



APPEAL REF: 6005786

Land at Colwell Farm, Haywards Heath RH17 7TB

Outline application with all matters reserved except for access, for up to 80 dwellings with associated landscaping, open space, infrastructure and vehicular and pedestrian accesses

Case Management Note

1. This note provides further direction as to the management of the Inquiry following developments which postdate the Case Management Conference (CMC) held 28th April 2026.
2. As detailed within the letter from Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) dated 2nd June 2026 as I understand it the Council considers that it is no longer appropriate to resist the grant of planning permission on the appeal site. The Council has advised that it will not be defending the earlier stated reasons for refusal and will not be submitting evidence to the Inquiry relating to those matters.
3. Whilst I note the position of the Council and the continued engagement with regard to a statement of common ground/planning obligation/conditions it would still be useful if someone from the Council could be present at the Inquiry to address any matters arising or assist with any required clarification, particularly when planning balance matters are considered.
4. I received the complete statement from Protect Colwell Farm Action Group (PCFG) on 19th May 2026 in line with the deadline set out within the earlier CMC summary note. From that statement it appears that the PCFG case is related to main issues of access to services and facilities / trees / Ecology as well as matters relating to broad planning / planning balance matters.
5. The main issues which are contested will be subject to evidence and I am not now planning a round table session on character and appearance/impact on countryside.
6. I note that the appellant intends to compile proofs of evidence on matters which no longer appear to be contested and potentially make witnesses relating to

those matters available for questions at the Inquiry. I am not yet in a position to advise you whether or not I would have any questions on those matters at this stage of the Inquiry process.

7. It would be better if the PCFG witness with regard to Ecology and Trees was available during the first week of the Inquiry. However, had the Inquiry proceeded as originally intended the availability of witnesses only in the second week would not have been likely to draw a lack of agreement. I do not consider that PCFG could have reasonably anticipated MSDC's revised position.
8. Therefore, should PCFG not be able to have an Ecology / Trees witness attend the first week of the Inquiry, those matters will be addressed starting at the beginning of the second week, followed by general planning/planning balance matters.
9. The opening day could incorporate openings, hearing from Interested parties and evidence relating to the main issue of whether the proposal would comply with the development strategy for housing with regard to access to services and facilities.
10. I accept that this leaves the possibility that Inquiry days on the opening week would be underutilised. However, the revised position has led to Inquiry time becoming available and I still consider it very feasible that the Inquiry as a whole can be completed within the originally intended timescale.
11. I also understand that the parties have agreed provision for online closings on 13th August at 9:30am. This provision can be utilised if needed. In any event, I would appreciate the assistance of all parties to complete the Inquiry within the allotted timescale.
12. Please continue to take into account the timetable which has been previously set out. The next deadline is 30th June, and the deadline relates to documents including the Proofs of Evidence.
13. Please once again be reminded that the parties to an Inquiry must at all times behave reasonably and act in a manner to support an effective and timely planning system.

T Burnham

INSPECTOR

19th June 2026