

Steven King
Planning Officer
Mid-Sussex District Council
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
RH16 1SS

DM/25/3129: Outline planning application for the erection of up to 125 dwellings, together with the provision of landscaping, open space, and associated development works, with access from Balcombe Road. All matters reserved except for access.

Location: Land At Borde Hill Lane, Haywards Heath, West Sussex (Sugworth Farm)

24 February 2026

Dear Mr King

I am writing to place on record my objections to the proposed development of 125 houses at Sugworth Farm, Haywards Heath.

As a long-standing resident of Barnmead I have seen the beautiful rural area that we moved to 45 years ago slowly eroded by an urban spread. My husband and I have also experienced and lived through the emotion, chaos and turmoil of large-scale building projects such as Mill Stream Meadow and Penland Farm. We are now again faced with the prospect of more urban development on a green field site and the chaos it will bring. We can only sympathise with the residents that will now be affected.

It was clear years ago that when Penland Farm was first discussed, Sugworth Farm was also under consideration. This became more evident when Penland was finished and a dropped curb inserted on the road leading off the roundabout to the access gate at Sugworth Farm. It wasn't a case of if but when. Wait a couple years until the locals had "calmed down and accepted" Penland - then begin "phase 2". Do Fairfax see the local residents as fools. Glossy brochures, emotive writing do not cover up land grab for profit.

I have read the objections already posted and looked at the plans / diagrams of the proposed scheme. I am not technically minded, therefore cannot write eloquently about my objections but they agree with all the other objectors' reasons.

- 1) Flooding
- 2) Increased traffic
- 3) Damage to wildlife habitat.
- 4) Infrastructure

1) Flooding – From personal knowledge Barnmead residents fought hard to stop Penland builders diverting the run-off water from the fields into Scrase Stream. But our local knowledge was ignored and we were told it would be the 1 in a 100-year event that might cause future problems. Until Penland estate was built we had not had flooding in this area since the building of the holding tank at the bottom of Balcombe Road.

Now every time there is a torrential downpour we anxiously watch as Scrase Stream becomes a torrent. Plus, we wait for Barnmead's inadequate drains to overflow, onto the pavement then into the garages of the lower end of the road. This is partly due to the culvert that runs under one of the houses from the road into Scrase Stream being backfilled with the torrent of water that Scrase stream becomes. The builders either chose to ignore this or were unaware?

Sometime during the last year or so the flooding in Harlands/Turners Mill Road returned making some of the houses inhabitable for many months. The balancing pond in Harlands school field built to alleviate this was so overgrown and the mechanism rusted that it was useless. Evidently the promised management of this has never happened.

Mill Stream Meadow was the flood plain for Scrase Stream. These houses have been flooded in the past as was Harlands House and businesses in Burrell Road which continue to be so. Similarly, Scrase Stream runs behind College road onto Lindfield and beyond. – Further flooding. Unless the new development is adequately managed there is going to be a “knock on effect” from the increased water flow and “run offs” especially with the oversized roundabout and steep land.

Reading the objections from people living on Penland estate there also appears to be flooding in that area. This whole area is riddled with streams (some underground) all interjoining. To build more houses on a downward sloping site is asking for flooding problems.

Sugworth Farm slopes down towards Fairfield Way and Orchard Close. Unless the runoff from the Sugworth estate is adequately designed and managed they are going to have similar flooding problems.

1a) Sewerage: When Penland Farm Estate was first proposed Southern Water stated that there was inadequate capacity to cope with extra sewerage. How do Fairfax propose to address this ongoing issue.

It is bad enough to cope with water flooding without the possibility of sewerage being added to this.

1b) Supply of fresh water. Will there be adequate supplies available for another 125 houses. We are already seeing drought conditions with their associated problems.

More houses, more demand, more failures.

2) Traffic - When I first moved here – the Balcombe Road was a quiet rural road as was Hanlye Lane. In fact, as it was so quiet I used to safely walk down Hanlye Lane from the old Cuckfield hospital with pushchair and toddler. Not anymore! Over the years the traffic has increased exponentially on all roads to the point where it is now dangerous, especially at peak times, to attempt to cross the Balcombe Road. This is exacerbated further as the lack of pavements necessitate the need to criss cross the road to reach the junction of Penland/Balcombe roads.

As was found with the Penland Farm development contractors' lorries to Sugworth Farm will have to use the local roads, which are not built for this type of heavy traffic. Witness the state of the local roads. Also, there is a risk to the children who attend Harlands School when contractors' lorries use Penland Road

Due to the amount of traffic travelling down the Balcombe Road car drivers attempting to exit either entrance to Barnmead find it extremely difficult and frustrating. With more cars on the road this is only going to get worse. Especially with the addition of contractors' lorries

More houses, more traffic, more potential accidents.

2a) The Roundabout

The expansion of the existing large roundabout seems to be totally out of proportion to the size of the development it will serve. Admittedly the present roundabout has alleviated the accidents that occurred from the previous T junction of Hanlye Lane /Balcombe Rd/Borde Hill Lane, but at the expense of the rural nature of this area. An expanded roundabout will just make the area more urban and destroy any remaining rurality with the associated destruction of trees and woodland. As experience has shown, with the building of the Penland Farm roundabout, this new enhanced roundabout will bring yet more disruption to local businesses at Borde Hill, local residents and road users, due to lengthy road closures (3 months?), let alone the noise and associated environmental pollution to the nearby existing houses.

3) Damage to Wildlife Habitat.

The area is only just recovering from the Penland Farm development and now more wanton destruction (just for profit) is to be inflicted on this area. Not only the irreplaceable loss of mature trees and woodland but the habitat of the numerous wildlife that live amongst the hedgerows and fields.

If one walks slightly past the junction of Penland Rd and Balcombe Road there is a beautiful view over the farm gate going across the fields to Sugworth Farm buildings. This piece of rural countryside will be lost to future generations.

4) Infrastructure

The addition of a further 125 houses is only going to add to the pressure on the already inadequate infrastructure. I don't think anyone who lives in this area can be unaware of the oversubscribed schools, the lack of GP's and the subsequent inability to book appointments. Lack of public transport. Lack of police. The hospitals are over stretched.

More houses, more people, more lack of facilities available

Summary

MSDC planning please listen to the deep concerns of your residents. Throw this application out as totally unsuitable for the local area. The only people to "profit" will be Fairfax homes, the losers will be the residents, the future generations and the wildlife.

Yours faithfully


30 Barnmead

Haywards Heath

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