

## Andy Watt

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**From:** planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk  
**Sent:** 02 March 2026 18:24  
**To:** Andy Watt  
**Subject:** Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application DM/26/0317

## Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 02/03/2026 6:23 PM.

### Application Summary

Address: Glebelands Field Lodge Lane Bolney West Sussex

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Proposal: A phased development of up to 9 self build dwellings.

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Case Officer: Andrew Watt

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[Click for further information](#)

### Customer Details

Address: 

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### Comments Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour or general public

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Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

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Reasons for comment:

Comments: Dear Planning Officer,

I object to the above planning application and ask that it be refused.

My husband and I moved to Bolney 22 years ago, specifically because it was a quiet, rural village with green spaces, a sense of community, a village primary school, minimal traffic disturbance and a pace of life that allowed families to put down roots. I have served on the PTA at Bolney Primary School and been a member of the school travel committee. We have raised four children here but are now witnessing the continual erosion of the factors that make our village unique.

The loss of green space is becoming relentless

When we arrived, Bolney felt balanced. Housing development was reasonably paced and reflected the needs of local communities (not developer greed). The fields, paddocks, and

open spaces afforded the breathing room that gives a village its identity. Piece by piece, that is being taken away. Foxhole Farm will consume a significant area of open land to the east. Now this application targets another green field to the west. If both proceed, the village will have lost open space on two sides simultaneously.

At some point - and I believe we are very close to it - there will be nothing left to build on, and the reasons that make people want to live here in the first place will have been destroyed in the process of accommodating them. That is not planning. That is an incremental loss of countryside character.

#### Loss of wildlife habitat and biodiversity

This site is not just an empty field; it is part of a functioning ecosystem. Fields, hedgerows and undisturbed green spaces provide established habitats for birds, insects, small mammals and plant life. These habitats have developed over many years and form part of a wider ecological network across the countryside. Once lost, they cannot simply be recreated.

The applicant refers to biodiversity enhancements, including new planting, woodland areas, ponds and habitat corridors. However, these are newly created, engineered environments. They do not replicate the ecological complexity, soil structure, species diversity or interconnected relationships found in long-established habitats. It can take decades for such systems to begin to approach the ecological value of what is being lost, if they ever do.

There is also a significant risk that these proposed habitats will be fragmented, isolated and subject to ongoing disturbance from residential use, reducing their effectiveness. Without clear, secure, and long-term management, such features often fail to deliver the biodiversity benefits that are claimed at the application stage.

Furthermore, under the Environment Act 2021, developments are expected to deliver a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain. This requires not only replacement of what is lost, but a measurable and lasting improvement in biodiversity value. It is not clear from the application how this will be robustly achieved on-site, particularly given the loss of an established greenfield habitat.

In planning terms, mitigation and enhancement are not equivalent to preservation. The loss of an existing, functioning habitat in exchange for newly created landscapes represents a net ecological loss in the short to medium term, and potentially in the long term. This conflicts with the requirement to conserve and enhance the natural environment. Once these natural spaces are gone, they are gone for good.

#### Sustainability is not just a policy word

The application makes much of Bolney being a "sustainable settlement." As someone who has served on the school travel committee, trying to find safe routes for children to walk and cycle, I can tell you that sustainability in Bolney is extremely limited. There are no safe, continuous footpaths connecting Lodge Lane to the village centre. The lane itself is narrow, unlit, and has a dangerous blind S-bend. I would not allow my children to walk it, and I would not expect new residents to do so either.

The bus service is negligible. The Number 89 runs infrequently, and the weekly service to Burgess Hill is not a realistic alternative to the car. Every household on this proposed development will be entirely car-dependent for school runs, shopping, healthcare, and work. This does not represent sustainable development and is contrary to the objectives of reducing reliance on private vehicles.

#### No medical centre, no capacity

Bolney has no GP surgery. It has no medical centre. The nearest practices are in Haywards Heath or Hurstpierpoint, both requiring a car journey. With 200 additional homes already approved at Foxhole Farm, and no corresponding investment in healthcare infrastructure, the cumulative impact of additional development without provision for healthcare is a matter of serious concern - particularly for families with young children and elderly residents.

#### Impact on the Conservation Area and rural character

This site is an open field that lies directly adjacent to the Bolney Conservation Area, with part of its boundary contiguous with it. It therefore forms part of the Conservation Area's immediate rural setting and the transition to the wider countryside. The existing character of this part of the village is defined by low-density development, with trees, hedges and open spaces making an important contribution to its attractiveness.

Development of this field would erode that setting and harm the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The Council's own site assessment recognises that the site adjoins the Conservation Area and that development would result in harm.

The National Planning Policy Framework requires that great weight is given to the conservation of heritage assets, including their setting. This proposal would fail to preserve that setting and would therefore conflict with national policy.

I also note that this site was assessed as SHELAA Site 749 and rejected. The Council concluded it had low capacity for change and felt detached from the village. Those conclusions remain valid.

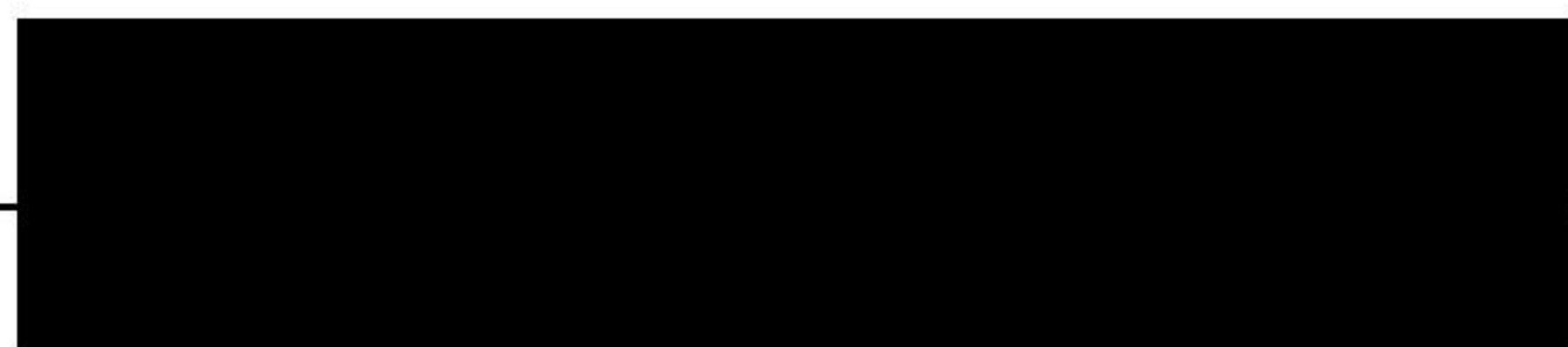
#### Conclusion

I understand that housing is needed. But not every field adjacent to a village should be built on, and not every application should be approved simply because demand exists. Bolney is already absorbing a doubling in size. This application asks for more than this community can give.

For the reasons set out above - including harm to biodiversity, unsustainable location, pressure on infrastructure, and impact on the setting of the Conservation Area - I respectfully request that this application is refused.

Yours faithfully,

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Kind regards