

Steven King

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk
Sent: 05 July 2026 21:45
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 05/07/2026 9:45 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land At Borde Hill Lane Haywards Heath West Sussex
Proposal:	Outline planning application for the erection of up to 117 dwellings, together with the provision of landscaping, open space, and associated development works, with access from Balcombe Road. All matters reserved except for access. (Amended plans and supporting statements received 15th April reducing the number of proposed dwellings to up 117 and reducing the size of the proposed roundabout). (Additional ecology information received 19/05/2026). (Additional highways information received 12/06/2026).
Case Officer:	Steven King

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Customer Details

Address:	West Cottage Church Lane Ardingly
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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 or Madam, I wish to object to planning application DM/25/3129. I note that the amended application has reduced the proposed number of dwellings from 125 to 117, reduced the size of the proposed roundabout and submitted additional ecological and highways information. Whilst these amendments are welcomed, they do not overcome the principal planning concerns. The proposal remains major residential development on a highly sensitive greenfield site whose fundamental characteristics are unchanged. I fully recognise the need for Mid Sussex to provide new housing and support sustainable growth. However, sustainable development is not simply about delivering housing numbers. It is about delivering development in locations where environmental, social and infrastructure impacts are acceptable and where long-term sustainability can genuinely be achieved. In my view, this proposal fails that test. 1. The site performs an important landscape function

The applicant's own Landscape Design Statement describes the site as lying between the Haywards Heath settlement edge and the rural landscape, adjoining the High Weald National Landscape and immediately adjacent to the Grade II Registered Park and Garden at Borde Hill. It identifies the site as comprising open field parcels, mature hedgerows, woodland, grassland and a watercourse.

This is not simply an undeveloped field awaiting expansion of the town. It is the landscape transition between the built-up area and nationally protected countryside. National planning policy requires great weight to be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of National Landscapes, including their setting. Mid Sussex District Plan Policy DP16 similarly requires development affecting the High Weald National Landscape to conserve and enhance its character and setting. Although the site lies outside the designated boundary, it forms part of its immediate setting. Development of this scale would permanently urbanise this transition, replacing open countryside with built form, lighting, roads, domestic activity and associated infrastructure. Landscape planting cannot recreate this transition. Trees take decades to mature and mitigation planting cannot replace an existing landscape that has evolved over generations.

2. The Council's own site observations reinforce the site's sensitivity

The Council's own site visit records describe the site as:
being on the edge of the settlement
Borde Hill Lane appearing as a more rural road
having a significant fall in levels
containing a watercourse at the lowest level
involving heritage assets
requiring consideration of AONB setting.

Those observations summarise why this site is fundamentally different from a conventional urban extension. They demonstrate that this proposal affects not merely an open field but a sensitive landscape interface between town, countryside and heritage assets.

3. Flood risk remains a significant concern

The application acknowledges that the site drains naturally towards West Common Stream and includes land affected by flood constraints. Whilst Sustainable Drainage Systems are proposed, these rely upon long-term management, maintenance and future performance during increasingly intense rainfall events. Greenfield land currently performs an important role in absorbing rainfall and slowing runoff. Once replaced by roofs, roads and hardstanding this natural function is inevitably reduced. Residents have already experienced increasing localised surface water issues following periods of heavy rainfall. Against this background, I remain unconvinced that sufficient certainty has been demonstrated that flood risk will not increase elsewhere, as required by national policy and Mid Sussex District Plan Policies DP41 and DP42.

4. The proposal would reinforce car dependency rather than reduce it

The application describes the site as sustainable, yet its own Transport Assessment demonstrates otherwise. The nearest bus service operates only every two hours and provides no evening or Sunday service. The applicant's own data shows that the overwhelming majority of existing journeys are undertaken by private car. This is not the transport profile of a genuinely sustainable location. Although Haywards Heath station lies within walking distance for some residents, the route is lengthy, busy and unlikely to represent an attractive everyday alternative to the private car for many families, older residents or those with mobility limitations. National policy seeks to reduce reliance on private vehicles and encourage genuinely sustainable travel choices. I do not believe this proposal achieves that objective.

5. Existing highway pressures should not be underestimated

Anyone who regularly uses Balcombe Road will know that it already experiences severe congestion at peak times.

The reduction in the size of the proposed roundabout does not alter the fundamental issue. The concern is not the geometry of the junction itself, but the cumulative effect of introducing traffic from over one hundred additional dwellings onto an already heavily trafficked corridor serving existing housing, schools and commuter traffic.

The modelling presented cannot fully reflect the day-to-day reality experienced by residents.

6. Permanent ecological and arboricultural losses remain

The applicant has submitted additional ecological information, but the proposal nevertheless requires permanent change to an established greenfield habitat.

The Arboricultural Impact Assessment accepts that mature trees will be removed, including the loss of a mature English oak described by the consultant as "regrettable", together with reduction of an existing woodland parcel.

Whilst replacement planting is proposed, newly planted trees cannot replicate the ecological function, landscape contribution or biodiversity value of mature trees and established habitat for many decades.

This is particularly important given the site's location adjoining the High Weald National Landscape and Borde Hill Registered Park and Garden.

7. Pressure on local infrastructure

The Planning Statement suggests the site benefits from nearby services.

However, proximity does not equate to capacity.

The application has not demonstrated that local healthcare, schools, community facilities or other infrastructure possess sufficient spare capacity to accommodate the additional population without increasing pressure on already constrained services.

Policy DP20 requires infrastructure to keep pace with development. I remain unconvinced this has been satisfactorily demonstrated.

In summary, this objection is not based upon opposition to new housing.

Haywards Heath will continue to grow, and it should.

However, growth should occur in locations where it genuinely represents sustainable development.

In this instance, the applicant's own evidence demonstrates that this site forms the landscape transition between Haywards Heath and the High Weald National Landscape, occupies a sensitive edge-of-settlement location, contains important green infrastructure and drainage functions, and sits within the setting of nationally and locally significant heritage assets. The Council's own site observations reinforce these characteristics.

When considered alongside existing highway pressures, weak public transport provision, unresolved flood risk concerns and pressure on local infrastructure, I do not believe this proposal represents sustainable development in the right location.

For these reasons I respectfully request that Mid Sussex District Council refuses planning permission for application DM/25/3129.

Yours faithfully,



Kind regards