

Steven King

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk
Sent: 20 March 2026 16:04
To: Steven King
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application DM/25/3129

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 20/03/2026 4:04 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land At Borde Hill Lane Haywards Heath West Sussex
Proposal:	Outline planning application for the erection of up to 125 dwellings, together with the provision of landscaping, open space, and associated development works, with access from Balcombe Road. All matters reserved except for access.
Case Officer:	Steven King

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Customer Details

Address:	1 Coniston Avenue Haywards Heath
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Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour or general public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

Comments:	Dear Sir/Madam, I object to this application primarily on the grounds of overdevelopment of the allocated site, significant highway and pedestrian safety concerns, and the potential harm to the rural character and landscape setting of this part of Haywards Heath. As a resident of Haywards Heath, I am concerned that the proposal would have a significant impact on the character, infrastructure and transport network of this part of the town. This part of Haywards Heath has a distinct rural character which is an important feature of the local environment and community. I wish to formally object to the above planning application for up to 125 dwellings and associated infrastructure at Land East of Borde Hill Lane. While I understand that this land has been identified for development under Policy DPA7 within the Mid Sussex Site Allocations Development Plan Document, the proposal submitted goes far beyond what was originally envisaged for the site and raises serious concerns regarding
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highway safety, infrastructure capacity, environmental impact and the character of the surrounding countryside. These issues represent material planning considerations. For the reasons set out below, I believe the proposal conflicts with several policies within the Mid Sussex District Plan and does not represent sustainable development. In particular, the proposal raises concerns in relation to policies within the Mid Sussex District Plan relating to transport, landscape protection and sustainable development, including policies addressing transport safety, landscape character and the provision of supporting infrastructure.

National planning policy also requires that development is sustainable and that significant impacts on the transport network or highway safety should be carefully considered. The National Planning Policy Framework emphasises the importance of protecting the character of the countryside and ensuring development is supported by adequate infrastructure and safe access. In my view, the proposal raises serious concerns in relation to these objectives.

Overdevelopment of the Allocated Site

Earlier stages of the site allocation process indicated a lower level of development on this land, with figures in the region of around 60 dwellings discussed during the preparation of the allocation. The current proposal for up to 125 dwellings represents a significant increase in the scale and density of development compared with the level originally envisaged for the site. The scale of the proposal risks transforming what was intended to be a modest edge-of-settlement development into a much denser suburban estate, which would be out of keeping with the rural character of this area of Haywards Heath.

Outline Nature of the Application

The application is submitted in outline form with all matters reserved except access. As a result, important details such as layout, internal road design, parking arrangements, landscaping and the precise form of development are not yet known.

Approving a development of up to 125 dwellings without this information makes it difficult to fully assess the impact of the scheme on the surrounding area, particularly in relation to density, design quality and landscape impact.

Highway Safety and Traffic Impact

The surrounding road network is already constrained and raises serious concerns regarding its ability to safely accommodate the level of additional traffic generated by a development of this scale.

Balcombe Road is narrow in places, poorly lit and already experiences congestion at peak commuting times. The road also suffers from poor surface conditions in places. It serves as an important route into Haywards Heath from the north and is already heavily used by commuters, delivery vehicles and local traffic.

The addition of traffic from over one hundred new homes, together with visitor vehicles and delivery traffic, would place significant additional pressure on this road network.

The proposed enlargement of the existing roundabout is also concerning. A large two-lane roundabout appears disproportionate for its rural location and may encourage vehicles to approach the junction at higher speeds. This could create additional safety risks for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians.

Larger roundabouts and wider carriageways can encourage higher approach speeds, particularly in rural edge-of-settlement locations where drivers are already travelling at speed. The introduction of a significantly enlarged roundabout at this location risks increasing vehicle speeds on the surrounding roads while also introducing additional pedestrian crossing movements associated with the new development. This combination raises concerns regarding highway safety and whether the design of the junction is appropriate for its setting.

Pedestrian Safety and Connectivity

Pedestrian routes from the proposed development site towards the town centre, railway station and local amenities are currently poor.

Balcombe Road has narrow pavements and in some areas pavements exist on only one side of the road. Pedestrians travelling from the proposed development would be required to cross the road multiple times in order to reach key destinations. This would create a potentially unsafe environment, particularly for school children, elderly residents and families with pushchairs. For a development of this size it is essential that safe and convenient walking routes are provided to encourage sustainable travel. The current proposal does not appear to achieve this.

Unsustainable Location and Car Dependency

Public transport provision in this area is limited. Bus services are infrequent and operate only at certain times of the day. As a result, residents of the proposed development would be highly dependent on private vehicles for everyday travel.

Key services such as GP surgeries, secondary schools and many local amenities are not easily accessible on foot. This means that the development is unlikely to support the sustainable transport objectives set out in national and local planning policy.

Impact on the Setting of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The site lies close to the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Although it sits outside the formal boundary of the designation, it forms part of the wider landscape setting of the AONB.

Development of this scale would introduce a substantial area of suburban housing, road infrastructure and lighting into what is currently open countryside. This would erode the rural transition between Haywards Heath and the protected landscape and diminish the tranquillity and character of the surrounding area.

Loss of Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat

The fields and hedgerows on the site currently provide valuable habitat for local wildlife.

Residents regularly observe birds of prey such as red kites hunting over the fields, as well as owls, ducks and other species.

Development would inevitably result in the loss of existing habitats and wildlife corridors. While mitigation measures may be proposed, it would take many years for any newly planted landscaping to provide ecological value comparable to the existing environment.

The protection of landscape character and scenic beauty is a key objective of national and local planning policy.

Pressure on Local Infrastructure

Local infrastructure in Haywards Heath is already under pressure.

Local schools including Harlands Primary School and Warden Park Academy already serve a large catchment area. Additional housing on this scale would inevitably increase demand for school places and it is unclear whether sufficient education capacity exists locally to accommodate this growth.

Healthcare services are also under strain, with long waiting times at GP surgeries and at The Princess Royal Hospital, which serves the wider area.

The railway station is already extremely busy during peak commuting hours, with trains frequently overcrowded and congestion around the station at peak times.

It is unclear whether sufficient infrastructure improvements are planned to support a development of this scale. It is therefore important that the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that appropriate infrastructure provision and developer contributions will be secured before any development of this scale proceeds.

Water Supply and Environmental Resilience

The area has experienced recent water supply pressures, including prolonged hosepipe restrictions. Introducing over one hundred additional homes would inevitably increase demand on local water infrastructure.

Given the increasing challenges associated with water availability and climate change, it is important that new developments demonstrate that they can be supported by resilient infrastructure.

The application does not provide clear evidence that local infrastructure, including education provision, healthcare services and water supply, can accommodate the additional demand generated by the development.

Construction Impact

A development of this scale would likely involve several years of construction activity, including heavy goods vehicles, delivery vehicles and construction machinery. This would place further strain on local roads and could lead to increased noise, dust and disruption for existing residents.

Conclusion

While I recognise that the site has been identified for residential development, the scale of development proposed represents a substantial intensification beyond what was originally

envisaged and raises serious concerns regarding highway safety, landscape impact and infrastructure capacity.

The application does not demonstrate that the surrounding road network, infrastructure or landscape setting can accommodate development of this scale. The proposed enlargement of the roundabout would introduce a substantial piece of highway infrastructure into what is currently a rural edge-of-settlement location. This risks urbanising the approach to this part of Haywards Heath and significantly altering the character of the surrounding landscape. In my view, the potential harms associated with the proposal outweigh the benefits of the development in its current form.

For these reasons I respectfully request that the Local Planning Authority refuse this application.

Yours faithfully,

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature of the sender.

Kind regards