

## Planning Policy Advice

Application Ref:	DM/25/1129
Application Type: (Pre-app/ application)	Outline Planning Application
Address:	Land at Foxhole Farm, Foxhole Lane, Bolney
Description:	<b>Outline application (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved), for the erection of up to 200 residential dwellings, including affordable housing; a community building (use class F1) encompassing land for education provision, together with associated access, ancillary parking and landscaping; the creation of a vehicular access point from the A272 Cowfold Road, and pedestrian and cycle only access to The Street; and creation of a network of roads, footways, and cycleways through the site; together with the provision of countryside open space, children's play areas, community orchard, and allotments; sustainable drainage systems and landscape buffers.</b>
Date:	26 June 2025
Policy Officer:	Natalie Sharp
DM Officer:	Joanne Fisher

### Development Plan

The Development Plan comprises of the adopted 2018 Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031, currently under review, and the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (Site Allocations DPD) adopted June 2022. The site falls within the Bolney Neighbourhood Plan (BNP) area which was 'made' in 2016.

Below are the Development Plan policies considered key to the consideration of the application proposal.

#### 2018 Mid Sussex District Plan (2014 – 2031)

##### *Principle of Development*

DP6: Settlement Hierarchy and DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside - The site is located adjacent to the built-up area boundary as shown on the Policies Maps, Policies DP6: and DP12 are therefore relevant.

DP25: Community Facilities and Local Services – The application proposal includes the provision of a community facility (use class F1) for use by a local charity organisation (Kangaroos) which offers support to those with disabilities and complex needs to develop social and life skills. Policy DP25 supports the provision of such facilities and services which contribute to creating sustainable communities.

DP22: Rights of Way and other Recreational Routes – The application proposes two new connections to footpath 44Bo which runs along the site's northern boundary. To the east this

connection provides pedestrian access to The Street and to the west access to the countryside. No other rights of way are located on or adjacent to the site.

DP30: Housing Mix – Whilst this is an outline application the Planning Statement notes that the illustrative layouts have had regard to the housing mix for market and affordable housing as set out in the 2021 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The SHMA is the most recent evidence of need, this approach is therefore supported.

DP31: Affordable Housing – The application proposes to provide 60 affordable dwellings in line with the policy requirement of 30%. The Planning Statement states that the exact mix and tenure split will be agreed at the detailed application stage.

DP34: Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets and DP35: Conservation Areas - 'Bolney (North) Conservation Area' and 'Bolney (South) Conservation Area' are located northeast and southeast of the site, respectively. Two listed buildings are located east of the site: Walnut and Well Cottage (Grade II) and St Mary Magdalens Church (Grade I). Several other listed buildings are also located north and west of the site. Comments from relevant consultees such as the Council's Conservation Officer should be sought in determining any potential harm on these heritage assets.

DP41: Flood Risk and Drainage - The planning application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Sequential Test Assessment (STA). The site is within Flood Zone 1; area of lowest fluvial flood risk. The FRA confirms that areas in the northeast, northwest and southern parts of the site are at high risk from surface water flooding. The FRA and Planning Statement explain that other than the proposed vehicular access, no built development will be within areas at risk of surface water flooding. Supporting documents submitted with the application conclude that there is no other suitable location for the access and that the surface water flood risk can be suitably managed. Views from the Local Lead Flood Authority should be sought.

### Bolney Neighbourhood Plan

The Bolney Neighbourhood Plan (BNP) was made in September 2016. Since then, the 2018 District Plan has been adopted. If there is conflict between non-strategic policies in the District Plan and BNP, the District Plan takes precedence.

Policy BOLBB1: Built-up Area Boundary seeks to limit development to within the Built-up Area unless certain criteria are met. Where development outside the boundary is proposed Policy BOLE2: Protect and Enhance the Countryside requires that the development does not have an unacceptable impact on the landscape.

Policy BOLE1: Protect and Enhance biodiversity seeks to ensure developments protect and, where possible, enhance biodiversity through a range of measures.

Policy BOLD1: Design of New Development and Conservation promotes high quality design in new development taking into account Bolney's rural nature, its heritage and distinctive character. Whilst, as above, it is acknowledged that the application is Outline, the Applicant's Design and Access Statement (DAS) has sought to address the components of the policy.

Policy BOLH1: Residential Development Mix sets out the expected mix of dwellings, unless an alternative mix of dwelling size is justified. As noted above, the Council's 2021 SHMA is considered to be the most recent evidence of need.

Policy BOLH3: Affordable Housing seeks to ensure that the type of affordable housing provision addresses local needs and applicants engage with the Council early on.

Policies BOLA4: Securing Infrastructure and BOLA5: High Speed Broadband are concerned with ensuring new development is supported by the necessary infrastructure. Further commentary on infrastructure is provided below.

Policy BOLT1: Transport Impact of Development and Policy BOLT3: Off-street parking provision for new residential developments seek to ensure that additional traffic from the development can be safely accommodated, facilitated by adequate off-street parking and the promotion of safe pedestrian and cycle routes to facilities.

## **Housing Land Supply Position**

The Council has performed excellently in respect of the Housing Delivery Test, a new standard method formula was published alongside the NPPF which gives Mid Sussex a significantly higher housing requirement than the current District Plan. As a result, and having regard for the need for an appropriate buffer, the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites as per the requirements of paragraph 78 of the NPPF.

As a measure to help improve the supply position, the use of a shorter time to implement the permission would be supported. As a guide, 3 years for a full permission and 2 years under a reserved matters application.

## **Planning Policy – site selection process**

All potential housing and employment sites are included within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). The SHELAA provides the palette of sites that are assessed for their suitability for allocation in the Development Plan. A site selection methodology has been developed and tested at Examination (of the adopted site allocations DPD). The site selection methodology has been used to assess the SHELAA sites, and identify those sites with potential for development, via allocation in a Development Plan.

There are 3 steps to the site assessment process, which are:

Stage 2(a) – Relationship to existing settlements – sites that are disconnected from existing settlements are rejected and not subject to further assessment.

Stage 2(b) – Showstopper constraints – where environmental constraints and deliverability considerations result in very negative impact against the site assessment criteria. Sites with showstopper constraints are rejected and not subject to further assessment.

Stage 2 (c) – Overall Assessment – Sites that remain in the pool are subject to full assessment. Sites may be rejected at this stage if there are a combination of negative impacts. Sites may also be rejected at this stage if the loss of the site's current use is contrary to national policy

For the purposes of plan making, sites that remained in the pool, after Stage 2(c) were subject to further testing including Sustainability Appraisal, Habitat Regulation Assessment and Transport Modelling. This is Stage 3 of the site selection process. Those sites remaining in the pool after this stage were proposed for allocation in the submitted Draft District Plan Review (2024).

The Application site was submitted to the Council and has been included in the SHELAA as site #1120. This site has been assessed through the site selection process. Further detail

on the site assessment can be found [here](#) (see the 2024 Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) and 2024 Site Selection Conclusions Paper).

In summary, the site was proposed to be allocated within the Draft District Plan as site DPA14: Land at Foxhole Farm, Bolney.

## **Sustainability**

The Council has undertaken a Settlement Sustainability Review, which enabled a classification of the district's settlements, taking into account service provision and accessibility. Policy DP6 of the adopted District Plan set out this hierarchy. The application site is in Bolney, a Category 3 settlement: a medium sized village providing essential services for the needs of their own residents and immediate surround communities.

Part 3 of the site assessment considers sustainability and access to services. In terms of the availability of public transport, the assessment's conclusions reflect that the closest bus stop is within 400m but services are infrequent. Bolney is served by two bus services: the 89 and 273. Between them, these routes offer access to larger settlements with a wider range of services. The assessment also reflects that the nearest train station is over 1.6km.

In terms of accessibility to other services and infrastructure, the site is within walking distance of Bolney CofE Primary School and a local convenience shop (within the fuel station) on Cowfold Road (A272). The village also has a modern village hall with a part time community café.

## **Infrastructure**

The Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) (September 2024) outlines the types of infrastructure identified to support growth within the district, specifically growth to deliver the draft District Plan (2021 – 2039). The application site is associated within certain infrastructure provisions within Section 7 – Infrastructure Delivery Schedule, either as onsite provision or in the form of financial contributions. Key pieces of onsite infrastructure expected to be delivered with the development include, but not limited to:

- Community allotments
- Provision of new community facility
- Informal outdoor space including countryside open space and community orchards
- Equipped play spaces, and
- Provision and upgrades to certain utilities.

The Applicant's Planning Statement and supporting documents outlines the (illustrative) provision of the below infrastructure to meet the requirements set out above:

- 0.15ha of allotments
- Community facility for use by local charity (Kangaroos)
- 3.95ha of natural/ semi-natural
- 0.84ha of amenity green space
- 4.19ha countryside open space
- 0.15ha of equipped play spaces (including LAP and LEAP)
- Two new electricity substations, underground cable ducts for telecom and full fibre coverage, network reinforcement for water supply and new foul pumping station and connections.

The IDP is a living document and will be updated intermittently. The Council's S106 Monitoring Officer should be engaged with any discussions on provision and securing financial contributions.