

Steven King

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk
Sent: 21 February 2026 16:05
To: Steven King
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application DM/26/0303

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 21/02/2026 4:05 PM.

Application Summary

Address: Land North Of Borers Arms Road Copthorne West Sussex RH10 3LH

Proposal: Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for access for the demolition of an existing commercial building and the erection of up to 260 dwellings, up to 1,700sqm of employment floorspace E(c)(iii), E(g)(i)(ii)(iii), car parking, landscaping, open space, and associated development works, with access from Copthorne Bank and Borers Arms Road.

Case Officer: Steven King

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address: 6 Oaklands Drive Copthorne Crawley

Comments Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour or general public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

Comments: Proposed Roundabouts Farm development. References DM/26/0303, 2025/1376 and DOM013

The proposed development site known as Copthorne Meadows is scarce Green Belt habitat:-
- The land in question is known as "unimproved meadow" and that environment has declined by 90% in the last century [source; Surrey County Council Natural Environment Team Manager].

- The site has SNCI designation. That, in itself, doesn't attract protective legislation but for a council to approve building on it wouldn't sit well with the obligation for councils to "conserve and enhance the environment".

- According to TDC's own site-based ecology assessment, the developers illustrative plan will necessitate piercing the linear broad-leaved woodland hedgerows for the on-site roadways. That will create breaks in the wildlife "corridors" provided by the [currently] continuous hedgerows and, consequently, cause species populations to be isolated and, thereby, not sustainable.

- The TDC ecology assessment goes on to list the facts that some of the oak trees that make up the hedgerows are possibly veteran. There are certainly many oak trees with boles

exceeding 50cm in diameter. Thanks to the nature of elderly oak trees, bat roosts are present and bat foraging flights are common within the fields.

- There are 53 "species of interest" recorded for the site.
- There are active Badger setts within the proposed site.
- Native Bluebells [not European introductions] are growing in patches, though these are somewhat diminished as a result of the repeated "flaying" of the fields over recent years.
- Various herptiles have been recorded repeatedly over the years. All of which have protected status.
- West Sussex Wildlife Trust support our objection to development on the site.
- The Surrey Botanical Society are seeking better management and protection for the site.
- The Badger Trust are already involved in helping us to identify the active Badger setts.

The developer admits within their vast application documentation that it is not possible to mitigate for species loss on the site. They claim that a nearby field will mitigate the loss of species, or, possibly, they'll purchase "Habitat Units" from off-site providers but there is nothing to say that these Habitat Units will be anywhere near Burstow [or even Copthorne]. So it's our wildlife diversity that they're playing fast and loose with.

Within the planning application, the developer has answered "no" to the question "Has there been any loss (or degradation) of any onsite habitat(s), resulting from activities carried out before the date the onsite pre-development biodiversity value was calculated?" [since January 2020]. However, the applicant's own consultant [The Ecology Co-op] states that; "In late June 2023, it was discovered that most of the roofing felt mats had been destroyed due to flail mowing of all of Land North of Borers Arms Road, which took place without prior knowledge of Fairfax Acquisitions Ltd." This contradicts the claim by Fairfax that the land wasn't flayed after 2020. In fact the land has been cynically flayed on multiple occasions over the last 6-7 years. On at least one occasion, the flaying was undertaken during the night!

As far as flood risk is concerned, the developers own consultants admit that "... infiltration drainage is unlikely to be feasible at this site...", as test pits dug around the proposed site failed to drain. Indeed, they filled up with more water from the surrounding substrate. So where will the additional surface water go? The developer offers no realistic or practical solutions.

Aside from the catastrophic ecological impact [some of which is enumerated above] there are the social impacts to consider too:-

- There is already significant development on the other side of Copthorne and, until the consequent impact of those 500 dwellings has settled down, it seems to me impossible for a meaningful, accurate impact assessment of the Roundabouts Farm development of another 260 dwellings to be carried out.
- It is currently verging on the impossible for any new residents to be accepted onto the register of any local doctors practice, let alone over 1,000 extra people populating the new development already completed. What hope would another several hundred new residents from the proposed Roundabouts Farm development have?
- Local schools are already full and the only places being added are in handfuls each year. Certainly not in the hundreds that are needed to service the current new development, let alone the additional scores of school places needed if the Roundabouts Farm development gets the go-ahead too. The current average number of children per household with children [42.3%] is 1.7 [source: Office of National Statistics], so the applicants proposed development will house approximately 187 children. Obviously, it will be someone's responsibility to find places for children to be educated but bussing the kids about, or, more likely, parents driving the children to/from school will simply add to the already congested roads around Copthorne.
- The National Centre for Social Research states that Surrey generates around 1.5 cars per household, so we can expect 260 additional houses to generate 390 additional vehicles vying for space on Copthorne Bank and Borers Arms Road, together with creating "rat-runs" on all adjoining roads [Knowle Drive, Newtown, Church Road, Church Lane, The Green, etc, etc], as drivers search out routes to Crawley, Redhill and Gatwick employment centres.

In 2017, Tandridge District Council published its Local Plan [Sites Consultation] document, as a guide to key planning decisions up to 2033. The Foreword to the document, provided by Councillor Martin Fisher, includes the statement "... we want to build the right type of development in the right places and make sure that The Green Belt is protected from inappropriate development." The site in question was then referred to as DOM013 and the accompanying notes for that reference clearly state that "Taking into account the available evidence gathered to date, the site is ruled out from further consideration through the Local Plan process and would not be subject to the exceptional circumstances test". I contend that the "... available evidence ..." has moved on considerably since that foreword was written by Mr Fisher and the additional evidence only strengthens the case against the development going

ahead.

So, what is the alternative? If Copthorne Meadows is an inappropriate proposal, is not suitable for exclusion from the Green Belt, is not sustainable and had been previously turned down for development [the latest being in March 2019 (letter from James Amos to Rodway Planning Consultancy refers)], where can we look for an area that could satisfy the Tandridge housing need for years to come? It seem to me that the obvious candidate is Redhill Aerodrome, which is substantially within Tandridge District. The aerodrome hasn't turned a profit in many years and is perfectly sited adjacent to both a main railway line and to the M23 and is more than 10 times the size of the Fairfax proposed site. Whereas Copthorne Meadows is designated Green Belt [with SNCI status], is part of the only 10% remaining "Unimproved Meadows" in the UK, is bordered by minor roads that are already beyond breaking point [both literally and metaphorically] and can offer potential residents nothing but resource headaches in terms of medical and educational services.

I have been a countryman all my life. If I wanted to live in a conurbation I'd move to one. I certainly don't want a speculative developer to bring a conurbation to me.

In short, therefore, I believe that the proposed Roundabouts Farm development should retain its "Tier 4" category and be rejected as a potential site for any new housing.



Kind regards