

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 15 February 2026 18:25:53 UTC+00:00
To: "Joseph Swift" <joseph.swift@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application
DM/26/0073

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 15/02/2026 6:25 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land Off West Hoathly Road East Grinstead West Sussex
Proposal:	The erection of 44 new homes with access from West Hoathly Road, vehicle and cycle parking, landscaping, drainage, and associated infrastructure and highway works.
Case Officer:	Joseph Swift

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address:	39 Coronation 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:	I wish to object to the proposed development of 44 dwellings on land off West Hoathly Road. I recognise that there is a general need for housing. However, that need does not make every site appropriate for the development of this scale. In my view, the proposal represents an over-intensive form of development in a sensitive semi-rural location, with cumulative impacts that have not been adequately addressed.

My concerns relate to character, highway safety, pedestrian conditions, infrastructure capacity, ecological considerations, and the setting of Dunnings Mill and the surrounding countryside.

Semi-Rural Character and Rural Edge

West Hoathly Road does not present as a continuous urban frontage. It forms part of a transitional corridor between established built form and open countryside. That sense of transition, properties interspersed with open land, is a defining characteristic of this stretch.

The introduction of 44 dwellings on land currently functioning as open pasture would materially alter that balance. Even if physically adjacent to existing development, this would not represent modest infill. It would extend suburban form into the rural edge and change the perception of this approach.

The Road Development Suitability Analysis describes the land as "open grazing pasture". From direct observation, the field is in active agricultural use. Sheep are routinely present, and it clearly functions as working countryside rather than unused or derelict land.

Whatever its formal agricultural classification, land that is actively farmed and contributes to the rural setting should carry meaningful weight in the planning balance.

Incremental additions along this corridor have already altered its character over time. The cumulative effect of continuing that process risks eroding the distinctly semi-rural nature of the area altogether.

Overdevelopment in Context

The question is not simply whether housing can fit on the site, but whether 44 dwellings are proportionate in this location.

For a rural edge site forming part of the transition into open countryside, this represents a significant intensification. It would shift the character of this stretch from semi-rural edge to a more continuous suburban frontage.

That degree of change should be acknowledged rather than treated as minor.

Setting of Dunnings Mill

Dunnings Mill is a recognised local heritage asset whose character is closely linked to its semi-rural surroundings. Although development has occurred in the wider area over time, its immediate context still retains an identifiable relationship with open land.

The proposed scheme would substantially intensify built form

within that setting. My concern is not about physical harm to the structure itself, but about incremental suburbanisation of its surroundings. That gradual erosion of the rural context is relevant when assessing the impact on the setting.

Proximity to the High Weald National Landscape

The site lies close to the High Weald National Landscape. Even where development sits outside the designated boundary, its location can influence the character and experience of nearby protected landscapes.

The existing open pasture contributes to the sense of transition into the countryside. Replacing it with estate-style housing would urbanise this edge and weaken that transition.

Traffic and Highway Safety

Weekday Peak Conditions

It appears from the submitted documentation that elements of a visual traffic assessment were undertaken late morning on a Saturday. Weekend flows differ materially from weekday peak periods.

On weekday mornings and afternoons, traffic levels increase significantly, particularly during school start and finish times. There is more than one education setting in the wider area, and peak movements overlap. This creates concentrated pressure on Dunnings Road and West Hoathly Road at specific times of day.

An assessment that does not robustly capture those weekday peaks risks understating the likely impact of an additional 44 households.

Existing Constraints and On-Street Parking

On-street parking already narrows sections of both Dunnings Road and West Hoathly Road. At certain times, it is difficult to exit side roads safely because parked vehicles reduce visibility and restrict manoeuvring space.

Additional vehicle movements associated with the development would add to what is already a constrained situation, particularly during peak school periods.

Emergency and Refuse Access

Refuse vehicles do use Dunnings Road and West Hoathly Road. These vehicles already navigate parked cars and peak traffic conditions.

Emergency and service vehicle tracking should therefore be demonstrated under realistic peak-time conditions, taking account of existing on-street parking, rather than assuming unobstructed carriageways. Without this, the assessment risks presenting an overly optimistic picture of access.

Pedestrian Safety and Partial Lighting

Footways are narrow along Dunnings Road and West Hoathly Road, and street lighting along West Hoathly Road is not continuous. During the darker winter months, this materially affects visibility.

Families and schoolchildren use these routes daily. Increased traffic flows, combined with narrow pavements and partial lighting, reduce both perceived and actual pedestrian safety. The relationship between additional vehicle movements and pedestrian vulnerability in these conditions should be given proper weight.

Construction Traffic

A detailed and enforceable Construction Traffic Management Plan does not appear to be secured at this stage.

Construction access via Dunnings Road and West Hoathly Road would likely involve heavy vehicles negotiating already constrained routes. Without clear controls in place prior to determination, there remains uncertainty regarding short-term but potentially significant disruption and safety impacts.

Infrastructure - Water Supply

While wastewater infrastructure is referenced in the documentation, there appears to be limited discussion of potable water supply capacity.

Given increasing regional pressure on water resources, it would be prudent to ensure that supply capacity is clearly confirmed before a development of this scale proceeds.

The recent water outage affecting East Grinstead and the wider area illustrates how vulnerable supply infrastructure can be when systems come under strain. While that incident may have had its own specific causes, it nevertheless demonstrates that the resilience of water provision cannot simply be assumed. In that context, further development should only proceed where capacity and resilience are clearly evidenced.

Sustainability and Local Services

The closure of Sunnyside Post Office in recent years illustrates the gradual reduction of local services.

Additional housing in this location is therefore likely to increase reliance on private car travel for everyday needs, rather than supporting a genuinely self-contained settlement pattern.

Ecology

Sections of the ecological report are redacted, limiting public scrutiny. While I understand the need for sensitivity around

protected species, this inevitably reduces transparency.

Deer are regularly observed crossing or grazing in the vicinity of the proposed site. Buzzards are also frequently seen in the area. The land clearly forms part of a wider ecological network rather than being an isolated or low-value parcel.

Cumulative Impact

Each of the above concerns may be presented individually as manageable. However, planning decisions must consider the cumulative effect.

The loss of actively farmed pasture, the intensification of built form at the rural edge, pressure on constrained roads during weekday school peaks, partial street lighting and pedestrian safety concerns, impacts on the setting of Dunnings Mill, proximity to the High Weald National Landscape, infrastructure resilience concerns, and ecological sensitivity, taken together represent a material and lasting change to this part of West Hoathly Road, Dunnings Road and the surrounding countryside.

In my view, that cumulative impact weighs decisively against the proposal. For these reasons, I respectfully request that the application be refused.

Kind regards