

Sarah Valentine

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 July 2026 14:25
To: planninginfo
Subject: FORMAL OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION DM/26/0303

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Application: DM/26/0303

Proposal: Outline application (all matters reserved except access) for the demolition of an existing commercial building and the erection of up to 260 dwellings, employment floorspace, open space, landscaping and associated infrastructure at Land North of Borers Arms Road, Copthorne.

Introduction

I write to formally object to the above application.

Whilst the need to deliver new housing is recognised, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is clear that sustainable development comprises economic, social and environmental objectives which must be pursued in a mutually supportive way. The proposal fails to achieve an appropriate balance between these objectives and would result in substantial and lasting harm to the character of Copthorne, the living conditions of neighbouring residents, highway safety and the local environment.

The cumulative impacts of this development significantly and demonstrably outweigh its claimed benefits.

1. Conflict with the Character and Appearance of Copthorne

The application proposes a substantial urban extension into an area of open countryside which currently provides an important visual and environmental buffer to the existing settlement.

The NPPF requires developments to be sympathetic to local character, landscape setting and surrounding built form. Similarly, policies within the Mid Sussex District Plan seek to ensure that development responds positively to local distinctiveness and protects the intrinsic character of the countryside.

The proposed development fails these objectives.

The scale of up to 260 dwellings represents an urban form of development that bears little relationship to the existing rural character of Borers Arms Road. Rather than integrating with the village, the proposal would extend built development deep into currently undeveloped land, fundamentally altering the character of the locality.

The resulting urbanisation would permanently erode one of the remaining areas of open countryside that contributes to the identity and setting of Copthorne.

2. Harm to Landscape and Loss of Mature Trees

The application would result in the loss of mature trees and established landscape features that provide significant visual, ecological and environmental benefits.

These trees are particularly valuable because the surrounding area already experiences considerable environmental pressures arising from the proximity of Gatwick Airport and the strategic motorway network.

Mature trees cannot simply be replaced through landscaping conditions.

The environmental value of established woodland and mature tree belts develops over many decades and includes biodiversity, carbon sequestration, air quality improvements, noise attenuation and visual screening.

Their removal would therefore represent permanent environmental harm which is contrary to the environmental objectives of the NPPF and the Government's emphasis upon biodiversity enhancement and climate resilience.

The proposal fails to demonstrate exceptional justification for this loss.

3. Unacceptable Impact upon Residential Amenity

The application would have an unacceptable effect upon neighbouring residential amenity.

My property lies immediately adjacent to the application site and currently benefits from an open outlook across undeveloped land.

Although detailed layout is reserved, the proposed quantum of development makes it inevitable that residential properties will be constructed in close proximity to existing homes.

The proposal would therefore result in:

- a significant loss of openness;
- an overbearing sense of enclosure;
- increased overlooking;
- loss of privacy;
- increased activity immediately adjacent to existing rear gardens; and
- a substantial deterioration in the living conditions currently enjoyed by neighbouring residents.

These impacts conflict with the long-established planning principle that development should provide a good standard of amenity for both existing and future occupiers.

4. Cumulative Noise and Environmental Disturbance

The application significantly underestimates the cumulative environmental impacts upon existing residents.

Properties adjoining the site already experience substantial aircraft noise associated with Gatwick Airport.

Residents therefore already live with an elevated baseline level of environmental disturbance.

This proposal would introduce additional sources of continual noise including:

- construction works over a prolonged period;
- construction traffic;
- additional vehicle movements;

- domestic activity from approximately 260 new dwellings;
- commercial activity associated with the employment space; and
- increased servicing and maintenance traffic.

The cumulative impact would materially worsen residential amenity and significantly reduce the peaceful enjoyment of neighbouring homes.

Planning decisions should consider cumulative effects rather than assessing each source of disturbance in isolation.

5. Highway Safety

The Transport Assessment fails to reflect the existing operational difficulties experienced along Borers Arms Road.

The road already suffers from:

- limited pedestrian infrastructure;
- discontinuous or absent footpaths;
- restricted opportunities for pedestrians to safely access local facilities;
- constrained residential driveways with poor opportunities to safely emerge; and
- existing traffic volumes that already place pressure upon the local highway network.

I have personally witnessed several near collisions involving vehicles entering and leaving residential properties.

Introducing traffic generated by up to 260 additional dwellings would inevitably increase conflict between vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

The proposal therefore conflicts with the NPPF requirement that development should only be permitted where safe and suitable access can be achieved for all users.

6. Unsustainable Transport

One of the fundamental objectives of the planning system is to promote sustainable transport choices.

The application fails this objective.

Residents should be encouraged to walk safely to local community facilities.

Instead, the proposal would make walking increasingly hazardous due to increased traffic volumes and inadequate pedestrian infrastructure.

This is particularly concerning for access to valued community facilities including:

- the Scout Hut;
- local dance clubs;
- Oliver's Wine Bar; and
- other village services.

The likely consequence is greater reliance upon private vehicles, directly conflicting with national planning policy objectives.

7. Construction Impacts and Cumulative Development Pressure

Borers Arms Road has only recently experienced prolonged disruption associated with the construction of a substantial residential care home.

Residents have endured:

- construction traffic;
- mud and debris on the highway;
- dust;
- noise;
- vibration; and
- lengthy periods of disruption.

To introduce another major construction project on the same road before the community has recovered represents an unreasonable cumulative burden on existing residents.

The Planning Authority should give significant weight to the cumulative impact of successive major developments upon local communities.

8. Economic Benefits are Limited and Outweighed by Harm

Whilst the proposal identifies housing delivery and employment floorspace as public benefits, these benefits should not be overstated.

Economic benefits are capable of being delivered on sites that cause significantly less environmental and residential harm.

Conversely, the proposal would impose considerable costs upon the existing community through:

- deterioration in residential amenity;
- increased congestion;
- environmental degradation;
- loss of mature landscape features;
- reduced accessibility to local businesses due to highway safety concerns; and
- pressure upon local infrastructure.

The claimed economic benefits therefore carry only moderate weight and are substantially outweighed by the permanent harm identified above.

Planning Balance

The Planning Authority is required to undertake a balanced assessment of all material considerations.

Whilst the delivery of housing is acknowledged as an important objective, it should not override the requirement to achieve genuinely sustainable development.

In this case the proposal would result in:

- Significant harm to the rural character and appearance of Copthorne.
- Permanent loss of mature trees and valuable landscape features.

- Encroachment into open countryside.
- Material harm to neighbouring residential amenity through overlooking, loss of outlook, enclosure and increased disturbance.
- Serious highway safety concerns arising from existing deficiencies on Borers Arms Road.
- Unsustainable transport arrangements inconsistent with national policy.
- Unacceptable cumulative construction and environmental impacts.
- Public benefits that are insufficient to outweigh the substantial and permanent planning harm.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, the proposal conflicts with the environmental and design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework together with the development plan policies that seek to protect landscape character, residential amenity, highway safety and sustainable patterns of development.

The adverse impacts of the proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits.

Accordingly, I respectfully request that Mid Sussex District Council refuses planning permission for Application **DM/26/0303**.

Many thanks,

[Redacted Signature]

Windyridge, Borers Arms Road, Copthorne, West Sussex, RH10 3LJ

[Redacted Contact Information]