

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 14 July 2026 15:07:30 UTC+01:00
To: "planninginfo" <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Consultee Comments for Planning Application
DM/26/1315

Consultee comments

Dear Sir/Madam,

A consultee has commented on a Planning Application. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 14/07/2026 3:07 PM from . Haywards Heath Town Council on behalf of Parish Consultation.

Application Summary

Reference:	DM/26/1315
Address:	Land West Of Gatesmead Wickham Way Haywards Heath West Sussex
Proposal:	Proposed 49 new homes together with open space and associated infrastructure.
Case Officer:	Caroline Grist

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Comments Details

Comments:	The Town Council strongly OBJECTS to this application and believes the site is wholly unsuitable for the proposed development due to the following reasons: 1. Landscape Character, Open Space and Visual Impact The proposed development, by reason of its scale, layout and location on an undeveloped greenfield site forming part of the countryside edge and local gap, would result in the urbanisation and erosion of the intrinsic landscape character and the loss of a valued informal recreational resource. Evidence from Place Services identifies that the site makes a meaningful contribution to local landscape character, forming part of the transition between the built-up area of Haywards Heath and the surrounding countryside. The development would fragment historic field patterns, erode the wooded and field character, and
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introduce suburban form and layout which is not landscape-led.

The proposal would also result in an adverse landscape effect and significant adverse impacts on visual receptors, including users of Public Rights of Way and informal routes, which have not been fully or accurately assessed within the submitted Landscape and Visual Appraisal.

Furthermore, the site is identified within the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan as forming part of a local gap, where development must not erode landscape character or harm the setting of the town. The proposal fails to satisfy these requirements.

Accordingly, the development is contrary to:

- Mid Sussex District Plan Policies DP12 (Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside), DP37 (Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows) and DP38 (Biodiversity)
- Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan Policies E1 (Loss of Open Space) and E5 (Local Gap)
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Chapter 15 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

2. Loss of Recreational Open Space and Amenity Value

Notwithstanding its lack of formal designation, the application site is demonstrably a well-used and valued area of informal open space providing recreational opportunities for local residents, including walking and access to the wider countryside.

Place Services confirms that the site has notable recreational value, is well connected to Public Rights of Way including the Sussex Diamond Way, and functions as an accessible green space forming a gateway to the wider National Landscape.

The proposed development would fundamentally alter the character and function of this space, replacing its informal rural character with a formalised and urbanised environment, thereby resulting in the loss of its amenity and recreational value.

The application fails to demonstrate that:

- The open space is surplus to requirements; or
- Equivalent or better replacement provision would be delivered in a suitable location

As required by neighbourhood plan policy.

The development is therefore contrary to:

- Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan Policy E1
- Mid Sussex District Plan Policy DP12

3. Biodiversity and Ecological Impact

The development would result in the loss of an extensive area of grassland and associated habitats, with potential to support protected and notable species, and would lead to fragmentation of

ecological networks and hedgerow systems.

The removal of existing hedgerows and the disruption of historic field patterns would undermine biodiversity value and ecological connectivity, contrary to policy objectives seeking to conserve and enhance natural habitats.

The proposal is therefore contrary to:

- Mid Sussex District Plan Policy DP38 (Biodiversity)
- NPPF Chapter 15

4. Impact on Historic Landscape Structure

The application site contains evidence of a remnant medieval field pattern, which contributes to landscape character and local distinctiveness.

The proposed layout would fragment this historic landscape structure through removal of hedgerows and introduction of built form and access roads, failing to respond sensitively to the site's landscape context.

Place Services concludes the scheme is not landscape-led and does not respect or reinforce the existing field pattern.

This represents unacceptable harm to the historic landscape character and is contrary to:

- Mid Sussex District Plan Policies DP12 and DP37

5. Public Right of Way (DMMO 3/22)

An unresolved Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO 3/22) affects the site and relates to a claimed Public Right of Way following an established route used by local residents.

The application fails to sufficiently account for this route within the proposed layout, and determination of the application prior to resolution of the DMMO risks prejudicing the outcome and could result in irreversible harm.

The proposal is therefore considered premature and contrary to the proper planning of the area.

6. Highway Safety and Access

The application fails to demonstrate that safe and suitable access can be achieved.

The proposed access via Gatesmead, a narrow residential road, is inadequate to accommodate the scale and nature of the development, and insufficient information has been provided in relation to:

- Traffic impacts and congestion
 - Pedestrian safety
 - Construction impacts
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- Emergency and service vehicle access

As such, the proposal conflicts with the NPPF requirement to provide safe and suitable access for all users.

7. Infrastructure Capacity

The application fails to demonstrate that adequate infrastructure capacity exists to accommodate the proposed development, particularly in relation to:

- Education provision
- Healthcare services
- Drainage and water supply infrastructure

There is insufficient evidence to confirm that the development would not place unacceptable strain on existing services to the detriment of existing residents. Water security at the site represents a serious concern, an issue which has been further heightened by the recent severe weather conditions.

Overall Conclusion

The cumulative impacts of the proposal, particularly in relation to landscape harm, loss of recreational space, and conflict with adopted and neighbourhood plan policies, demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme.

The proposal is therefore considered unacceptable and the Town Council urges the planning inspectorate to refuse permission for this application.

Section 106

Without prejudice to the Town Council's strong objection to this application and its view that planning permission should be refused, the Council considers that, should the Local Planning Authority or Planning Inspectorate be minded to grant permission, a comprehensive Section 106 Agreement would be required to mitigate the impacts of the development. Such obligations should secure appropriate contributions towards education, healthcare, highways and sustainable transport, public open space and recreation, community facilities, biodiversity enhancement, green infrastructure and any other infrastructure necessary to address the demands generated by the development.

The Town Council would expect a fair and proportionate share of any relevant Section 106 contributions to be invested in projects within Haywards Heath that directly mitigate the impacts arising from the development. This should include, amongst other measures, improvements to the Town Council's wayfinding and walking-network programmes, investment in youth and recreational facilities, enhancement of publicly accessible green infrastructure and countryside access, and measures that support and protect public rights of way and active travel connections.

In particular, given the current application's impact upon an established and well-used route which is the subject of Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO 3/22), the Council considers that any permission should be accompanied by measures to safeguard, enhance and promote public access and connectivity within the wider area.

The Council emphasises, however, that the provision of planning obligations would not overcome its fundamental objections to the principle of development on this site, nor the significant harm identified in this representation.

Kind regards