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Sent: 10 February 2026 20:29:48 UTC+00:00
To: "planninginfo" <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Consultee Comments for Planning Application
DM/24/3112

Consultee comments

Dear Sir/Madam,

A consultee has commented on a Planning Application. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 10/02/2026 8:29 PM from Clerk on behalf of Parish Consultation.

Application Summary

Reference:	DM/24/3112
Address:	Ludham Farm Cinder Hill Lane Horsted Keynes Haywards Heath West Sussex RH17 7EG
Proposal:	Change of use of land for the siting of a riding arena 60m x 30m, including 6 external lights on poles, ancillary to the existing private equestrian use of the site. (Updated plans and further information, including ecology and BNG, received 11.03.2025, 28.04.2025, 15.05.2025, 23.05.2025, 17.07.2025, 05.01.2026 and 12.01.2026) (Revised description agreed 12.01.2026)
Case Officer:	Caroline Grist

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Comments Details

Comments:	DM/24/3112 Ludham Farm Cinder Hill Lane Horsted Keynes Haywards Heath Change of use of land for the siting of a riding arena 60m x 30m, including 6 external lights on poles, ancillary to the existing private equestrian use of the site. (Updated plans and further information, including ecology and BNG, received 11.03.2025, 28.04.2025, 15.05.2025, 23.05.2025, 17.07.2025, 05.01.2026 and 12.01.2026) (Revised description agreed 12.01.2026) Horsted Keynes Parish Council strongly OBJECT to the above application and, in particular, to the inclusion of external lighting. The site is in the High Weald AONB/ National Landscape and these proposals would be an unwelcome intrusion into the countryside
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in conflict with DP12 and DP16. There is no public benefit to justify the harm that it would cause to the landscape and the public enjoyment of the countryside. It is noted that the purpose of the development is solely for personal recreational enjoyment and there would be no benefit to business or tourism.

DP16 indicates that development on land within the HW AONB will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances the natural beauty and has regard to the HW AONB Management Plan.

The application conflicts with the Horsted Keynes Neighbourhood Plan policy HK9 relating to the HW AONB as it does not retain the historic field system.

By reference to the attached HW AONB Landscape Character Maps it can be seen that the site is part of a "Medieval, or earlier field system" and the HW AONB advisory unit have clearly indicated that it is fields such as this that "best reflect the national significance of the AONB" and therefore development of such areas should be avoided.

The proposals go against the objectives of the HW AONB Management Plan:

- FH2 To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands.
- FH 3 To protect and enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats.
- FH 4 To protect individual archaeological features as well as historic assets and pattern of fields and heath.

One of the key character components of the HW AONB is its Dark Skies. By reference to the HW AONB Management Plan and the attached Planning Technical Advice Note, it should be noted that: "The High Weald AONB is characterised by having some of the darkest skies in the South-east of England, with the least skyglow. This gives the AONB a sense of remoteness and peacefulness and connects the natural environment to the cultural and historic landscape."

These proposals go against the following objectives:

- DS1 To preserve the dark skies of the High Weald AONB by minimising light pollution, obtrusive external lighting and internal light spill from domestic, commercial and public premises in both existing and new developments within the High Weald, and from highways lighting.
- DS2 To protect wildlife and habitats from light pollution across the High Weald.

The application fails against the first test for "Usefulness" under the planners check list:

"Is the light needed? -has the design fully justified the use of external lighting? (The reasons should be clear and evident, and critical to the development, e.g. access, safety and business needs)
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There is no justification for lighting as there are no access, safety or business needs. The application is solely for private recreational purpose.

The lighting proposals would also conflict with policy HK13 as they are not required to ensure public safety or security or operational needs.

The Parish Council very keen to see the dark skies in and around the parish protected. It is one of the key priorities that has repeatedly been expressed by parishioners throughout the Neighbourhood Development Plan process and whenever applications such as this are considered.

The proposals conflict with DP22 as they would adversely affect the public enjoyment of the adjacent Public Right of Way, creating an unsightly intrusion into the countryside with an adverse impact on public views across the landscape.

The introduction of a sand school would also, by its very nature, create unwanted noise in what is currently a relatively peaceful and tranquil environment. This would be another adverse impact on the amenity currently enjoyed by users of the existing PRoW which runs through the field. It is also likely to adversely impact the amenity of residents of neighbouring properties.

There is no justifiable need for this sand school as there are already several other existing sand schools within the parish and one in the immediate vicinity adjacent to the business park, just across the road.

There appear to be no level drawings provided in support of the application but, since the existing site is sloping, any attempt to provide a more level area for the sand school would result in a remodelling of the landscape which is likely to conflict with policy HK4 which requires developments to “respect the natural contours of the site”.

It is noted that the site is adjacent to a Grade II listed building at Leamlands and the application conflicts with HK6 as the applicant has not submitted the required Heritage Statement in support of the application. The significance of this heritage asset does not appear to have been understood by the applicant and the impact that these proposals would have on the setting of the listed building has not been assessed as required by DP34. It is therefore suggested the MSDC’s Conservation Officer should be consulted on the proposals.

Given that the site is part of a Mediaeval, or earlier, field system and in view of recent archaeological finds within the parish, the applicant should be required, in accordance with HK6, to demonstrate that they have taken into consideration below ground archaeological deposits.

In summary the Parish Council conclude that any private benefit that these proposals give the landowner would be significantly outweighed by the harm to the High Weald National Landscape and public amenity.

Attachments:

1. HWAONB Character Component Map

2. HWAONB Character Component Map – Field & Heath
 3. HWAONB Planning Technical Advice Note Dark Skies
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Kind regards