

Application to alter the Schedule of Lessons associated with Condition 3 of planning permission 13/00897/COU that permits the swimming pool to be operated by a private company

Date: 20 April 2025

To: Planning Department
Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 1SS

Dear Sir/Madam,

Further to the Pre-Application Planning advice we received from Debrah Lynn of Mid Sussex Council dated 17/09/24 and the Highways Pre-Application we received from Kyran Schneider of West Sussex County Council dated 11/11/24 please find enclosed an application to vary the schedule of lessons (hereafter 'Schedule of Lessons') associated with Condition 3 of planning permission 13/00897/COU at Ludwell Grange, Cinder Hill Lane, Horsted Keynes.

Condition 3 states that 'the schedule of such lesson... shall be adhered to unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, no less than 7 days prior to a change taking place.' We emailed the Council on 12th October 2025 seeking to alter the schedule of lessons in order to comply with this Condition but were informed by Sarah Valentine that we will need to make a full planning application to do this.

To have to make a full application each time the schedule of lessons needs to be changed is not practical, impacts the financial viability of the pool being operated by a private company and ultimately inhibits it's use for the benefit of the local community (especially those who live within walking distance), who would be the target group for swimming lessons.

This application is therefore seeking to remove the requirement that the Local Planning Authority be notified to any changes to the schedule of lessons as long as the total number of hours does not exceed 15 hours per week between 0900-1800 Monday to Friday.

We include copy of the decision notice. This also restricts the usage of the swimming pool to five clients per session and requires access gates to open 30 minutes before lessons; both conditions that we will maintain.

We have consulted Horsted Keynes Parish Council, St Giles Primary School and Horsted Keynes Pre-School all who have been supportive of the proposals and recognise the pool as a valuable community asset.

This application includes the following section:

1. The Proposal Description
2. The Operational Rationale and Financial Viability
3. Site Context
4. Planning History
5. Heritage & AONB Impact
6. Operating Hours and Trip Generation
7. Transport, Access & Parking
8. Policy References
9. Community Engagement & Local Benefits
10. Conclusions

Attached is the following support documents:

- Decision notice for 13/00897/COU
- Site location plan (1:1250) with red-line boundary (no change to the site boundary since 10 Feb 2012)
- Car and Cycle Parking Plans (no changes to these proposed)
- Colour coded site plan showing the different areas

Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Sam Wright

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1. Proposal Description

The application seeks to vary the Schedule of Lessons associated with Condition 3 of permission 13/00897/COU to:

1. Remove the requirement that the Local Planning Authority be notified to any changes to the schedule of lessons, subject to the total number of hours not exceeding 15 hours per week between 0900-1800 Monday to Friday.
2. Maintain the requirement that access gates open 30 minutes prior to any booked session.

No alterations to the outbuilding housing the pool, the parking, or the accesses are proposed; and it is intended that the key target group for the swimming lessons will be the local community who live within walking distance.

The Planning Pre-Application Advice concluded 'my informal opinion of that the Council would be unlikely to raise an objection to the proposal provided the development is deemed to be acceptable from a highway safety perspective.' Subsequent to this the Highways Pre-Application Advice concluded that 'there is currently no evidence to suggest the existing access has been operating unsafely, or that the proposals would exacerbate an existing safety concern.'

2. Operational Rationale & Financial Viability

Condition 3 states that 'the schedule of such lesson... shall be adhered to unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, no less than 7 days prior to a change taking place.' We emailed the Council on 12th October 2025 seeking to alter the schedule of lessons in order to comply with this Condition but were informed by Sarah Valentine that we will need to make a full planning application to do this.

To have to make a full application each time the schedule of lessons needs to be changed is not practical, impacts the financial viability of the swimming pool being operated by a private company and ultimately inhibits it being used for the benefit of the local community (especially those who live within walking distance), who would be the target group for swimming lessons.

This application is therefore seeking to remove the requirement that the Local Planning Authority be notified to any changes to the schedule of lessons as long as the total number of hours does not exceed 15 hours per week between 0900-1800 Monday to Friday.

We are proposing that the schedule of lessons be limited to 0900-1800 Monday to Friday and fifteen hours per week in order to not impact upon the neighbours or the residential character of the area.

This number of hours would also provide private companies with sufficient hours to make operating from the pool viable both from a staffing and cost perspective. This will ultimately allow the swimming pool to be a village amenity, of benefit to the local community and reduce the travel time and costs for families in the village who are currently having to travel further afield to places such as Hassocks and East Grinstead for swimming lessons.

3. Site Context

Ludwell Grange is a Grade II listed dwelling within the High Weald AONB. The indoor pool sits in a northern outbuilding (that until the 1990s was not part of Ludwell Grange), accessed via a gate onto Cinder Hill Lane (30 mph limit). Five-year collision data shows no accidents at the access. Permissions 12/00502/COU and 13/00897/COU already allow private-company use.

4. Planning History

- 12/00502/COU: Change of use for private-company swimming lessons (approved for 12 months)
- 13/00897/COU: Renewal and consolidation of private-company pool hire permanently (approved)
 - Condition 2: Maximum five clients per session
 - Condition 3: Access gates to open 30 minutes before sessions; the Schedule of Lessons previously submitted on 17th April 2012 (Wednesdays 14:00–14:30 and Thursdays 10:30–11:00) be adhered to; and, any changes to the schedule of lessons be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority no less than 7 days prior to the change taking place.

This application proposes to vary the Condition 3 only.

5. Heritage and AONB Impact

No external works are proposed. Under District Plan Policy DP16 and Neighbourhood Plan Policy HK8, small-scale economic and recreational uses that conserve AONB natural beauty are supported. The proposal preserves the setting of the listed outbuilding and the character of the AONB.

6. Operating Hours & Trip Generation

- Existing Traffic Data: Since acquiring the property in December 2023, no swimming lessons have been provided because the Schedule of Lessons is not considered viable by the private hire operators we have approached. As such, there are no recorded on-site trip counts.
- Previous Traffic Data: We understand that when operated previously the lessons predominately attracted children from within the village (as would be the future intention) and that there were generally no more than 2 two-way trips per 30 minute lesson (ie. 4 two-way trips per hour).
- Projected Existing Use (under previous permission): We consider 1 hour/week would generate approximately 4 two-way vehicle movements.
- Proposed Use: A maximum of 15 hours/week, although the actual usage could be lower. Were usage to be 15 hours per week this would likely be in the form of (5 x 3-hour sessions) which we anticipate would generate up to 60 two-way movements/week, ie. c 20 per day.

This modest uplift does not constitute a material intensification of access use on Cinder Hill Lane.

7. Transport, Access & Parking

In accordance with WSCC advice:

- The existing gated access remains unchanged.
- Five-year collision data records no accidents at the access.
- Five on-site parking spaces; our analysis confirms forward-gear exit.
- Cycle and buggy parking will be provided in accordance with the previous plans.
- Lessons will target village residents who will be encouraged to journey on foot to minimise car travel.
- Promotional materials will encourage parking at Horsted Keynes Recreation Ground to reduce on-site demand.

West Sussex Council Highways Authority confirmed in their response to our pre-application consultation (dated 11 November 2024 & Internal Reference: PRE-92-94) that 'there is currently no evidence to suggest the existing access has been operating unsafely, or that the proposals would exacerbate an existing safety concern.'

8. Community Engagement & Local Benefits

We have consulted and received support from:

- Horsted Keynes Parish Council
- St Giles Primary School
- Horsted Keynes Pre-School

Each welcomes these potential changes that would enable the pool to be used as a local resource. Targeting the lessons predominately towards those in the village will reduce car journeys by enabling parents and their children to walk to lessons. Families currently have to travel as far as Hassocks or East Grinstead for lessons. Enabling them attend lessons at the pool will reduce that need and so to local traffic and carbon emissions.

We are committed to enabling the swimming pool to be used as a useful asset for the community to support wider recreational, educational, and social objectives.

9. Conclusion

The proposed alteration to Condition 3 to remove the need to see permission from the Local Planning Authority to any changes to the schedule of lessons and replace with a limit of 15 hours per week requires no external alterations, and safeguards highway safety, heritage, community, and financial viability interests. Further to supportive informal planning and highways advice that we received from Mid Sussed and West Sussex Council's. We request that Mid Sussex District Council grant the variation to Condition 3 of 13/00897/COU to remove the requirement that any changes to the schedule of lessons be approved by the Local Planning Authority and be replaced with a limit of 15 hours of lessons per week between 0900-1800 Monday to Friday.

10. Supporting Documents

- Decision notice for 13/00897/COU
- Site location plan (1:1250) with red-line boundary (no change to the site boundary since 10 Feb 2012)
- Car and Cycle Parking Plans (no changes to these proposed)
- Colour coded site plan showing the different areas