

Joanne Fisher

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk
Sent: 09 June 2025 20:07
To: Joanne Fisher
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application DM/25/1129

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 09/06/2025 8:07 PM.

Application Summary

Address: Land At Foxhole Farm Foxhole Lane Bolney West Sussex

Proposal: Outline application (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved), for the erection of up to 200 residential dwellings, including affordable housing; a community building (use class F1) encompassing land for education provision, together with associated access, ancillary parking and landscaping; the creation of a vehicular access point from the A272 Cowfold Road, and pedestrian and cycle only access to The Street; and creation of a network of roads, footways, and cycleways through the site; together with the provision of countryside open space, children's play areas, community orchard, and allotments; sustainable drainage systems and landscape buffers.

Case Officer: Joanne Fisher

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Customer Details

Address: 4 DIAMOND COTTAGES COWFOLD ROAD BOLNEY

Comments Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour or general public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

Comments: Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to formally object to the planning application DM/25/1129 concerning the proposed development of 200 houses at Foxhole Farm, Bolney.

This development poses serious concerns for the local community and conflicts with numerous policies in both the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan and the Bolney Neighbourhood Plan, as outlined below:

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1. Contrary to Policy DP6 and Policy BOLBB1 - Inappropriate Location

The proposed site lies outside the defined built-up area boundary and is in open countryside. It is not included in the adopted District Plan or the Bolney Neighbourhood Plan. Development should be focused within larger settlements or infill sites in villages to meet local needs, not through large-scale expansion into rural land.

2. Contrary to Policy DP12 and Policy BOL2 - Loss of Countryside Character

The proposal will cause irreversible damage to the countryside, which is valued for its intrinsic character and beauty. There is no justification under the plan's requirements (e.g. agricultural or landscape necessity) to allow development of this scale in open countryside.

3. Contrary to Policy DP26 and Policy BOLD1 - Damage to Village Character

Bolney is a small, historic village with a population of around 650 (2021 Census). The addition of 200 homes-representing a population increase of approximately 60%-would dramatically alter the character, scale, and feel of the village, undermining its identity and rural charm.

4. Fails Policy DP21 - Transport and Infrastructure Concerns

The proposed site lacks sustainable access to essential services and public transport. The 273 bus service is not frequent or reliable enough to support such a development. Most residents would need to rely on private vehicles, adding to traffic and pollution, and increasing risks on narrow rural roads.

5. Inadequate Information on Community Benefits

Although a community hub is proposed, there is little clarity on its purpose or benefit to existing residents. The "Draft Heads of Terms" also lack key details on critical contributions such as affordable housing, school places, and healthcare provision.

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We are fully against this plan.

I would like to state clearly objection to the plan laid out in the plan, it is clear that there are a number of issues which will impact the local community, services, sustainability and general village life that indicate the plan is not 'sound' from a sustainable development perspective.

The plan does not represent sustainable development given the local context and infrastructure, as highlighted in the following points:

Adding this many houses to an existing small village should provide suitable access to services, facilities and infrastructure to meet the daily needs of those living there, present and future. This plan does not provide for suitable infrastructure in this regard.

The current school is already at capacity and the plan does not allow for any additional building or infrastructure to support an additional 200 homes worth of children within the catchment area.

Any new land for educational purposes is not a suitable or sustainable solution as there is no allocation for buildings of teachers that could support the extra pupils.

The Street in the village is the main avenue of travel in and out of the village - on the eastern side, foxhole lane is a single track lane. Access from the A272 will cause significant and

ongoing disruption and higher levels of congestion at the southern end of the village as well as causing disruption to an already very busy East/West road.

Foxhole lane is often already clogged and busy at times of the day due to the Bolney wine estate and reclamation yard up the road. There are very limited passing places, which are just muddy laybys not suitable for the current load of traffic, much less an increased volume which is to be expected when congestion occurs on the A272. I have already experienced a number of issues when walking up this road with my daughter in the buggy with near misses and cars going fast past walkers and road bikers.

The Street is also a single lane through the village center next to the pub with no passing places. There are no pavements in a significant section of the village. An increase in traffic here will significantly impact residents and also cause safety concerns to those using the pedestrian walkways which are in the road. Even with the current traffic load, walking along the pedestrian walkways here are challenging especially with a buggy or with children (this is the main access route to the primary school for many). I have often had to move out of the way of oncoming traffic as the road is not wide enough to take two-way traffic, even when one is pedestrian.

The village currently has a minimal public transport connection - which is not planned to grow or realistically supported by this plan . This means that the additional 200 houses will need to be self -transporting with private cars, greatly increasing traffic in the area and the above issues. Walking or cycling to local town centres is not feasible and is frankly dangerous if using the roads.

Cycleways in and around the village are limited to bridleways and the main roads. The A272 is a very unsafe road to cycle on to get to either Haywards Heath or Cowfold to access services. I have done a triathlon on the A272 and had cars pass at high speed in both directions very close - this is a road to be avoided on a bike. However, in avoiding it, there are no other viable direct routes to nearby services.

Road Safety

The A272 between the traffic lights and the end of Brookside Cottages (at the end of Bolney Cross) is already unsafe. As a resident living on this road and having to cross it to get to our cars, we have seen countless crashes, near misses, high speed vehicles, overtaking in front of the cross roads, road bikes trying to cross from Chapel Lane to Foxhole Lane (a popular bike circuit) and having near misses. The road is busy and clogged at rush hours, drivers often have to apply brakes and skidding is frequent (hence the red high friction surface) because drivers come from a 60MPH zone to the east and then have a line of traffic ahead of them as a driver is turning at the crossroads or into the petrol station. This is already a source of numerous crashes and difficulties - to add another 200 houses of cars plus the added complications of other crossings and entrances will certainly cause

increased danger
to road users and inhabitants on what is already a dangerous piece of road.

I can provide an informal survey of Road Traffic Incidents collated over part of 2023. As a resident at Diamond Cottages I work from home a few days a week, whenever I heard a crash or brakes screeching and was able to go outside I recorded some data which shows consistent and regular incidents many of which are not reported to the police and therefore go unrecorded. Please note that this is absolutely not a complete record as many times I was not able to leave work to take pictures/see what was happening or was not at home. We have often found crashed cars in the parking at the bottom of foxhole lane which are then later picked up, in most incidents the Police are not in attendance and therefore the incident is not recorded, however even in this short summary we highlight the existing danger to road users, road bikers and pedestrians alike without the significant added complications of additional features on this road.

The plan to add a ghost lane near the garage is massively impractical and will be dangerous - you are trying to fit in too much into a small length of straight road. To the West the majority of crashes happen at the crossroads as people fail to see upcoming traffic stopped to turn in to the garage. The same happens from the East as cars round the bend and then are faced with a line of traffic coming out of the garage and onto the road as there is limited space on the forecourt. When the tanker is delivering fuel the situation is worse as drivers plan to make a quick exit off the road to the petrol station, see at the last moment that the cones are out and a tanker is blocking the way and then swerve back onto the road again. To add another traffic feature in this already busy and accident high area is dangerous and will lead to many issues in an already difficult area. Worth also noting that the speed limit of 40mph is often not applied so new estate residents will have to make a quick turn across 40mph+ traffic if coming from the M23 (the most likely direction of travel for most users).

The current traffic lights are also not safe - the road is a 40MPH zone, and as such cars come round the corner at speed without realising that ahead is a red light. Many drivers don't see it as its round the bend. At the end of the corner (Westbound) the driver then sees the red light but is still at 40MPH and they often struggle to stop. We have had incidents of drivers skidding to a halt at the lights (while we are crossing), with the car behind nearly going into them. We also heard of a parent and child that were hit by a car on this crossing on a red light due to the same issue. Whenever we cross now we wait for the red light and then for the first car to have actually stopped before we cross. An increased traffic loading here and additional road systems/entrances will increase this existing danger.

In an already very busy and sometimes very congested area which sees big trucks, vans, cars and bikes all converging within a short stretch today, this seems like it will drastically worsen the section in terms of congestion, road safety. With the expectation of growing traffic levels in the area of the coming years I believe this will see the current already stretched and dangerous piece of road become more dangerous and difficult for residents and commuters and then continue to get worse with increasing traffic levels. Clearly this planning cannot be considered sustainable development or consider the future needs of the populace.

Generally I would already not let my children walk or ride to the school even along the pavements of the A272 or the Street due to safety concerns - increased pressure here is going to worsen the problem.

There are no facilities, shops, healthcare or other services planned or available to support an additional 200 houses.

It is already a challenge to get onto a medical surgery list - we had trouble getting into Cowfold which is the nearest doctors surgery - with no plans for additional services the pressure on local GPs will increase resulting in poorer healthcare options for those in the village and surrounding areas.

The current garage (the only place to stop to get milk or small items) is often full, with the forecourt overfull with cars without an additional 200 houses worth of people and potentially another additional 3-400 local cars. On many occasions the petrol forecourt traffic then backs up onto the A272 with cars parked in queue along the eastbound carriageway in the path of cars and trucks coming round the corner at 40MPH. This is already dangerous, additional traffic load and pedestrian traffic from new houses will cause a dangerous and unsafe environment for all road users.

Future sustainability - an allotment, small orchard, country park etc really does not much value when compared to an additional 200 homes added to this area. A sustainable community that is growing needs actual shops, services and infrastructure to support it. In addition please consider:

Increased risk of flooding > More buildings will create additional run-off on low-lying areas on the edge of the field, particularly to the east and south, which are already flooded or brim-full after heavy rain, affecting houses and potentially roads.

Loss of valuable agricultural land. The nearby vineyards and orchards show the land has viable and essential agricultural potential that would be permanently lost.

Such a large development close to the AONB will cause a permanent loss of wildlife as habitats and food sources will become scarcer. Congestion will divert traffic to the small roads of the AONB, increasing the risk to wildlife.

Local secondary schools locally are oversubscribed. There are limited bus services, in practice will mean that more people using cars locally for school run, this contradicts the '20 minute neighbourhood' ideals

In conclusion, this development is unsustainable, out of scale, and in direct conflict with established planning policies. I strongly urge the council to reject this application in order to preserve Bolney's unique character and protect its countryside for future generations.

Yours sincerely,



Kind regards