

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 09 March 2026 10:47:37 UTC+00:00
To: "Joseph Swift" <Joseph.Swift@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/26/0073 Land off West Hoathly Rd., EG

Hi Joe

Comments on the above planning application.

The proposed development site is an open field located to the east side of West Hoathly Road, near to the southern edge of East Grinstead town. It is separated from the residential development to the north by a recreation ground- a public right of way (PROW) runs along the northern side of the recreation ground in a south easterly direction from Dunnings Road into the open countryside beyond. Just to the north of the northern corner of the site, and on the opposite side of the road to the entrance to the path is Old Dunnings Mill which is a Grade II listed building comprising an 18th century water mill and attached probably late 16th century cottage, with modern extensions. The building is in use as a public house. The proposed development site is considered to be within the setting of the Mill.

Based on the information in front of us, Old Dunnings Mill is considered to possess archaeological interest as a surviving example of an 18th century water powered corn mill, architectural value based on the construction and craftsmanship of its different constituent parts (the late 16th century cottage and the 18th century mill building), historical illustrative value as a good example of a water powered mill with associated earlier mill cottage, possibly suggesting sequential rebuilding of the mill complex, and which would have been a constituent part of the local agricultural economy, and aesthetic value based in part on the use of vernacular materials which can still (from some angles) be viewed against the rural landscape from which they were drawn. It also may be considered to possess communal value as a former focus of the local farming community.

When constructed, the mill will have sat in a rural context outside the town. However, the urban sprawl of East Grinstead has spread southwards since the late 19th/early 20th century, so that the mill building now sits at the town's southern extremity. Notwithstanding this, elements of the original setting of the mill remain legible and contribute positively to its special interest and how this is appreciated- these include the mill stream, and the remaining wider rural context to the west, south and east. The proposed development site to the southeast constitutes perhaps the most prominent remainder of the countryside which originally surrounded the mill. There will be intervisibility between the mill building and/or its immediate setting and the field constituting the site; this field also influences the character of the backdrop against which the mill is seen in views looking south along Dunnings Road, and the nature of the approach to it both along the PROW to the south of the site, and travelling northwards along West Hoathly Road.

The current proposal, which follows on from pre-application advice, is for a residential development on the site of 44 new homes with access from West Hoathly Road, vehicle and cycle parking, landscaping, drainage, and associated infrastructure and highway works.

The Heritage Statement accompanying the current application has been revised since the pre-application submission. However the Statement continues to understate the contribution made by the Site to the setting and special interest of the listed building:

- It does not recognise the prominence of the application site, which retains a rural character, in views looking south along Dunning's Road which also include the Mill, and in which the listed building is consequently viewed in the context of a remnant of its original rural setting. (Image below from Streetview, showing the Mill to the right with its pub sign, and the green field of the site top left)



- It does not recognise the importance of the site in terms of the character of the approach to the Mill in both directions along Dunning's Road/West Hoathly Road, including in kinetic views, and how this contributes to an understanding of the historically rural context of the Mill, and its function.

Consequently, the statement underestimates the adverse impact of the proposal on the setting and special interest of the listed building.

In my opinion, the proposed development will have a fundamental and adverse impact on the currently open and rural character of the site, which will become a suburban enclave. Although it is apparently intended to retain and in some cases reinforce the existing vegetation to the site boundaries, with the exception of the location of the new site access, the seasonal variation on this planting, its potential ephemerality, and the scale and intensity of the development as shown will mean that the new housing will inevitably be apparent in external views, including those mentioned above which currently contribute to the character of the setting of the Mill. The positive contribution which the site currently makes to the special interest of the listed building and the manner in which this is appreciated will be removed and reversed. The most significant element of the surviving rural setting of the Mill will be lost in favour of suburban development.

This will result in a degree of less than substantial harm to the special interest of the listed building, in particular to those parts of its interest which arise from historical illustrative and aesthetic values, which I would place at around the mid-range of that scale. The balancing exercise set out in paragraph 215 of the NPPF will therefore apply, bearing in mind the great weight which the Framework also requires must be given to the conservation of heritage assets.

The proposal will also be contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34.

Thanks,

Emily

Please note that this advice is given at Officer level only and is without prejudice to the formal decision of the District Council.

Submit your planning application online.
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk>

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