

Appeal 6009474

Interested party comments

Appeal type	Planning
Appeal procedure	Written
Appeal site	Sussex Topiary,, Naldretts Lane,, Rudgwick, Horsham,, RH12 3BU
Agent contact details	
Local planning authority	Horsham District Council
Application number	DC/26/0271

Interested party 1

Comments

Rudgwick Parish Council (RPC) objected to the Permission in Principle application to HDC for this site and continues to do so. The Council has no intention of restating the reasons for the objection as the Inspector will have sight of them from the original HDC planning file. However, RPC would like to submit the following details and observations for consideration in the Appeal process.

The Agent states that 'There is no doubt that the Tilted Balance is engaged with regards to the housing proposal'. RPC challenges this. The Appeal site is well outside the Built-Up Area Boundary (BUAB) for the village, does not adjoin it and is some way distant. The proposal for this site would not meet any requirements of rural exceptional policies and would therefore conflict with Rudgwick Neighbourhood Plan (RNP) Policy 1 and HDPF Policy 26.

Furthermore, the December 2025 NPPF will begin to apply on planning considerations and this new framework, in relation to non-excepted sites 'distant' from a BUAB, seeks to apply 'reverse tilted balance'. For approval, the benefits of the proposal must substantially outweigh the adverse effects, including to the character of the countryside and in relation to promoting sustainable patterns of movement, thereby giving presumption against an unallocated development in the countryside which does not adjoin a BUAB unless in one of the exception categories listed in National Development Management policy S5. This development would clearly not meet one of the exceptions.

Additionally, the appointed Inspector conducting the ongoing HDC Local Plan Inquiry has already commented regarding modifications to development management policies in the emerging plan that he wishes. In particular with regards to 'countryside protection' he has stated "This policy (14) should be modified to reflect the wording of Policy S5 of the emerging Framework (as finally adopted) which in

effect protects the countryside outside built up areas subject to certain criteria".

Rudgwick parish has 2 sites (with outline permission already approved) allocated in the emerging Local Plan to fully meet it's share of the current District housing allocation. These 2 sites, adjacent to the BUAB and the A281 in Bucks Green, are situated in a far more sustainable location than the Appeal site. There are bus stops and a bus shelter for the 63 bus service between Horsham and Guildford on the A281. The sites are also much closer to village facilities than the Appeal site, as they are within walking distance of the village school, pre school, scout hut, Medical Centre and shops. There are also plans for footpath improvements coming forward to improve Active Travel between the main residential area of Bucks Green and the facilities in Rudgwick itself.

These allocated sites are directly opposite the King George V Playing Fields, which hosts the recreation fields, main Village Hall, Skate Park, Youth Centre, Children's Playground area, a business hosting a children's Role Play Franchise, a Fitness Studio, and also is home to Rudgwick Tennis Club, Cricket Club and Football Club.

The Appeal site situation is a fair walk from the A281 in Bucks Green, and therefore the other village facilities, making it more likely that occupants will be heavily dependent upon cars for their daily lives.

The 2 allocated sites will provide approaching 100 homes, which significantly exceeds the 'at least 66' as stated in the Draft Plan. There will then be no unmet housing need for the parish. For evidence, the main site (DC/25/1269 - outline approved) is likely to deliver up to 90 homes with 40% Affordable, mix compliant with RNP Policy 2 and with some homes lower than 2 storey (RNP Policy 4), so there should be no outstanding residual Rudgwick parish housing need.

Therefore, the presumption in favour of sustainable development in a tilted balance situation should not be applied to this Appeal site as it fails the sustainability aspect required owing to its location. In justification of this assertion, it is clear that the proposed site fails the Locational Sustainability test in HDCs 'Shaping Development in Horsham District' Planning Advice Note (paras 5.10 to 5.12) that was endorsed by HDC on 17th September 2025 pending adoption of a new local plan (now scheduled for January 2027). [Read more](#)

Supporting documents	No documents
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Interested party 2

Comments	REPRESENTATION FROM NEIGHBOURING RESIDENTS ON PLANNING APPEAL REFERENCE: 6009474
	LPA Planning Application Reference: DC/26/0271
	Site: Sussex Topiary, Naldretts Lane, Bucks Green, Rudgwick,

Description of application: Permission in principle for the development of up to nine self-build park homes

This representation is submitted on behalf of the neighbouring residents in and around Naldretts Lane in Bucks Green, Rudgwick. As the immediately impacted community, we are strongly opposed to this proposed speculative development.

Many residents have already registered individual objections to the application. In response to this appeal, we further stress these significant grounds for our opposition:

1. No unmet need for additional housing

Two new sites in Rudgwick have been allocated in the Horsham District Draft Local Plan which will meet the required targets for additional housing in the parish. These sites were chosen as the most suitable and sustainable sites in the Rudgwick/Bucks Green settlement area when all the sites were scrutinised in the 'Call for Sites'.

Both sites have been approved in outline, giving the potential for up to 96 homes over the two sites. This represents a major (~11%) expansion of the local housing supply. The larger of the two sites also provides for up to 40% affordable homes, and a housing mix that includes homes to meet local identified need (less than two storeys).

Forcing an additional, unallocated residential development into the countryside in Naldretts Lane constitutes unnecessary, market-driven sprawl and would not justify the permanent loss of rural character.

2. Urbanisation and Severe Harm to Landscape Character

The Landscape Consultant's report notes that the application site falls within Landscape Character Area G3 – Slinfold and Five Oaks Wooded Farmlands, an area defined by an "overall high sensitivity to change", due to its many landscape qualities and rural character, and where there is a need to "conserve rural undeveloped character."

This report goes on to explicitly conclude that this proposal represents "incremental development which is not respectful of the character and appearance of the surrounding built and natural environment." Development on any scale in this location is not supported on landscape grounds.

Building a permanent residential development of nine park homes adds an unacceptable cumulative urbanising impact to the rural nature of the site. This directly violates Policy 26 (Countryside Protection) of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) and Policy RNP8.2 of the Rudgwick Neighbourhood Development Plan, which stipulates that the scale and massing of new developments must respect the character and appearance of the surrounding built and natural environment.

3. Inadequate foul sewage infrastructure

The application site has no connection to the public foul water sewer and the only means of sewage disposal is currently via an on-site sewage treatment plant. At times, this has proved inadequate and raw or partially treated effluent has flooded into the open ditch bounding Naldretts Lane and, during periods of high rainfall, polluted runoff has run down the lane adjacent to residents' homes.

Adding nine residential units onto this compromised system would exacerbate these overflows and with no indication that this situation would be rectified, we suggest this location is entirely unsuitable for further housing.

4. In conflict with the Rudgwick Settlement Pattern

The site lies entirely outside any defined built-up area boundary and is located in the open countryside. It would not meet any requirements of rural exception policies and would be in breach of Policy 26 of the HDPF, which states that, outside the defined built-up area boundaries, the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside must be protected. In addition, Policy RNP1.2 of the Rudgwick Neighbourhood Development Plan explicitly requires all development to "maintain the settlement pattern in the parish" and "avoid the diminution of a settlement's individual identity." Building a permanent housing estate in a rural paddock in Naldretts Lane would be entirely incongruous.

5. Adverse impact on the setting of Grade II Listed Heritage assets

The landscape report highlights that the application site sits in close, sensitive proximity to three Grade II listed heritage assets:

- Naldrett Farmhouse (Listing ID: 1194712)
- Warhams Cottage (Listing ID: 1026978)
- Warhams (Listing ID: 1194707), one of the oldest, continually inhabited timber-frame buildings in West Sussex and the wider region.

The introduction of permanent residential infrastructure, domestic lighting, activities and associated noise, together with vehicle movements, would permanently degrade the tranquil, historic rural setting of these assets.

6. Highway Safety risks in a single-track lane

As residents who navigate Naldretts Lane daily - by car, by bike, on foot or on horseback - we have repeatedly emphasised that a rural lane like this cannot support the volumes of road traffic that would inevitably result from this development, putting all users at personal risk.

Access to the nine park homes would rely on a narrow, single-track section of Naldretts Lane, with a blind bend half way along it, unlit and with no formal passing places. Traffic routinely meets on the lane, often at the bend, and the risks that this presents to all users will be exacerbated with potentially 18 additional residents' cars, plus delivery and visiting vehicles.

7. Lack of pedestrian sustainability and car dependency

The site sits roughly 850 metres from the built-up boundary of Bucks Green and around a mile from central village services including schools, shops and the health centre. The absence of safe pedestrian infrastructure in the vicinity of the site isolates the location and almost certainly guarantees high reliance on car use, directly contradicting the transport sustainability requirements of the NPPF.

Conclusion

As a community of neighbours, many of whom have chosen to live in Naldretts Lane because of its unspoilt rural nature, we are wholly opposed to this application and the adverse impact it would have on its setting and the wellbeing of neighbours. The independent landscape experts have confirmed that this proposal constitutes an unacceptable incursion into the countryside that contradicts local planning policies. The location is fundamentally unsuitable for the land use proposed.

We respectfully request that the Planning Inspectorate upholds the integrity of our local policies and dismisses this appeal.

Yours faithfully,

Neighbouring Residents living at:

Gerrans, Haven Road
Wanford, Haven Road
Hammersley Hatch, Haven Road
3 Haven Road
4 Haven Road
5 Haven Road
6 Haven Road
7 Haven Road
8 Haven Road
9 Haven Road
2 Wanford Cottages, Naldretts Lane
1 Mill Cottages, Naldretts Lane
2 Mill Cottages, Naldretts Lane
4 Mill Cottages, Naldretts Lane
5 Mill Cottages, Naldretts Lane
6 Mill Cottages, Naldretts Lane
7 Mill Cottages, Naldretts Lane
Warhams, Naldretts Lane
Warhams Cottage, Naldretts Lane
Upper Barn, Naldretts Lane
Quince Farm, Naldretts Lane
Naldretts Farm, Naldretts Lane
Morelands, Naldretts Lane
Pensfold, Naldretts Lane [Read more](#)

Supporting documents

No documents
