

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 20 December 2025 21:37:44 UTC+00:00
To: "Joanne Fisher" <joanne.fisher@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application
DM/25/3020

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Although our offices and phone lines are closed for the Christmas period from 4pm on 24th December 2025 and reopening on Monday 5th January 2026, most of our services can be accessed online through our [website](#).

All emails will be responded to on our return on 5th January.

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 20/12/2025 9:37 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land To The West Of Courthouse Farm Copthorne Common Copthorne West Sussex
Proposal:	Outline planning application for the erection of an extra-care retirement community (Use Class C2) and community pavilion, including associated parking, outdoor amenity space, landscaping and drainage, with all matters reserved except for the new access proposed from Copthorne Common Road
Case Officer:	Joanne Fisher

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address:	Pella Copthorne Common Copthorne
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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 register my objection to both building proposals, as listed above. I would also like to complain about the consultation process, misleading statistics and the legality of the use of land. I agree with all the reasons for objection submitted and displayed on the planning portal but would like to add further reasons for objection plus supply an alternative suggestion.

Consultation:-

On paper it would appear that the development company have provided numerous means of interaction for local people to learn about their plans. However, documents on the planning portal state that they sent out over 1200 letters yet only received 16 replies. May I suggest the reason for this low response is because the initial alerting letter to all of the information was addressed "To the Occupier. "

I believe many residents, like myself, filed this straight in the recycling bin without opening it, expecting the usual junk mail. It would have guaranteed more response if the initial letters had been named using the electoral register for information. I only learned of the proposals by chance!

Furthermore, we have not had any engagement with the developers and as an immediate neighbour to the site I feel they state they have done so in their documents on the planning portal. Nor have we been asked about the presence of Great Crested Newts which we commonly see on our property which is certainly way under the distance limit they say has been investigated. Is this really a legitimate claim to engagement and consultation with the local community?

Misleading Statistics:-

I feel the charts stating walking distances to various amenities in the village are misleading because they are too generalised. The proposals indicate that either older residents will use the routes, or alternatively the most regular walking will be school journeys. Walking children to the only local schools, all on the North side of the A264, will take longer than stated simply because these are young primary aged children. It would be a lot quicker to drive them to and from school and of course cause more traffic on the A264 and around the schools and small local village roads. Likewise it would be a lot easier for our older generation to drive to village facilities simply because they may be slower at walking due to age, or infirmity or simply cannot cope with the distance. These are the "real people" concerns that apply to the development proposals not bland statistics that offer no explanation of nebulous numbers.

Breach of Planning :-

The site in question is currently in breach of Planning Regulations. It was originally agricultural land, often frequented by cows and is now advertised, used as and indeed listed on documents on the planning portal as a dog walking site. I believe no permission was ever sought for change of use and immediate neighbours were never consulted on this change, thus breaching planning regulations.

Highway Safety Issues:-

Ghost Island

1) Danger to Children

I live directly East of the land in question, on the South side of the A264 and regularly for the past 10 years have walked 10000 steps a day from my home. This always involves either crossing the A264 or walking away from or towards the land in question. It is an official fact that this road has long been designated as "operating at, or over capacity," and having walked next to this land at all hours of the day and after dark I can confirm that holding a conversation is absolutely impossible due to the noise levels of the traffic and the proximity of vehicles whizzing past at up to 50mph.

As a mother of 3 children and an ex primary school teacher I feel it would be impossible for any parent to convey safety instructions to primary school age children whilst using the proposed Ghost Island twice a day, at the road's busiest times, to reach the local primary schools, which are all on the North side of the A264. Alternatively parents from the proposed new estate could drive their children to the local schools. However, this would increase local traffic around school buildings and around the sometimes narrow or absent pavements through the village and increase congestion on the A264 as cars queued to leave the new estate- all around the same time as people heading to or away from Crawley to get to and from work.

Yes parents can use the pelican crossing built for the golf course, but again there is danger from not hearing instructions. Also, I would also like to point out that at some point these children will want to walk to school on their own - not least when they transfer to secondary school and need to catch a bus to either Crawley or East Grinstead. National statistics for road accidents involving young teenagers are well known and if they bother to use any crossing assistance at all I'm pretty certain most would choose the proposed Ghost Island, almost directly next to the estate exit, whether designated for pedestrians or not, than walk the few hundred metres further down the road to find a safer crossing. Yes, most worried parents would choose to drive their children to senior school, again increasing congestion.

2) Ambulances

Many times a week and sometimes 2 or 3 times a day ambulances with blue lights and sirens use the A264 and it is common to see traffic pull out of their way so they can waste no time getting through. I have personally witnessed, on several occasions, ambulances crossing to the opposite side of the carriageway to safely get through when the road is

blocked by queuing traffic. Has anyone asked our brilliant emergency services how they feel about an extra Island on this busy road, reducing the width so that traffic has less chance of pulling over and getting out of their way? How do they feel about negotiating a higher volume of cars, more queues, increased areas of smaller road width and potentially having to deal with injured pedestrians on this very road?

3) Cyclists

I happen to be a qualified mountain bike trainer and for many years cycled to work. During my local walks I cannot recall the last time I saw anyone using a pedal bike on the A264 in Copthorne. I do recall approximately 10 years ago reading about a cyclist being knocked off their bike by a hit and run driver in the region of this proposed development. The gutters are regularly littered with tree debris, rubbish and even bits of cars so having to pull out into streams of fast moving traffic including hgv's, double decker buses and even car transporters is enough to put off any keen cyclist. I have seen a few cyclists using the surrounding pavements.... more danger for children heading too and from school. The stupid thing about this aspect of the proposed development is that builders will have to provide cycle storage to comply with regulations and yet I feel few, if any, will feel safe enough to venture onto this road from home. I still road cycle.... but I load my bike on the car and drive to a safer place to enjoy a ride.

An Alternative Solution:-

The site in question breaks the conditions of both the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan and the Mid Sussex District Plan which define this area as a green ring and an area for protection and enhancement of the countryside. Building on this site would also not promote social cohesion and could increase loneliness and isolation since the whole site is surrounded by ancient woodland and private land, fronted by a dangerous A road as the only entrance or exit. This estate would struggle to be a part of any community except it's own and yet precious few facilities are included in either build to promote a socially cohesive way of life.

The few individual houses built on the same side of the A264 are mainly of an age when utilities were not in such demand and

consequently adding a large estate to use these facilities would be a large call on available supplies. Water from Ardingly reservoir is currently at such a low level that consideration is being given to topping the level up with an 8 mile pipe from Weir Wood Reservoir. Already we experience drops in water pressure. I also feel very little consideration has been given to an adequate water supply or drainage since the planning site shows that the wrong water company was consulted! Electricity supply to provide car battery charge points at each new house would I expect need a substantial upgrade in supply down the whole road. Also there is no gas supply at all on the South side of the A264. Upgrading all these facilities for the whole length of this arterial road would cause untold disruption for a very long period of time, not just to local traffic, but for surrounding roads between Crawley and East Grinstead. The A264 through Copthorne is also used as a diversion away from the M23 to the M25 whenever incidents require this.

Considering all the negative objections outlined above my partner suggested moving the golf course club house to this piece of land ... Indeed they applied to move to the South side of the land a few years back now , but were turned down. The design could fit in with the

countryside setting and could indeed be planted with more trees to hide the car park and off- set the many hundreds of trees cut down on the golf course this past year. The entrance could be widened and form part of the existing golf course entrance at the lights and therefore not unduly affect the busy road, especially if it had only a left turn entrance and exit. This would leave the current club house land available for building proposals if required. It would enclose the new site within the village boundary. Not unduly encroach upon the green belt surrounding the village, nor would a new club house demand such extensive use of utilities. Children would be safer getting to and from school and less congestion would be caused on the A264 than the current proposal, allowing more residents of any new development to choose a safer, shorter journey to the village facilities.

Kind regards