

Susan Dubberley

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 September 2026 10:52
To: planninginfo
Cc: Susan Dubberley
Subject: Re: Objection to Planning Application: DM/26/2178 in College Lane

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I am sending this here as it wasn't possible to upload my objections to the Mid Sussex District Council portal. Please do add it to your consultation, many thanks.

69 College Lane,
Hurstpierpoint,
West Sussex,
BN6 9AE

(FORMAL REPRESENTATION – PLEASE REGISTER)

Dear Planning Policy Team,

I am writing to you as a resident of Hurstpierpoint and I wish to formally object to planning application DM/26/2178 for six dwellings at Land Between 149 and 161 College Lane, Hurstpierpoint.

I wish to formally object to the cumulative impact of the proposed Hurstpierpoint allocations. Specifically about the plans for proposed 6 dwellings at Land Between 149 and 161 College Lane, Hurstpierpoint

Planning Application: DM/26/2178

Our village cannot safely accommodate the accumulation of these plans, and they would have a hugely detrimental effect though lack of local infrastructure, and destruction of the local ecosystem.

My objection concerns the site's relationship with wider proposals unit the area. The established built-up area, the cumulative effect of development along College Lane, highway and pedestrian safety, settlement character, landscape and biodiversity, and the long-term implications for the spatial structure of Hurstpierpoint.

A key concern is that the application should not be considered in isolation from other recent, permitted and proposed development in this area.

Of particular relevance is **DM/24/1139 – Land at 147–149 College Lane**, which provided for seven dwellings on previously undeveloped greenfield land and was approved by the Planning Committee on 10 October 2024.

There is need for new housing country-wide, but where is the measure that this many houses are needed in our specific area at this time? I believe building work should be proportional to the area, and built in areas where those in greatest need will use it.

All brownfield sites locally and across the country should be regenerated first. Greenfields, important areas for wildlife and for farming, should not be built on.

It's important that all areas play their part in ensuring the next generation have enough housing. But most of the new builds proposed are detached expensive houses, out of the reach of the people who most need housing.

There should be a national strategy to create affordable and sustainable housing: Regenerating brownfield sites, and neglected cities, with communal green spaces, ecological small-scale housing, community allotments and access to schools, transport etc.

New builds in the countryside and villages should also be small scale, sustainable and affordable, with community spaces and sustainable infrastructure. Rather than developments of large, detached houses on greenfield sites, without the infrastructure to support it, as is proposed here.

We understand that these are difficult decisions for councils but believe the decisions should not be motivated by profits, but by the good of our communities.

Housing numbers on a district-wide spreadsheet are not, in themselves, evidence that these particular sites are necessary, suitable or deliverable.

The Inspector should require the Council to demonstrate clearly:

- why these particular Hurstpierpoint sites are required;
- what demonstrable housing need they are intended to meet;
- whether that need could be met elsewhere;
- what infrastructure capacity currently exists;
- what additional infrastructure is required;
- whether that infrastructure is funded, deliverable and capable of being provided **before** the houses are occupied, if indeed they ever will be.

Existing infrastructure is already under serious pressure

Roads and Water

We live College Lane, it is College Lane is a narrow historic route with parked vehicles, restricted space and limited continuous pedestrian provision. The addition of six dwellings would generate further vehicle movements and create another access onto an already constrained route.

It is a very narrow lane, and most of it, including the part we live on has no pavement, because the road is too narrow. Hurstpierpoint College is at one end. And the Hassocks Road with access to both the village centre in one direction, and Hassocks in the other, is at the other end.

As things stand currently, the road is a traffic jam which is often almost impassible, every morning for at least an hour, as people head to work, to the local schools, and to Hurst College. This is then repeated at the end of the day. It is very hard for traffic to move anywhere.

We have had the whole road at a standstill for over an hour at a time regularly because of congestion.

It is also very dangerous to have so much traffic while children are walking to school on a road without pavements, and there have been several near accidents in our street.

It is also very susceptible to flooding.

We have lived here for 12 years and every winter during periods of heavy rainfall, there are areas of College Lane, Malthouse Lane, and other surrounding roads which seriously flood. At the worst we have seen floods over a foot deep, going for more than 100 metres along malthouse Lane. But there are regular floods at every heavy rain, despite work being done to the roads.

Water infrastructure generally is an issue in the village, emergency sewer works at Willow Way following a pollution issue. Local concerns about flooding, drainage and sewerage capacity have also been formally raised by the Parish Council.

These roads are completely unsuitable for hundreds and thousands more vehicles to use. And the sewer infrastructure is completely unsuitable for hundreds and thousands more houses.

At the other side of the village is the high street, which is even more congested, as here there is a traffic jam not just twice a day, but often throughout the day too. It is a tiny high street, thriving with shops and housing too.

But it is at maximum capacity already, and it is impossible to imagine how this high street would function with the proposed thousands of extra houses built in the area.

Schools

St Lawrence School in Hurstpierpoint is likewise at full capacity.

I used to work there, and it is one of the biggest primary schools I have seen, with a full three form entry and classes from Reception to Year 6. So, there are already around 700 children in the local school, and it is inconceivable how thousands more, or even hundreds more houses could be accommodated.

Nearby is Alborne school, which is smaller but also full as I understand it.

My son attended Twineham School which was a smaller school in a nearby village. But this has now closed down, leaving families in the local area with even less options for schooling.

These are existing problems, not hypothetical future objections.

The village should not be required to absorb development before there is infrastructure in place. But I would argue there simply isn't space to build this development even if it included new infrastructure.

Nevertheless at the very least I ask the Inspector to require the Council to establish the existing infrastructure baseline before accepting further allocations.

They have to demonstrate the evidence, where is the:

- adequate sewerage capacity;
- adequate drainage capacity;
- reliable water supply;
- safe pedestrian routes;
- adequate highway capacity;

- safe emergency access;
- sufficient school and community infrastructure; and
- deliverable funding for whatever improvements are required?

If these things cannot be demonstrated, then the allocations should not be confirmed.

Wildlife and Local Ecology

Building at this scale would require building new school, major roads and connections, which would in turn, on top of the building for housing, take up the space necessary for wildlife and farming in our local area.

While I do think that the proposals as they stand would have a terrible effect on the everyday functioning and community of the village, to me an even bigger problem is the devastating effect it would have on the local ecosystem.

We are in a wildlife and ecological crisis, something which even the most hardened sceptic is starting to realise as we end the hottest summer ever on record, with wildfires all over the country, and head into a harvest season of crop failure and shortage that hasn't been seen in this country for many decades.

All the science points to the fact that this is only the beginning, and that future years will have hotter summers, more disrupted and extreme weather, and more problematic harvests.

This week globally the UN announced that we passed the climate tipping point, meaning it is imperative that we reduce all emissions globally to bring the temperature down, if we want to survive as a species. Even if we can bring the temperature down, there will still be decades of increased weather-related disasters, rising seas, drought and crop failure, and extinctions.

We can't afford to build on farmland when we need that land to feed ourselves.

And we can't afford to build on wildlife habitat, when it is so rare in this country now, and necessary for our survival too.

Here in the UK, the recent State of Nature Report found that a fifth of species here have been lost since the 1970s. More than half of our flowering plants have disappeared from their natural habitats, and pollinators have declined by 18% in the last 40 years.

Wild mammals make up just 4% of all mammals on earth. Creatures like badgers, hedgehogs, deer, bats, and foxes are essential for the ecosystem.

The Woodland Flora and Fauna group have spent decades protecting the wildlife of this area of Mid Sussex, surrounding Hurstpierpoint. They have increased the population of barn owls, and so many protected species substantially over the decades.

Water voles are protected and have been seen within metres of the college Lane sites.

There are great-crested newts, again within meters of the sites, which are also protected.

These habitats provide essential habitats for pollinators. Wildlife, humans and the natural world are all connected, we need a balanced ecosystem to survive. We can't survive without pollinators, and a rich ecosystem and variety of wildlife which sustains that. No crops can be grown without pollinators, and of course, without farmland.

We believe that the plans as they stand will be very destructive to wildlife. These builds are on greenfield sites.

My son has grown up in a time where wildlife has been protected locally, and he is devastated at what this building work will do to our local countryside.

Currently the **Nature Bill** is being debated in parliament and has passed through the first readings. If we are serious about any of the promises in a bill like this, we have to consider our local planning in accordance with that.

I believe that brownfield sights around Burgess Hill, and all brownfield sites in the county should be considered seriously first, and the priority should be to build on and regenerate them. We can't rely on building on greenfield sites; it is not sustainable for our local wildlife and our futures.

We have seen a huge amount of wildlife on the sites proposaed, including newts which are protected, as are water voles which we have seen in the areas.

The Consultation Process seems to have been designed to confuse and make it hard to object. Submitting separate objections to numerous individual modifications does not make sense, because our objections concern the same cumulative impact on one village.

I am submitting this as my petition against the cumulative effect of these developments on our village and surrounding area.

Please confirm whether this will be considered, as it is not appropriate to ask individual residents to submit separately to each individual modification, these are builds which would affect so much of our community, and we ask for our very real cumulative evidence to be considered.

If you will only consider the evidence separately, please identify the legal or procedural basis for that requirement.

I am submitting this representation by email because the online consultation portal has been down, or will not accept uploads. Please confirm that this email is a valid representation and that the full contents will be forwarded to the Inspector.

Requested outcome

I respectfully request that the officer's report clearly addresses these cumulative matters and, in particular:

- the precise relationship between DM/26/2178 and the adopted built-up-area boundary;
- whether that boundary has changed since DM/24/1139;
- the relevance of the statement made by Joanne Fisher on 10 October 2024;
- whether DM/24/1139 is being relied upon to establish physical contiguity;
- the policy basis for treating the proposal as infill, if applicable;
- cumulative highway and pedestrian-safety impacts;
- landscape, biodiversity and ecological effects;
- the relevance of the 30-Year Nature Recovery Strategy;
- the availability and relevance of brownfield alternatives;
- the proposed housing mix in relation to identified local need; and
- consistency with the Hurstpierpoint Neighbourhood Plan.

Given the cumulative planning issues raised by this application and their wider implications for Hurstpierpoint, I also request that consideration be given to determining the application through

the **District Planning Committee**, where the Council's procedures permit, rather than solely through delegated powers.

The central issue is not simply the impact of six additional dwellings considered in isolation. It is whether this proposal, when considered alongside recent, permitted and proposed development, would be consistent with the adopted development plan, settlement strategy, countryside policies, biodiversity and nature-recovery objectives and the Hurstpierpoint Neighbourhood Plan.

Specific consideration should be given to the **30-Year Nature Recovery Strategy**, relevant national planning policy, local biodiversity policies and the Hurstpierpoint Neighbourhood Plan. The Council should consider the effects of gardens, fencing, lighting, access and other domestic infrastructure on ecological connectivity, as well as whether proposed landscaping and biodiversity measures provide genuine long-term enhancement.

The cumulative loss of individual areas of undeveloped land may have wider consequences for landscape character, habitat connectivity and nature recovery than would be apparent from considering each application separately.

More broadly, the Council should consider whether the continuing development of individual parcels along this part of College Lane is producing a cumulative change to the character and spatial structure of Hurstpierpoint.

Hurstpierpoint is already struggling with **congestion, pedestrian safety, drainage and sewerage problems, and water-supply resilience**.

It is also in an incredibly important area for wildlife and biodiversity.

I believe it is not the place of the current decision makers of the village and surrounding area, to decide that Hurstpierpoint is no longer a village. This proposal would mean that Hurstpierpoint would be so closely connected to Hassocks, Burgess Hill, Sayers Common and surrounding towns and villages, that this will be a deciding step into how this area changes and develops into the future.

If these builds go ahead, it will change the landscape here forever, and will take away the identity and life of these villages and small towns. I believe that this is much too much building for one small area to absorb.

Younger children growing up here will not live in a village surrounded by biodiversity and wildlife as my son has.

They will grow up in a suburb, effectively in a town which combines the local villages, much as I did at the edge of Brighton. It would be a massive change for the worst, taking away much of the biodiversity, character, history and community of this area, and one that could never be undone.

This is too large a step to be made against the will of the communities that live here.

I understand that part of the additional housing pressure being placed on Mid Sussex arises because neighbouring authorities, including Brighton & Hove and Crawley, have been unable to accommodate their full housing requirements. If that is true, it is incredibly worrying that the consequences of those shortfalls should effectively be transferred to our village in Hurstpierpoint.

It isn't enough to say that additional housing is required somewhere within the District. Please can the Council must demonstrate why these particular sites in Hurstpierpoint are necessary, why this village should absorb this additional pressure, and where the evidence is that Hurstpierpoint has the infrastructure and environmental capacity to accommodate it. I don't believe this is the right location for this amount of housing.

A housing requirement elsewhere does not automatically create a justification for development here.

I ask the Inspector to require clear evidence of the actual housing need being met by these sites, including how much of that need arises from unmet requirements elsewhere, and to establish **why Hurstpierpoint** has been selected to bear that burden when the village is already **experiencing serious infrastructure and safety problems**.

I formally object to planning application DM/26/2178 and request that this objection is placed on the public planning file and fully taken into account when the application is determined.

I have copied this email to the Council's Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Executive, and my elected Member of Parliament. Please acknowledge receipt and confirm that this representation has been forwarded in full to the independent Inspector.

Best Wishes,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.