

Sarah Valentine

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 11 July 2025 16:03
To: planninginfo
Subject: Application No : DM/25/1630 - Hurst Farm, Hurstwood Lane, Haywards Heath, West Sussex

[REDACTED]
Subject: Comment on the Planning Application – Proposed Development of 375 Homes, School, and Graveyard

Dear Planning Officer,

I am writing to submit my comment to the planning application for the proposed development at Hurst Farm, Hurstwood Lane, Haywards Heath, West Sussex – *Application No DM/25/1630* - which includes 375 new houses, a school, and a graveyard.

Effect on Appearance and Countryside Intrusion The proposed development would significantly alter the character and appearance of the surrounding area, which is currently defined by open countryside and natural vistas. While Haywards Heath does benefit from traditional town parks such as Victoria Park, Clair Hall Park, and Borde Hill—with structured amenities like playgrounds and tennis courts—the fields around Hurst Barn offer something altogether different: a real sense of connection to nature. It's not uncommon to see deer, ducks, rabbits and an array of birds nesting in hedgerows and trees. Notably, barn owls have also been spotted gliding silently over the fields at dusk—an increasingly rare sight in modern landscapes. These fields are a vital pocket of biodiversity and tranquillity, offering local residents a chance to experience genuine countryside without having to venture far. To lose them would be to lose a valuable retreat that complements—but is not replaced by—formal green spaces.

Quality of Design and Overbearing Impact The design of the houses is, quite simply, non-existent. The application lacks any credible architectural detail, offering no visual plans, no information on materials, and no indication of how the new buildings would relate to the existing townscape. It's difficult to assess what is being proposed because very little has actually been presented. This vagueness suggests a rushed or speculative scheme that fails to meet the standards of thoughtful development.

Beyond the absence of clarity, the overall layout feels overly ambitious and filled with wishful thinking rather than practical understanding. This raises serious concerns about sustainability, liveability, and long-term value for the community. Moreover, the massing and density appear excessive, likely resulting in a significant overbearing impact and a loss of outlook for neighbouring residents.

Questionable Economic Benefit While proponents argue that new housing and a school may stimulate the local economy, such benefits are speculative and must be weighed against long-

term strain on infrastructure, public services, and the environmental cost. Economic gain should not come at the expense of community identity and cohesion.

Strain on Public Services Public services are already on their knees. Access to health care is extremely difficult, with long wait times and limited availability of appointments. Increasing the local population will only worsen the situation, placing yet more pressure on already overstretched services. The proposal risks reducing the quality of essential care and support for existing residents.

Highway Safety, School Traffic, and Lack of Transport Infrastructure With 375 houses proposed, we can reasonably expect a minimum of 375 additional vehicles. Our roads are already congested, and the addition of so many cars would further burden an already stretched transport network. Public transport options are limited to a single bus per hour, which is insufficient to serve the needs of the new population. Furthermore, the nearest train station is a 45-minute walk from the Fox and Hound pub—hardly a feasible commute for most, especially when followed by an hour-long train journey. Realistically, few will opt for this route, making car travel the default—and the resulting traffic a serious concern for highway safety and air quality.

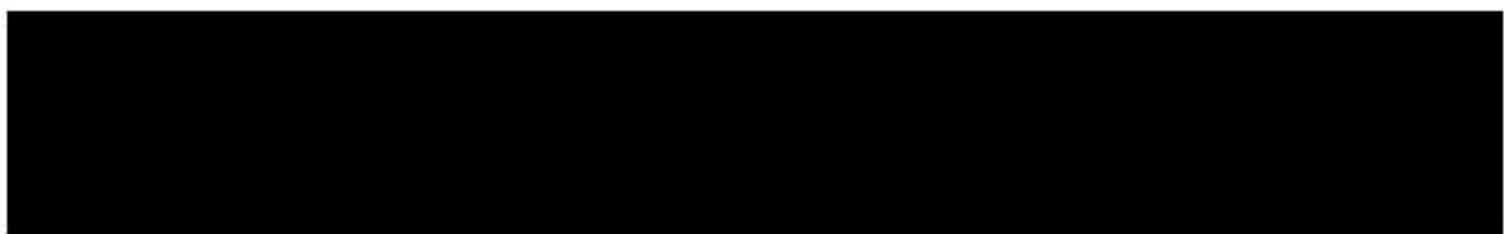
The school itself will drive even more traffic into the area, particularly at peak times. The reality is that most parents do not walk their children to school. With Fox Hill Road already so busy, it's unpleasant—and more importantly, unsafe—for pedestrians. The pavement is far too narrow to accommodate adults and young children walking side by side. Additionally, Haywards Heath lacks any proper cycle paths, making cycling a dangerous and unappealing option for families. Compounding this, drivers frequently speed along Fox Hill, putting cyclists and pedestrians alike at serious risk.

To make matters worse, the design of the development as a close—with only a single entrance and no internal connection to surrounding areas—makes it completely isolated from the rest of town. There is no provision for cross-estate walking or cycling routes, cutting off residents from amenities and discouraging sustainable transport. This cul-de-sac approach risks creating a disconnected enclave that undermines community cohesion and walkability.

Noise and Disturbance Fox Hill is already a very busy road. The constant flow of traffic has a real and direct impact on residents' wellbeing. Personally, I cannot sleep with the window open, as the noise from passing vehicles regularly wakes me up. Increasing the number of homes—and thereby cars—will exacerbate this issue dramatically. The noise generated during construction and once the development is occupied will fundamentally diminish the peace and quiet that our area once enjoyed.

In light of the above concerns, I strongly urge the planning authority to reject this application in its current form. Any future proposals should be reconsidered with genuine community consultation and respect for the unique character of our area.

Yours sincerely,


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