

Fairhaven
Church Lane
Ardingly
West Sussex
RH17 6UR

Planning Department
MSDC
Haywards Heath
West Sussex

12th June 2026

Dear Madam / Sir

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to object to the detailed planning for SA26 (Land West of Selsfield Road). I do not object to development in general but the specificity of this development is not appropriate. In fact, in line with our Neighbourhood Plan and survey carried out last year, I believe we should be making efforts to ensure we provide reasonable and affordable homes for young people and for those that are less well off in order that they are not forced out of the village and rural environment.

My rationale for objecting are as follows:

1. Housing Mix and Community Need

As mentioned in my pre-amble, there is no/low provision for affordable housing or low cost housing. The homes that are in the plans hide a bedroom to make them look like 2 bedroom houses. The fact is, they are three bed houses and will

be priced as such. To this end, it will make it very difficult for young people, families and those less well off to afford such housing.

We don't need 35 3-5 bedroom houses in Ardingly. We need a better blend of housing that will be suitable for all demographics. This does not match the identified housing need laid out in our Neighbourhood Plan. This document was carefully worked up and approved by Council and therefore developments should be in line with its statements.

4. Water Infrastructure, Drainage and Flood Risk

This has been covered by many of the respondents so I will not dwell on it. Suffice it to say, the plans do not adequately address the significant drainage, sewerage and flooding risks associated with this development:

- 1) It has not been proven that the main sewer can manage the additional flow.
- 2) It is not clear that the ditch behind the graveyard can handle the additional water that will flow from the site – or indeed where the water will go from the graveyard ditch.
- 3) It is not clear what will happen to additional surface water if the pumps that are being put in fail

3. Transport, Accessibility and Parking

The site is totally tipped towards cars. Despite the misleading statements in the application (e.g. that Balcombe station is 22 minutes away by bike – I cycle and am pretty fit and can make it in 18 minutes. Without wishing to blow my own trumpet, but given the hills one has to climb, the average person would take significantly longer than 22 minutes), it is clear that the developers only expect cars to be used – given by the number of spaces they have given the development.

Equally, the assessment talks about the bus service. This, at best, is sporadic. It cannot be relied on for anything but casual use. It cannot be used for commuting, shopping or going to the doctor / hospital.

Given where the site is, the impact of an extra 140+ car movements a day, principally up and down the high street, has been given no thought. The village is already congested and more cars will create added pressure and danger to villagers.

Our Neighbourhood plan is clear on page 11 that we need to reduce the negative impact of traffic and encourage safe walking and cycling – this application does nothing to promote this vision and objective.

5. Character, Appearance and Landscape Impact

While the proposed scheme reflects certain aspects of the traditional architectural style found within Ardingly, its overall scale and built form differ markedly from the established character of the village.

A particular concern relates to the inclusion of several three-storey properties, which are not a common feature of the local area. Their height and prominence have the potential to introduce a more urban appearance that sits uncomfortably within both the surrounding landscape and the sensitive setting of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Conservation Area.

The proposed landscape strategy also appears inadequate in mitigating the visual impact of the development. The extent of tree planting and screening is limited, especially when considered against the height of a number of the proposed dwellings. Furthermore, the revised scheme provides considerably less landscaping than the original proposal, most notably along the western boundary, resulting in a significant change to views from the west and a reduction in visual buffering.

Finally, given the site's position on the edge of the settlement, directly adjoining open countryside, the site does not appear to fit in well to its surroundings. The height, massing and overall scale should be re-designed to create a softer and more gradual transition between the village and the adjacent rural landscape.

2. Inaccuracies within the Supporting Documentation

A number of statements within the application documents appear to be inaccurate or out of date, which calls into question some of the conclusions reached.

The submitted documents refer to the Ardingly Post Office as a local amenity available to residents. However, the Post Office closed in November 2021 and has not operated since. Any assessment of local services and facilities should therefore be updated to reflect current circumstances.

The Statement of Community Involvement suggests a level of engagement with local stakeholders that does not accurately reflect my experience. The document identifies consultation with the Parish Council, St Peter's Primary School and the Ardingly Scout Group. However, my experience was that this process was largely a one-way flow of information rather than genuine consultation. It is also unclear why these particular organisations were selected and not others, and what the extent of that engagement was in each case.

Yours faithfully

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