19 Woods View,
Crawley Down,
Crawley,
West Sussex
RH10 4BE

15th April 2025

Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands,
Oaklands Drive,
Haywards Heath,
West Sussex RH16 1SS

For the Attention of Ann Biggs – Assistant Director Planning and Sustainable Economy

Dear Ann Biggs,

RE: DM/25/0014; DM/25/0015; DM/25/0016 & DM/25/0017
Planning Applications for West of Turners Hill Road to create 350 New Homes and a 65 (now 70) Bed Car Home

Building upon my letter of the 18th February 2025, which highlighted and raised many substantive and justifiable objections, concerns and challenges surrounding the planning applications above, given the subsequent additions to those applications I would like to add the following to my letter if the 18th February 2025 .

I would again like to suggest that the adoption of an entrance / exit through Hurst Farm would provide for mutually beneficial outcomes for all parties concerned providing for a more a more appropriate road infrastructure, providing for the minimum of disruption both during the build and after completion and would help to support the maintenance of growing local communities and which would help to alleviate many of the valid substantive and justifiable objections, concerns and challenges already raised.

In an attempt to be succinct as practical I have shared my additional comments as per the headings below with some supporting detail as per the following pages, which I hope is helpful as follows:

- Inclusive Design
- Wychwood Streets in Context
- Need for an Independent Risk Assessment of Wychwood Access and Street Structure

I would again remind our Council of their published priorities' as reconfirmed w/c 10th February 2025 as highlighted in part within page 2 given that residents (particularly children and vulnerable people) are quite clearly not being kept safe from avoidable accidents and or vulnerable situations, and given the significant detrimental impact on quality of life, health & well-being and the impacts around general and local mobility, accessibility and public services including health & social care, education and outdoor activities coupled with the added risks of flooding that this plan doesn't support a sustainable and prosperous economy as it does not help its people and communities to fulfil their potential and most certainly doesn't make the best use of vital and finite resources.

I hope that this contribution helps to support the right decision for the communities' of Crawley Down.

Yours Sincerely

[redacted]

Inclusive Design

Planners and the council should ensure that the principles of inclusive design are captured within all of the planning processes, which is apparently not the case at the moment.

Such inclusive design processes should

- place people and the existing community at the heart of the design process;
- offer common sense and practical choice where a single solution cannot accommodate all impacted;
- Street design should be inclusive.

  Inclusive design means providing for all people regardless of age or ability. There is a general duty for public authorities to promote equality under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. There is also a specific obligation for those who design, manage and maintain builds and public spaces to ensure that disabled people play a full part in benefiting from, and shaping, an inclusive built environment.

  This has been omitted and fails such obligations given the insufficient provision of pavements particularly on the entrance to Wychwood and around the dangerous 90 degree corner and this will be further exaggerated and exacerbated should this access be permitted.

- Providing for movement along a street is vital. The need to cater for motor vehicles is well understood by transport planners but the passage of people of all ages on foot and using a bicycle has often been neglected. Walking and cycling are important modes of travel, offering a more sustainable alternative to the car, making a positive contribution to the overall character of a place, public health and to tackling climate change through reductions in carbon emissions

The adoption of such an approach to street design would:

- help to support the application of a user hierarchy to the design process with pedestrians at the top;
- emphasise a collaborative approach to the delivery of our community streets;
- recognise the importance of the community function of streets as spaces for social interaction;
- promote an inclusive environment that recognises the needs of people of all ages and abilities;
- reflect and support pedestrian needs in networks and detailed designs;
- designing to keep the number of vehicles and their speeds practically lower on our residential streets;
- use the minimum of highway design features necessary to make the streets work properly for the community.

Wychwood Streets in Context

Wychwood is made up of a number of small streets that are accessed from a 'B' road with a 90 degrees access entrance / exit before further 90 degree corners and bending roads, which are at best 5m wide, which is barely enough for 2 motor cars to pass safety and slowly. Larger vehicles will take up most of the street space. These observations are supported by the WSCC site visit on the 13th February 2025 where the site visit report stated: *"Clearly the potential for two opposing vehicles to meet at the bend is very much real although two cars are though expected to be able to pass but with care. A larger vehicle would occupy the whole carriageway"*.

NOTE: A clear distinction can be drawn between streets and roads. Roads are essentially highways whose main function is accommodating the movement of motor traffic. Streets are typically lined with houses and public spaces.

Wychwood streets have to fulfil a complex variety of functions in order to meet our community needs as these are places for living, socialising and moving around in.

Streets that are good quality places achieve a number of positive community based outcomes, creating a virtuous circle including but not exclusively:

- attractive and well-connected permeable street networks encourage more people to walk and cycle to local destinations, improving their health while reducing motor traffic, energy use and pollution;

- more people on the streets leads to improved personal security and road safety – research also shows that the presence of pedestrians on streets causes drivers to travel more slowly;
- people meeting one another on a casual basis strengthens communities and encourages a sense of pride in local environments;
- people who live in good-quality environments are more likely to have a sense of ownership and a stake in maintaining the quality of their local streets and public spaces;
- The sense of place is fundamental to a richer and more fulfilling environment. It comes largely from creating a strong relationship between the streets and surrounding spaces that frame it.

Need for an Independent Risk Assessment of Wychwood Access and Street Structure

Building upon the practical access points made in my letter of the 18th February 2025 amongst others as well as the points above on Inclusive Design and Wychwood Streets in Context I would strongly suggest that a comprehensive and robust and independent risk assessment of the Wychwood access, streets and infrastructure be performed promptly in order to better inform a practical and responsible planning process and in order to ensure that that process meets councils obligations' and priorities' and any decision(s) taken actually reflect and meet the needs of the wider community of Crawley Down and the local community of Wychwood.

Such an independent assessment will help to support and show how the council and its planning process tries to protect, maintain and support the interests, privacy and enjoyment of established and neighbouring properties whilst importantly keeping people safe from vulnerable situations – these are not exhaustive but examples.

The good design of streets, roadways and the control of traffic are important factors in the prevention of road traffic accidents and an important consideration in the prevention of accident hazards consideration whilst keeping people of all ages safe.

So I would re-highlight that the Wychwood entrance/ exit off Turner's Hill Road (a 'B' road) and Wychwood estate roads were not designed with subsequent developments in mind. As a consequence are not of a suitable design and or quality for the envisaged traffic flows of all vehicle types, hence the restricted and poor visibility given the 90 degree corners, bending streets and low level lighting. The street width is at best 5m as shared in WSCC site visit on the 13th February 2025 which in effect reduces in size as vehicles can't bend around corners and the curving roads, and with little if no provision of pavements for pedestrian use on dangerous parts of the roadways.

NOTE: As a veteran with double above knee amputations and hearing loss and who uses either prostheses and or a wheelchair to mobilise I find the access already particularly dangerous and I've already had a number of near misses. So given the anticipated volumes in traffic with little if no consideration of how to prevent such avoidable accidents I would suggest that this is an accident waiting to happen.

NOTE: The council or its officers are yet to reach out to the disabled community to seek their constructive opinion and collaboration. I would be happy to help constructively as and when the council seek to fulfil such obligations.

Some areas to consider when considering the entrance / exit and Wychwood roadways include but are not exclusively:

The identification of avoidable dangers & hazards capturing the following:

- **Traffic Flow:** Given that the envisaged build will quadruple (x4) the number of properties and by default the subsequent traffic flows of all types with be significant and so there continue to be serious concerns over the volumes and speed of traffic of all types approaching the entrance / exit, corners and on the Wychwood roads notwithstanding the issues around the many forms of pollution and damage to the existing road infrastructure.

  This should include swept path analysis / vehicle manoeuvre simulation and should ensure that it takes account of freeholders' rights to park on their streets and roadways.

- **Visibility:** Assess the visibility of the entrance/ exit, corners and curving roads, and the low level lighting for drivers and pedestrians. Consider factors like road widths, corners, curving roads, obstructions, and increasing changing and challenging weather conditions particularly in the winter as demonstrated by the widespread flooding.

- **Pedestrian Activity:**
  Evaluate the presence and behaviour of pedestrians including the lack of pavements and crossing points and the many potential avoidable conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.

- **Road Conditions:** Assess and analyse the road widths and surfaces particularly on corners and where two-way traffic is to be normalised, pavement markings, and the varying potential hazards.

- **Wychwood** – the access and streets are all un-adopted and are managed by two separate management companies for and on behalf of the freeholders. So should any changes need to be considered to any of our freehold land including access and streets then this will not be straight forward and would clearly take some time in order to work collaboratively with the two separate management companies who would clearly have to take directions and instructions from their freeholders.

- **Environmental Factors:** Consider the impact of weather conditions on visibility and driver behaviour.