

Balcombe Parish Council wishes to reiterate its opposition to this proposal. We have previously objected to its inclusion in the District Plan.

Our main objections are its proximity to the High Weald AONB, loss of agricultural land with considerable landscape character, the setting of the enlarged access roundabout adjacent to the lodge at Borde Hill and generated traffic through the village of Balcombe.

The site abuts the southern boundary of the AONB and its affect upon the AONB must be a weighty consideration. In planning terms views from the AONB should be preserved. The site offers considerable landscape character. It is a beautiful valley affording exceptional character to the northern edge of the settlement of HH and to the views southwards from the AONB.

During the previous Penland Road development the developer was required to move the new roundabout south away from the Brode Hill's south lodge. This proposal enlarges that roundabout and must result in a further detrimental effect on the setting of the lodge. The enlarged roundabout its self is double the size of the existing and would be an urbanising and intrusive feature within the site. It results in further loss of trees, hedgerow and character as it encroaches and setting of the countryside edge of this area of HH.

Loss of agricultural land should be resisted. In particular here adjacent to the AONB. Other sites for land within MSDC exist and this site should be discounted in preference to other more suitable sites.

Traffic impact through the village of Balcombe should be considered. The direct and fastest route north to centres of employment such as Gatwick Airport and Crawley is to drive north through the village of Balcombe and join the M23 at junction 10a. the development of this site would result in an increase in traffic through the village of Balcombe. The village has a very unusual, constrained road layout in the village centre and housing close to the road. The village already suffers considerably from excessive traffic numbers and this is yet another incremental increase, which has led to significant traffic growth in the past few years.

Whilst assessments of landscape character presented to MSDC downplay the role of this valley we see them as flawed. Anyone standing on the road edge and looking outwards to this tract of land can see its considerable value in landscape terms and in its setting along the southern edge of the AONB. It should perhaps have been included in the AONB such is its distinct character and setting at the southern foot of the escarpment leading up to the AONB.