

Sarah Valentine

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 May 2026 20:57
To: planninginfo
Subject: Objection: DM/25/3129 Objection to Revised Application – Proposed Development at Borde Hill Lane, Haywards Heath

[REDACTED]
Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to formally object to the revised planning application for residential development at Borde Hill Lane, Haywards Heath, which now proposes a reduced number of dwellings and a marginally smaller roundabout.

While I acknowledge these minor changes, they do not address the fundamental issues previously raised. The proposal remains unsustainable, contrary to planning policy, and likely to cause irreversible harm to the local environment, landscape and community.

1. Conflict with the Development Plan and Spatial Strategy

The site continues to be unallocated for housing within the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan. Granting permission would fundamentally undermine the plan-led system and conflict with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires decisions to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The location lies outside the defined settlement boundary for Haywards Heath, directly contradicting the adopted spatial strategy that focuses major growth in Burgess Hill and other designated areas. Allowing piecemeal, speculative development here risks setting a damaging precedent for incremental urban sprawl.

Although the number of dwellings has been reduced, the development still fails to meet the principles of the “20-minute neighbourhood” referenced in the emerging District Plan. Key services such as secondary education, healthcare and employment remain beyond safe, practical walking or cycling distance, guaranteeing continued car dependency and undermining sustainability goals set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2. Harm to Landscape and the High Weald Setting

The site remains a sensitive area forming part of the setting of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The smaller roundabout and marginal density reduction do not remove the fundamental visual and landscape harm.

Urbanising this rural approach with built form and engineered infrastructure would erode the tranquillity and rural character of Borde Hill Lane, weakening the landscape buffer that currently separates Haywards Heath from the AONB.

3. Flood Risk and Site Unsuitability

The land continues to experience flooding and waterlogging. Minor layout adjustments cannot resolve the inherent flood risk of the site. Works to accommodate drainage and hard surfacing will further displace water, increasing flood risk both within the new development and for existing neighbouring properties.

Removal of mature vegetation — which provides critical natural drainage and flood attenuation — would exacerbate these risks. The mitigation required demonstrates the unsuitability of this site for development.

4. Biodiversity and Environmental Harm

This area remains ecologically rich, supporting birds of prey, owls and other wildlife. Habitat loss from construction and urbanisation would fragment existing wildlife corridors.

Claims of “biodiversity net gain” are unconvincing given the maturity and ecological complexity of the existing environment. Replacement planting cannot replicate established systems such as carbon sequestration, flood absorption, and habitat connectivity developed over decades.

The nearby Penlands Green development demonstrates that transplanted landscaping struggles to establish successfully and causes long-term ecological decline. Reported badger deaths on newly created roads illustrate the tangible risks of development-related habitat disruption.

5. Highway Safety and Traffic Impact

Even with a reduced roundabout size, the proposed access remains disproportionate and out of keeping with the rural character of Borde Hill Lane. The additional traffic generated by over 100 dwellings will significantly intensify congestion on already constrained roads.

The design could encourage higher approach speeds and raises serious highway safety concerns for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. Cycling remains unsafe given existing road widths, poor visibility and traffic levels.

6. Pedestrian Safety

Safe pedestrian connectivity remains wholly inadequate. No controlled crossing forms part of the scheme, and the large roundabout design worsens existing hazards.

Reaching key amenities such as the town centre or railway station still requires multiple crossings on Balcombe Road, where pavements are narrow and discontinuous. Increased pedestrian activity in such conditions heightens the risk of serious accidents, particularly during school travel times.

7. Impact on Existing Residents

The revised scheme would still bring a substantial uplift in vehicle movements, noise, and light pollution. The rural and peaceful character of the area would be permanently changed.

Any perceived benefit of the smaller roundabout does not outweigh the ongoing impacts of intensified traffic, emissions, and potential antisocial behaviour associated with a large, unsupervised junction.

8. Pressure on Local Infrastructure and Services

Residents of the new development would depend on facilities within Haywards Heath despite being outside the settlement boundary. Local services — including schools, healthcare and water supply — are already operating at or near capacity.

Water shortages and usage restrictions in recent years highlight the fragility of local supply and the need for growth to be directed to areas with appropriate resilience.

Local schools such as Harlands Primary and Warden Park Academy remain oversubscribed.

Additional families would likely travel further afield, adding to traffic pressure and undermining sustainable travel targets.

Conclusion

Although the applicant has reduced the scale of development slightly, the proposal still represents unsustainable, policy-noncompliant growth in an inappropriate countryside location. It conflicts with the adopted and emerging District Plans, harms the setting of the High Weald AONB, increases flood and highway risks, and places undue pressure on infrastructure and community wellbeing.

The revisions do not overcome the fundamental objections previously raised. The environmental and social costs far outweigh any perceived housing benefits in this context.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that planning permission be refused.

Yours faithfully,

[Redacted Signature]

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