectfully request that careful consideration is given to:

- The cumulative visual impact of the proposed structures
- The choice of materials and finishes
- The potential for incremental, uncoordinated additions over time

It would be unfortunate if development in this location were to erode the rural setting that planning policy seeks to protect.

Ecology and Biodiversity

We would request strict adherence to ecological safeguards, including:

- Compliance with an Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy
- Precautionary measures for protected species

- Consideration of bats, lighting spill, and habitat protection

We trust that equivalent ecological rigour will be applied here, and would specifically ask the Council to ensure:

- Full protected species assessment (including bats, nesting birds, and ground mammals)
- Appropriate lighting strategy to avoid harm to nocturnal wildlife, including ensuring that any external lighting is low-level, directional, and does not introduce visually intrusive features such as decorative or festoon-style lighting
- Clear demonstration of avoidance, mitigation, and compensation measures

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

As you will be aware, development cannot lawfully commence until a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted and approved.

Our own scheme was required to demonstrate measurable net gain through:

- Habitat enhancement
- Native hedgerow and tree planting
- Long-term habitat management commitments (minimum 30 years)

We would expect this application to:

- Clearly demonstrate how the mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain will be achieved
- Address any losses (including hedgerow or habitat degradation) transparently
- Provide robust, enforceable long-term management proposals

Ensure that a Biodiversity Gain Plan is secured and approved prior to commencement

Any shortfall or reliance on vague or unquantified measures should be carefully scrutinised.

Trees and Landscape

We would also request detailed consideration of:

- Impacts on existing trees and root protection areas
- Whether an Arboricultural Impact Assessment is required
- The adequacy of any proposed landscaping or screening

These matters are critical to maintaining the character and ecological value of the site.

Conclusion

We fully appreciate that residents will naturally wish to improve and make use of their properties, which we support, and would not ordinarily seek to involve ourselves in such matters where there is no direct impact upon us.

However, given the level of scrutiny that has previously been applied to development in this immediate area, we consider it reasonable and appropriate that the same level of care and consideration is applied consistently to all proposals.

We therefore respectfully request that particular attention is given to:

- The effect on the appearance and rural character of the area
- The quality and appropriateness of the design
- Impacts on trees, ecology, and biodiversity
- Any potential for increased disturbance

We trust that these material considerations **will be carefully evaluated as part of the determination of this application.**

Yours faithfully,

The Old Lodge
Ditton Place
Balcombe