

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 01 November 2025 14:39:48 UTC+00:00
To: "Caroline Grist" <caroline.grist@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application
DM/25/2550

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 01/11/2025 2:39 PM.

Application Summary

Address: Hillsborough House 118 High Street Hurstpierpoint West Sussex

Proposal: Change of Use from 6 no self contained flats, 4x1bed, 2x 2 bed (Class C3) to Children's Residential Home (Class C2) for a maximum of seven children between the ages of 8 and 18, with up to 5 carers working during the day and up to 3 carers at night.

Case Officer: Caroline Grist

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address: 3 South Avenue, Hurstpierpoint Hassocks

Comments Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour or general public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

Comments: We object to the application DM/25/2550 for 118 High Street, Hurstpierpoint BN6 9PX. Having lived in Hurstpierpoint for over 50 years, we have seen the village grow and change, but always preserving its character. This proposal is different and raises several points of concern.

First, the type of use is not suitable for the Conservation Area. The comings and goings associated with such a multi-occupancy

arrangement would inevitably lead to noise and disturbance in the primarily residential area. The proposed staff numbers anticipates that some of these children will be problematic, with histories of anti-social behaviour, crime or mental issues etc., and there may be an assumption that serious staff recruitment difficulties could be overcome. In practice children would be free to roam, and to take up school places which in some cases they will not attend. It is not clear that Social Services or mental health services have been consulted.

Second, this application could set a worrying precedent. If planning consent is obtained, there is no control over which type of child comes, from which organisation or from which area; all would be unspecified. If the business fails for financial or other reasons, the planning authority could be asked to consider applications for other similar uses, such as a halfway house hostel for ex-prisoners for example

Third, the proposal raises highway and parking concerns. South Avenue and the adjoining roads have limited parking space. Additional vehicles would make access for residents and emergency vehicles more difficult.

Fourth, there are also policy issues. Mid Sussex District Council's own planning guidance emphasises the protection of housing stock for permanent residents, and the preservation of residential character in established neighbourhoods. Recent cases elsewhere in the district - including several in Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath - have seen similar proposals refused on precisely these grounds. The reasoning in those decisions is directly relevant here.

Finally, it appears that the applicant's supporting statements conflict directly with West Sussex County Council's published strategies, statutory duties and best-practice guidance. Each reference below draws on official council and government policy documents that the applicant has themselves submitted or relied upon.

1. Children First: In-House Residential Service Strategy 2019-2022

- WSCC's own strategy emphasises developing small, family-style homes for 2-4 children located within the community.
- It highlights that smaller homes provide better stability, educational outcomes and relationships with neighbours.
- The proposal for seven children plus multiple carers directly contradicts this guidance and represents institutional rather than family-scale provision.

2. Commissioning Residential Provision Report (November 2024)

- WSCC approved the creation of three new residential homes with only 2-3 bedrooms each to improve local sufficiency.
 - The report's objective is to avoid crisis placements and ensure each new home offers a calm, localised environment.
-

- The Hillsborough House proposal conflicts with this policy by proposing an oversized 7-bed facility within a Conservation Area and beside a recreation ground, introducing noise, traffic and disruption.

3. Sufficiency Duty under Section 22G of the Children Act 1989

- The statutory duty requires local authorities to secure, as far as reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation that meets the needs of children within their area and is consistent with their welfare.

- It does not require approval of unsuitable or over-intense sites simply to increase capacity.

- A 7-bed home in a High Street, adjacent to public recreation land, cannot be considered consistent with the welfare of the children or the surrounding community.

4. SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2019-2024 (Update 2022)

- The Council's SEND vision focuses on enabling children to live well in their communities and be supported within local schools and families.

- It promotes inclusive education and support close to home-not increased residential care provision in high-density areas.

- Establishing a large care facility in the heart of a village Conservation Area undermines that inclusion approach.

5. Mid Sussex District Plan Policies DP26 and DP34

- DP26 requires development to respect local character, scale and design, avoiding unacceptable impact on amenity.

- DP34 protects heritage assets and their settings.

- The proposed use conflicts with both policies through over-intensification, increased traffic, and harm to the setting of the building.

6. Access and Safety Adjacent to Public Recreation Ground

- WSCC's Highways and Children's Services policies stress child safety and safeguarding in the siting of care facilities.

- The narrow rear lane providing access to Hillsborough House runs directly beside a children's recreation ground.

- Locating a high-traffic care home access here introduces risk to local children and contradicts safeguarding aims.

The site itself is fundamentally unsuitable for any C2 residential use - not just at the proposed size but in any form.

Kind regards