

Steven King

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 February 2026 11:35
To: Steven King
Subject: Formal Objection to Planning Application DM/25/3129 Proposed Development of 125 New Homes – Land North of Balcombe Road, Haywards Heath (15-Feb-26)

[REDACTED]

Dear Mr King,

Formal Objection to Planning Application DM/25/3129 Proposed Development of 125 New Homes – Land North of Balcombe Road, Haywards Heath (15-Feb-26)

We write as neighbouring residents to formally object to planning application DM/25/3129, proposing the construction of 125 new homes on land north of Balcombe Road, Haywards Heath.

We outline our key objections below.

1. Access, Traffic and Highway Safety

a. Construction Traffic – Immediate Safety Risks

Although a Highways Assessment has been provided for the proposed entrance (Southlodge Roundabout), the report fails to acknowledge or address the existing constraints on the Balcombe Road and the impacts of additional construction traffic. This road is already under significant pressure due to its narrow width, deteriorating surface condition, limited passing places, and informal pedestrian crossing points between Old Wickham Road and Barnmead.

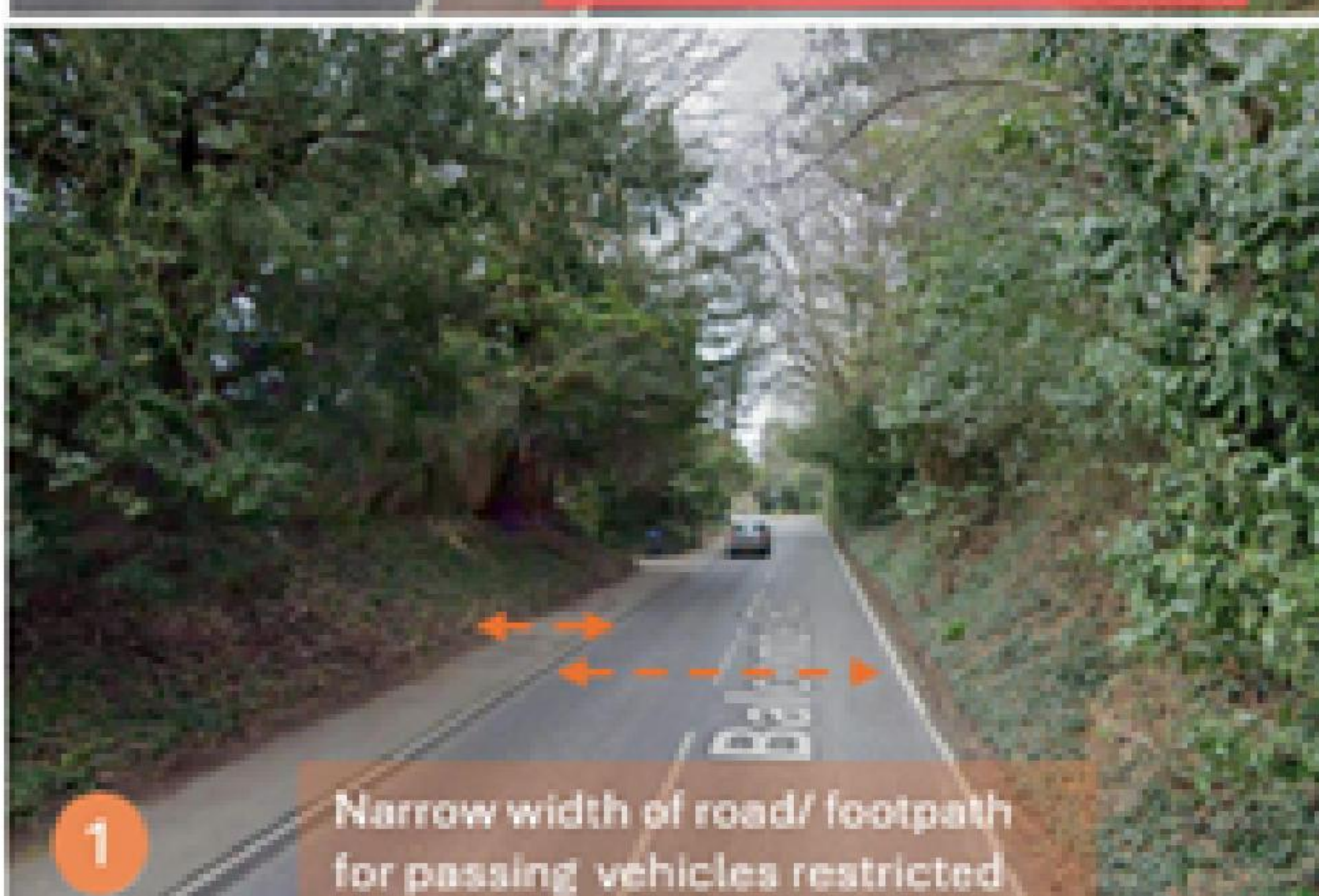
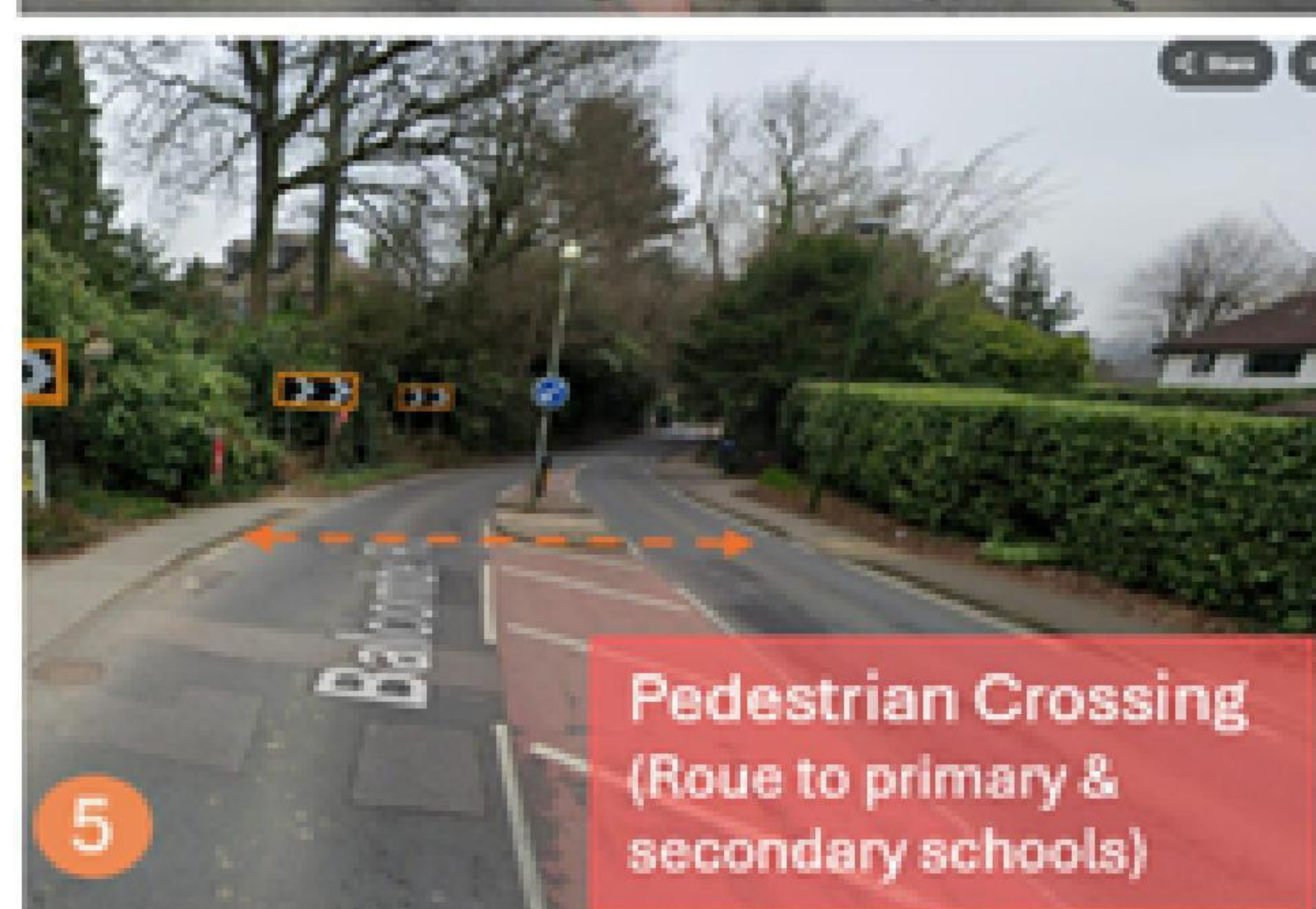
Introducing additional heavy construction traffic will substantially increase these risks. The road is not designed to accommodate increased HGV movements, and doing so without major upgrades would create unacceptable safety issues, particularly for schoolchildren who cross the Balcombe Road daily.

In its current condition, the route is **unable to safely accommodate construction traffic** without substantial upgrades. Essential improvements would be required to address the **inadequate road width, poor surface condition, insufficient surface-water drainage, and the absence of adequate footpath provision with clear lighting**. Additionally, the route lacks **clear, formalised, and controlled pedestrian crossing points**, posing significant risks to residents, **schoolchildren**, and other vulnerable road users.

The screenshots provided below highlight key routes of serious concern relating both to the temporary construction phase and the long-term impacts that would persist thereafter.

Without a **comprehensive and credible Road Safety Audit**, covering not only the immediate site access but also the approach roads to the existing South Lodge Roundabout, including **vehicle-movement analysis, swept-path assessment, street-lighting review, and a detailed Construction Traffic Management Plan**, we consider the proposal unsafe





b. Permanent Access Arrangements – Insufficient Detail

The application provides insufficient detail regarding the long-term access arrangements and their impact on Balcombe Road, neighbouring roads, and surrounding communities. It is unclear how safe and practical access to the lower part of Balcombe Road will be maintained once the development is fully occupied.

c. Road Condition, Safety and Ongoing Maintenance

Existing infrastructure is already struggling. Increased traffic, particularly HGVs, will accelerate surface degradation. The section of Balcombe Road opposite Fairfield Way is already eroding due to poor drainage, and further heavy vehicle use will worsen this significantly. These issues must be fully assessed before any approval is considered.

We expect clear, documented evidence that both the temporary (construction-phase) and permanent access arrangements have undergone a full and comprehensive Highways Assessment and **Road Safety Audit**.

This must include consideration of the full access route along Balcombe Road, down to and beyond the Mill Green Road rail bridge, with appropriate safety measures identified and implemented. As a minimum, the assessment must evaluate:

- Traffic volumes and the impact of peak-time congestion

- The suitability and adequacy of existing road and pavement widths
- Pedestrian safety at key crossing points, particularly at Old Wickham Road and Barnmead
- Long-term maintenance implications for the local highway network

In the absence of this level of analysis, the application fails to demonstrate that safe, appropriate, or sustainable access can be achieved both during construction and thereafter.

2. Insufficient Local Infrastructure Capacity

a. Water Supply

Ardingly Reservoir supports around 60,000 homes, yet local residents continue to experience supply interruptions. The 2025 hosepipe ban, lifted only at the end of January 2026 despite prolonged heavy rainfall, highlights the fragility of the existing system. Regular leaks already disrupt supply across the area, demonstrating that current infrastructure is barely coping with existing demand.

Adding further residential development without clearly defined and secured mitigation measures will place unsustainable pressure on a network that is already under-performing.

b. Education Provision

Local schools are at or near capacity, and the application provides no credible plan for accommodating additional pupils. We request sight of any assessment demonstrating projected pupil numbers and existing school capacity.

c. Healthcare Capacity

Local GP surgeries and primary care services are already operating beyond capacity, with routine appointments frequently taking over three months to secure.

Adding further population demand without corresponding service expansion directly undermines a “patient-first” approach and will place unacceptable strain on both primary and acute care provision.

This pressure will extend to the nearby Princess Royal Hospital, which is already experiencing documented challenges in emergency capacity and wider service performance.

Together, these factors indicate that local healthcare infrastructure is **not** in a position to absorb the additional demand generated by this development, and no evidence has been provided to demonstrate that safe or sustainable healthcare access can be maintained.

3. Planning Policy – Brownfield First

National and local planning policy requires brownfield sites to be prioritised before greenfield land is released. This proposal does not demonstrate that all brownfield alternatives have been fully explored.

a. Environmental Impact

The site is valuable greenfield land supporting wildlife, biodiversity, and the rural character of the locality. Development would result in permanent environmental loss.

b. Landscape and Visual Impact – Adverse Impact

The site lies immediately adjacent to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and the proposed development would break the existing landscape continuity that currently provides essential visual setting and acts as a buffer to areas of high environmental value. Such encroachment would erode local character and diminish the amenity enjoyed by existing residents.

The site also forms part of the landscape described in Historic England’s listing for Borde Hill’s Grade II* parkland, which states that “to the east, the site’s parkland and woodland merge into the adjacent undulating, wooded farmland,” referring specifically to the land at Sugworth Farm.

This proposed development would fundamentally disrupt that established historic and natural setting.

4. Pressure on Wider Infrastructure and Community Services

The proposed development will place additional pressure on services already operating at or beyond capacity, including:

- **Transport:** Overcrowded and often unreliable bus and rail services
- **Emergency Services:** Police, fire and ambulance response times already below national targets
- **Utilities:** Strained electricity supply, broadband capacity, and water infrastructure to respond to the change climate control requirements
- **Waste Services:** Refuse and recycling services struggling to meet current demand
- **Community Facilities:** Local community infrastructure is already operating beyond capacity, with libraries, community groups (including Scouts), leisure centres, and sports facilities struggling to meet existing demand. The proposed redevelopment of Clair Hall further highlights the ongoing shortfall in accessible community space. In addition, **grassroots outdoor sports are increasingly restricted** due to the lack of resilient, all-weather playing surfaces, with changing climate conditions regularly rendering natural pitches unusable. Without substantial investment in both expanded indoor provision and climate-adapted outdoor facilities, additional population growth will further limit access to essential community amenities and reduce opportunities for sport, recreation, and youth development

5. Mid Sussex District Plan

The site does not comply with MSDC's 20-minute neighbourhood principle for access to shops, secondary schools, GPs, Age Concern etc - see Fig 2, LCWIP prepared by PJA for MSDC 2023. In 2016 MSDC rejected the site as being "remote from services and facilities" and "causing a detrimental impact on the landscape". Nothing has changed..

With the above concerns in mind, we therefore formally object to the proposed development.

Yours faithfully,

4 Orchard Way, RH16 1UX