

Mid Sussex District Council
FAO Steven King
By email to steven.king@midsussex.gov.uk

10 February 2026

Re Application No DM/25/3129 for 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, on land at Borde Hill Lane.

I wish to formally object to the above planning application for up to 125 dwellings and access via a new roundabout on the land at Borde Hill Lane. I object for the reasons outlined below.

The location of the proposed development is unsuitable and at odds with the Mid Sussex District Plan

- The current Mid Sussex District Plan has no allocation for housing at this site. Permitting ad hoc development on this unallocated site conflicts with the plan-led approach to development required by national policy, the principles of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and sets an unacceptable precedent of urban sprawl for locations that have not been fairly assessed and allocated as part of established processes.
- The location of the proposed development is outside of the defined settlement boundary for Haywards Heath and is contrary to the spatial strategy adopted in the Mid Sussex District Plan which clearly identifies Burgess Hill as the focus for new development.
- The site is adjacent to the High Weald Area of Natural Beauty (AONB). Any development, including but not limited to the overbearing roundabout design proposed, would significantly alter the setting, intrude into the countryside and cause incremental harm to the landscape and tranquility of the surrounding AONB. This is a sensitive countryside location that acts as a crucial buffer between existing settlements and the protected landscape.
- The location does not support the 20-minute neighbourhood principles cited in the draft District Plan as many amenities (e.g. a secondary school or GP surgery) are further than a 20 minute walk away on unsafe, disconnected paths. The unsuitability of the location and the lack of public transport within the proposed development will result in a reliance on private car use, contrary to the sustainability objectives in both the National Planning Policy Framework and a “central aim” of the Mid Sussex District Plan.
- The site is at risk of flooding. The number of mitigations that would need to be in place to protect the new houses and surrounding existing residents from flooding, especially considering the impact of removing trees and vegetation that act as a natural flood defence today, suggest that the site is wholly unsuitable with the risk to the surrounding area and its residents being too great to justify.

The proposed development would cause irreversible damage to the environment, destroy natural habitats and endanger wildlife

- A development of any kind would be at the expense of nature and lead to a permanent loss of wildlife, whatever mitigation efforts are purported to be put in place. It cannot be proven that the site can be developed without harming wildlife and it is very difficult to see how a biodiversity net gain can be claimed given the site has such rich biodiversity today - I often spot birds of prey circling over the field and frequently hear owls at night. As experienced on the Penlands Green Redrow development, the trees and planting put in by developers often fail to thrive as they are planted at suboptimal times of year to meet completion deadlines and neglected by contractors. It would take decades for any level of planting even remotely comparable to what exists today to establish, and it would never match the environmental benefits of the existing landscape, such as carbon sequestration, natural habitat and flood mitigation.
- The disturbance to wildlife caused by new build developments destroying habitats and fragmenting wildlife corridors is evident, with two badgers having been killed crossing a road

within the Penlands Green Redrow development in the past year alone. Extending development to the proposed site and encouraging even more traffic poses a further threat to wildlife.

- The proposed development would cause to additional pollution and have a detrimental impact on air quality as residents would rely on private cars as their primary mode of transport in the absence of public transport and safe walking routes.

Pedestrian access from the proposed development site would be unsafe

- Cars approach the current roundabout at speed and the proposed plan to significantly increase the size of the roundabout will only exacerbate this, creating unsafe conditions for pedestrians to cross from the proposed development site with no controlled crossing planned.
- Even with adequate crossing measures on the proposed roundabout, pedestrians would be required to cross the Balcombe Road three times when walking the most direct route to the train station, supermarkets, restaurants or shops (excluding the six additional crossings required at the junctions of Penland Road, Fairfield Way, Oakhurst Lane, Old Wickham Lane and Barnmead). Balcombe Road has narrow pavements on only one side of the road making it extremely difficult to pass others safely without stepping into the road. This additional pedestrian activity would likely concentrate around rush hour, for example children walking to school, compounding the risk of there being a serious accident.

Road safety would be compromised by adding additional traffic to constrained, rural roads

- For the reasons outlined above, one must assume that the vast majority of residents of the proposed development will rely on private cars as their primary mode of transportation. In addition, a new development will bring with it construction vehicles, delivery vehicles and visitors' cars which will contribute to the existing traffic levels on roads that are already at capacity and constrained owing to the narrow lanes, poor visibility and the condition of the roads.
- The proposed roundabout design and size is unjustified for its setting. A roundabout of such scale will encourage speeding on approach and compromise the safety of road users on the adjoining roads.
- The application references cycling as a proposed mode of transport. Cycling on any of the surrounding roads is dangerous given the current levels of congestion, the width of the roads and pavements and poor visibility for cars to safely overtake.

Increased noise and disturbance would impact existing residents

- The proposed development, and especially the proposed roundabout design, would result in a significant increase in road traffic noise and light pollution for existing residents of the surrounding area - at odds with Mid Sussex's targets to minimise noise, air and light pollution. Introducing a new residential area will increase the number of comings and goings and significantly impact those already living in the area.
- There is the potential to attract antisocial behaviour due to the overbearing size of the proposed roundabout, the speed at which vehicles could approach it and its relatively remote location with low levels of surveillance.
- Whilst required to go some way to mitigate danger to pedestrians, the introduction of a pedestrian crossing point on the proposed roundabout would create a disruption to traffic flow, add to existing congestion and result in increased emissions from vehicles slowing or stopping to allow pedestrians to cross, therefore diminishing air quality further and adding to the noise from the road.

There would be a considerable impact on local amenities

- The proposed development site sits outside of the the defined settlement boundary for Haywards Heath and yet its residents would rely on Haywards Heath's local amenities. Presumably this additional capacity has not been assessed as part of the town's growth strategy.
- Haywards Heath and surrounding areas are experiencing water supply stress. Drought status has been declared and restrictions on water usage have been in place in recent years,

extending far beyond summer months. Climate trends and the increasing demand must be seriously assessed to ensure further development will not compound the issues being faced by existing residents.

- Both Harlands Primary School and Warden Park Academy are at capacity. Families moving from outside the area to the proposed development would increase pressure on school places and likely need to accept places for their children in schools beyond walking distance, further adding to the volume of traffic on the roads in the absence of adequate public transport and failing to align to the 20-minute neighbourhood principles.

In conclusion, the location of the proposed development is unsuitable and at odds with the Mid Sussex District Plan and its objectives. Development of any kind is unjustified and would cause irreversible damage to the countryside and local residents. Open countryside cannot be replaced and the development proposed in this application would fail to preserve the environment from which it would take from. I respectfully request that this application is refused.

Kind regards,

[Redacted signature]