



Briefing Paper for the District Planning Committee

Application: DM/25/1593 – Woodlands Close and Land North of Burleigh Lane, Crawley Down

Proposal: Demolition of 9–11 Woodlands Close and other buildings; erection of 48 dwellings (Use Class C3) with open space, landscaping, car parking, internal roads, and access via Woodlands Close.

Purpose of Briefing

To provide Planning Committee members with a summary of key planning considerations, policy conflicts, and material objections relating to DM/25/1593.

Site Context

- 2.3ha site within Crawley Down built-up area boundary.
- Adjacent to Grade II Listed Burleigh Cottage.
- Within Ashdown Forest, there is a 7km zone of influence.

Key Issues and Policy Conflicts

1. Access and Highways

- Policy SA22 explicitly requires that access to the site must be provided from Sycamore Lane.

The current proposal disregards this requirement by introducing access via Woodlands Close—a narrow cul-de-sac originally designed for only 13 dwellings. This represents a direct conflict with the site's allocation policy and raises serious concerns about compliance with the Development Plan.

The insert below shows the Inspector stating the site should be deleted from the District Plan if Access from Sycamore Lane cannot be secured.

MM21	SA22, page 65	<p><i>Modify policy SA22: Land North of Burleigh Lane, Crawley Down, for 50 dwellings, as follows:</i></p> <p><i>Under Highways and Access:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access from Sycamore Lane or Woodlands Close. <p>Detailed access arrangements will need to be investigated further.</p>	<p>The modification is necessary to ensure certainty of delivery by requiring specification of the vehicular access to be via Sycamore Lane, so as to ensure delivery of the allocation within the plan period. This is to ensure the effectiveness of the allocation.</p> <p>If access cannot be demonstrated through agreement with the relevant landowner(s), then this allocation should be deleted from the Plan.</p>
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The deviation will significantly alter the character and function of Woodlands Close and exacerbate congestion on Kiln Road and surrounding streets.

- The Transport Statement predicts 49 AM peak trips and 41 PM peak trips.
- Policies breached: SA22, DP21, CDNP10.
- NPPF Para 116: Development should be refused if residual cumulative impacts are severe.

2. Scale and Character

- 48 dwellings exceed Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan limit of 30 per development (Policy CDNP05).
- Inclusion of 3-storey units (10.3m high) out of character for edge-of-settlement location.
- Uniform light-brown brickwork creates a homogenous design.
- Policies breached: DP26, CDNP05, NPPF Section 12.

3. Residential Amenity

- No. 13 Woodlands Close becomes a "traffic island" surrounded by roads.
- Overlooking between plots (e.g., 34 and 35) and increased noise.
- **Policies breached:** DP29, CDNP05, NPPF Para 130(f).

4. Heritage Impact

- Recognised heritage harm to the Grade II Listed Burleigh Cottage setting.
- Missing hedgerow/tree belt required by SA22; inadequate landscape buffer.
- **Policies breached:** DP34, SA22, CDNP05, NPPF Paras 212–215.

5. Housing Mix

- Significant under-provision of 1–2 bed market units; over-provision of 4 bed units.
- Affordable housing clustering breaches SPD.
- **Policies breached:** DP30, Emerging Plan Policy DPH7.

6. Drainage and Culvert

- Culverting watercourse conflicts with WSCC guidance and Water Framework Directive.
- No evidence of foul sewer capacity.
- **Policies breached:** DP41, CDNP06, NPPF Paras 181–182.

NPPF Considerations

- Para 11: Presumption in favor of sustainable development applies unless adverse impacts significantly and demonstrably outweigh benefits.
- Para 134–135: Design should be sympathetic to local characters.
- Para 212–215: Heritage harm must be weighed against public benefits.

Emerging Mid Sussex District Plan

- Strengthens requirements for character-led design, balanced housing mix, and sustainable drainage.

Summary of Objection Grounds

1. Non-compliance with SA22 access requirements.
2. Overdevelopment and harm to character.
3. Significant amenity impacts.
4. Heritage harms without adequate mitigation.
5. Unacceptable housing mix.
6. Insufficient drainage evidence.

Recommendation

Worth Parish Council requests that the Planning Committee **refuse** planning permission for DM/25/1593 due to multiple conflicts with the Development Plan, NPPF, and emerging policy, and because adverse impacts outweigh any public benefits.

References:

- Mid Sussex District Plan (DP21, DP26, DP29, DP30, DP31, DP34, DP41)
- Site Allocations DPD (SA22)
- Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan (CDNP05, CDNP06, CDNP10)
- NPPF (Paras 11, 116, 130, 134–135, 181–182, 212–215)
- Emerging Mid Sussex District Plan (Reg. 19 Draft)