

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 10 August 2026 15:31:36 UTC+01:00
To: "Joseph Swift" <Joseph.Swift@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/26/1186 Land at Selsfield Road, Ardingly

Hi Joe

Comments on the above planning application. This is a reserved matters application following the granting of outline consent for residential development of 35 houses under DM/22/1575.

My comments on the outline application are appended below. The current submission includes further details of the site layout, including landscaping. In terms of heritage impact, I note that the site layout has been revised to introduce a greater amount of built form close to the Selsfield Road boundary of the site, and that the attenuation pond and landscaping which was previously located at the southwestern corner of the site has been removed in favour of built form and hard landscaping.

These changes to the site layout are retrograde in terms of their heritage impact in placing a larger amount of built form closer to the more sensitive eastern, southern and western boundaries of the site, potentially increasing the level of harm arising to the affected assets, as set out in my comments on the outline application (repeated below). This would include views from both parts of the Conservation Area, and potentially from the listed buildings on Street Lane including the former school, as well as the character of the approaches to these assets along Selsfield Road the PROW running along the southern side of the site. Placement of taller, 2.5 storey buildings at the southwest corner of the site may exacerbate this harm.

Although I note that the boundaries in question have suggested additional planting in the form of hedging, native scrub mix, and some trees, given the shallow depth of the planting and the scale and density of the proposed built form I would anticipate that this will prove to be of only limited value in terms of screening the new development in external views, particularly in winter.

I have read and considered the Heritage Statement; however it would appear that this has not been updated since the outline application and therefore will not reflect the changes made to the site layout which are discussed above. I would suggest that this Statement, which will be a validation requirement, should be either revised, or an addendum made to it to reflect the current scheme.

As it stands, I remain of the opinion that the proposal will result in less than substantial harm to the affected designated heritage assets, for the reasons set out in my comments on the outline application. I would expect the level of that harm to be slightly increased by the layout changes discussed above:

- Ardingly Conservation Area- less than substantial harm, at the mid-range of that scale.
- St Peter's Church- less than substantial harm, at the lower end of that scale.
- 1 and 2 Church Cottages- less than substantial harm, at the lower end of that scale.
- Jordans Cottage – less than substantial harm, at the lower end of that scale.
- St Peter's Church Centre- less than substantial harm, at the low-mid range of that scale.
- Knowles Farmhouse- less than substantial harm, at the lower end of that scale.
- Knowles and Cobwebs – less than substantial harm at the lower end of that scale.

Paragraph 215 of the NPPF will apply, bearing in mind also the requirements of paragraphs 212 and 213.

With respect to the NDHAs at New Knowles Farm, the proposal causes a low-mid level of harm to assets of a mid-level of interest in the local context. Paragraph 216 of the NPPF applies.

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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From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>

Sent: 10 February 2023 10:23

To: Joseph Swift <Joseph.Swift@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/22/1575 Land at Selsfield Road, Ardingly

Hi Joe

Comments on the above outline planning application.

The application site is an L shaped parcel of open land, a field, to the west side of Selsfield Road largely between the Ardingly Recreation ground and the South of England showground, to the north of the centre of Ardingly village. It is outside the Ardingly Conservation Area, which is in two parts, but considered to be within its setting. The boundary of the eastern part of the Area lies along Selsfield Road at the south eastern corner of the site; the boundary of the western part lies a short distance to the west and south west of the western edge of the site, separated from it by a further field. The site is also considered to be within the wider setting of the listed buildings grouped around St Peter's Church, at the junction between Church Lane and Street Lane, a short distance to the west, and of Knowles Farm and the pair of adjacent cottages (Knowles Cottage and Cobwebs), located to the south west on Street Lane, as well as possible non designated heritage assets (NDHAs) at New Knowles Farm, also on Street Lane.

Public rights of way (PROWs) run east-west from Selsfield Road across the northern and southern sides of the site. These paths link the two parts of the Conservation Area, and also lead towards the listed buildings and NDHAs centred around the church and Knowles Farm respectively.

Ardingly Conservation Area is in two parts, reflecting the historical development of the village which had (and still has) two nuclei, one around the church to the west and known as Ardingly (or Ardingley) and one around and to the north of the junction of College Lane, Lindfield Road, Street Lane and the High Street to the east, and known historically as Hapsteadgreen. These areas retain their own individual characters and a degree of separation. In my opinion, the significance of the two parts of the Conservation Area lie broadly in their nature as originally separate, now associated, rural Sussex settlements which have grown up over many centuries in close connection with the surrounding rural landscape. Although there is no adopted character appraisal of the Conservation Area, the Council's document '*Conservation Areas in Mid Sussex*' provides a brief assessment of its key features, including the views from the Area across the surrounding countryside. In my opinion, for these reasons the rural setting of the Conservation Area, which would include the proposed development site, makes a strong positive contribution to its significance as a heritage asset.

The current proposal, which is only in outline, is for 35 dwellings, with associated landscaping and infrastructure, with all matters reserved except for access. We have only limited details before us, including an illustrative masterplan, details of the proposed access from Selsfield Road, and an LVIA. However, even on this basis it is clear that the proposed development will have a fundamental impact on the character of the site, which will become suburbanised. For this reason, the positive contribution which the site currently makes to the surviving rural setting of the Conservation Area would be removed and reversed. Both parts of the Conservation Area will be affected, although the development would be closer to the eastern half. The adverse impacts would include the nature of views from both parts of the Area towards and across the site, and the character of the approaches to both parts along the above mentioned PROWs. I would consider the harm caused, through setting, to be less than substantial in terms of the NPPF - on the basis of an outline scheme it is not possible to assign a more precise level of harm within that scale. Paragraph 202 of the NPPF will therefore apply.

The listed buildings around St Peters Church include the following:

- St Peters Church itself- Grade I listed, dating from the 14th century with a 15th century tower. This building is likely to be considered an exceptional example of a rural Sussex church of its type and period. It is likely to possess historical evidential and illustrative values on this basis, as well as aesthetic value based in part on the use of vernacular materials viewed within the landscape from which they were drawn, and communal value. As such, the surviving village and broader rural setting of the church (which would include the development site) will make a significant positive contribution to its special interest and the manner in which this is appreciated, in particular those parts of that interest which are drawn from historical illustrative and aesthetic values.
- 1 and 2 Church Cottages, Street Lane – This is a Grade II listed 18th century building. It is likely to be considered to possess historical evidential and illustrative values as a good example of a rural Sussex village building of its type and period, as well as aesthetic value again based in part on the use of vernacular materials. Again, the surviving rural setting of the cottages, including the site, will make a strong positive contribution to the special interest of the listed building.
- Jordans Cottage, Street Lane – A Grade II listed 17th century or earlier refronted timber framed cottage. As for the buildings above, this is likely to be considered to possess historical evidential and illustrative values as a good example of a rural Sussex village building of its type and period, as well as aesthetic value based in part on the use of vernacular materials. Again, the surviving rural setting of the cottages, including the site, will make a strong positive contribution to the special interest of the listed building.
- St Peters Church Centre, Street Lane – This former National School is Grade II listed and dates from the mid-late 19th century, and will be likely to be considered to possess historical evidential and illustrative values as a good example of a rural Sussex village school building of this period, as well as aesthetic value. The surviving rural setting including the site will be considered to make a strong positive contribution to the special interest of the listed building, in particular those parts of that interest which are drawn from historical illustrative and aesthetic values.

The listed buildings at Knowles Farm comprise the following:

- Knowles Farmhouse is a Grade II listed 18th century building, a former farmhouse, located to the southern side of Street Lane.
- Knowles Cottage and Cobwebs are an attached pair of dwellings also Grade II listed and dating from the 18th century and presumed, from historic map regression to be former farmworkers cottages. All of these assets form part of the Old Knowles historic farmstead, which is recorded in the West Sussex Historic Farmstead and Landscape Character Assessment as a historic farmstead of the medieval period. As such they are likely to be considered to possess historical evidential and illustrative value as good examples of rural Sussex farm buildings of their period, as well as aesthetic value based in part on the use of vernacular materials, and group value with each other, and with New Knowles Farm to the west. As such the surviving rural setting of the buildings would be considered to make a strong positive contribution to the special interest of the assets. The site forms part of the wider setting of the listed buildings, and in particular influences the character of the views in which they are appreciated in views looking east along Street Lane, and of the approach to it along the PROW running along the southern side of the site.

The potential NDHAs at New Knowles Farm include:

- The farmstead at New Knowles Farm, which is directly to the west of the listed former farmhouse and cottages at Old Knowles Farm, includes a further former farmhouse, as well as what appears (from historic map regression) to be a fairly complete assemblage of farm buildings, centred around a pair of yards. Map regression suggests that these buildings date from around the mid 19th century or earlier. The West Sussex Historic Farmstead and Landscape Character Assessment records the farmstead as a historic farmstead of the post Medieval period. The buildings would be considered to possess historical evidential and illustrative value as good examples, within the local context, of a farm buildings of their type and period, as well as aesthetic value based on the use of vernacular materials, and group value with each other and with Old Knowles Farm. As such, the surviving rural setting of the NDHAs would make a strong positive contribution to their significance. The site is part of the wider setting of the farmstead, and in particular influences the character of the views in which it is appreciated in views looking east along Street Lane, and of the approach to it along the PROW running along the southern side of the site.

- As noted above, the proposed development will have a suburbanising affect on the site. Its current contribution to the special interests of the above listed buildings and NDHAs will be removed and reversed. In some instances, particularly the buildings on Street Lane, views from the buildings will be affected, in others it will be an impact more on the wider setting. The character of the approaches along the PROWs to the cluster of buildings at the junction of Street Lane and Church Lane will also be affected. This will result in a degree of less than substantial harm to the special interests of the listed buildings. It is not possible to assign a more specific level in the absence of a fully detailed scheme, and this will also vary according to the position of the affected building and the degree of potential intervisibility with the site. Paragraph 202 will again apply. In terms of the NDHAs at New Knowles Farm I would consider the proposal will be likely to result in a low-mid level of harm to assets of a mid level of interest in the local context.

In terms of proposed mitigation measures, due to the outline nature of this application we would expect only limited detail to have been provided. However I note the manner in which the built form of the development is set away from the PROW to the south by the intervening attenuation pond. The submitted illustrative landscape masterplan also indicates some new planting of trees and hedging, including around the site boundaries. Although these measures may go some way to soften and screen the development, in my opinion they are unlikely to significantly reduce the level of harm caused by the proposal, particularly given the seasonal and potentially ephemeral nature of screening provided by vegetation. I would recommend that if the current outline application is granted, a condition requiring a fully detailed landscaping scheme should be required. This should include significant and appropriately high/dense new planting of appropriate native species to the boundaries of the site, including the western boundary, to increase screening in views from the western part of the Conservation Area and the listed buildings within it. Details of any change of materials to the reconfigured access layout should also be required by condition.

In summary, it is my opinion that the proposed development will cause a degree of less than substantial harm to the affected heritage assets, as set out in more detail above. This will be contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 and DP35. Paragraph 202 and the balancing exercise set out within it will apply.

I note that the applicant has submitted a Heritage Statement with this application. Although I have read and considered its contents, I do not agree with the conclusions drawn in terms of the impact on the assets named above.

Thanks,

Emily

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