

OBJECTION to DM/25/3129 – Land at Borde Hill Lane



Dear Mr King

We OBJECT to the above planning application, which is in contravention of the Ansty, Staplefield & Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan (2015-2031), the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan (2014-2031) and the Mid Sussex District Plan (2014-2031).

The relevance of the Localism Act 2011 was demonstrated in 2020, when planning permission was refused at Tavistock & Summerhill School (DM/19/0260) and the same principles apply here.

Pre app advice given by Steve Ashdown in November 2020 to Woolf Bond states: *“Having regard for all the above, it is considered that the proposed development of the site is contrary to the Development Plan and as such were an application to be submitted it is not considered something that could be supported.”* Nothing has changed since that date.

General points:

- This site is included in Historic England’s description of Borde Hill’s Grade II* Parkland Listing: "To the ... **east**, the site's parkland and woodland merge into the adjacent undulating, wooded farmland
- In 2016 MSDC rejected the site as being “remote from services and facilities” and “causing a detrimental impact on the landscape” Nothing has changed.
- In May 2022, Mike Fox, Planning Inspector in the Site Allocations Development Plan said that there were no soundness issues over the underprovision of development in Haywards Heath.

- The site does not comply with MSDC’s 20-minute neighbourhood principle for access to shops, secondary schools, GPs, Age Concern etc – see Fig 2, LCWIP prepared by PJA for MSDC 2023
- A Sustainability Appraisal by JBA Consulting (Nov 2023 – Objective 8, Landscape) says: “This assessment comprises a deskbased exercise which has not been verified in the field. Therefore, the nature of the potential impacts on the landscape are, to an extent, uncertain. However, there is a risk of negative effects occurring.” This should not be relied upon.
- There are frequent accidents along Borde Hill Lane, making it unsuitable for further Housing

Proximity to AONB Land

Site 556, which is adjacent to AONB designated land and mentioned in the Grade II* listing for Borde Hill Park should be designated an AGLV (Area of Great Landscape Value). “To the ... **east**, the site's parkland and woodland merge into the adjacent undulating, wooded farmland”. Development of this site would breach Policy E5 HHTC Neighbourhood Plan.

Flood Risk

“Site has areas within flood zone 2/3 or has flooded historically” Lepus Consulting’s Sustainability Appraisal from October 2022 finds the site has a ‘major negative impact on flooding.’

Ancient woodland (known as Flat Wood) lies a few metres north of the site.

This is an open landscape, enjoyed by road users, train passengers and pedestrians, as well as neighbours. Nearby trees have high canopies, giving clear view across valley in Horsegate High Weald Character Area towards Grade II listed Sugworth Farm.

Biodiversity

The land lies opposite the South Park at Grade II* Listed Borde Hill Gardens, whose owners state that they “care passionately about our natural environment and this project will enable us to unlock 110 acres of listed heritage parkland to new and diverse audiences, while enhancing the *biodiversity that lies within the South Park and beyond.*”

Listed Building and listed parkland setting

This site is unusual as it is mentioned in the Historic England listing for the Grade II* parkland setting adjacent to it, not just the building itself.

Conservation Areas

The site is within close proximity of the Balcombe Road ATC (HHTC Neighbourhood Plan).

The large proposed roundabout would harm the setting of this semi-rural location.

Sustainability / Access to Services

Availability of Public Transport: Bus Route 31A at the junction of The Spinney/Penland Road only operates every 2 hours between 8.40 and 16.40. Some facilities within the town would require a change of bus, making journey by public transport highly unlikely.

Haywards Heath Railway station is over a mile from the centre of the site, (1.7km) using Googlemaps for accuracy. This fails to meet MSDCs sustainability criteria.

Access to Main Service Centre

This site, although beyond the Built Up Area Boundary (BUAB) of Haywards Heath, will be entirely dependent on its services. The town does not have a central focus for all these services, which are spread out across a wide area. The site fails to meet the 20-minute neighbourhood principle for many of these facilities. For example, the main shops at South Road, the Age UK centre at Lamb House, sports facilities at Beech Hurst, Victoria Park and Hanbury Stadium, together with private gyms in South Road, to mention just a few facilities, are a 40 minute walk away. Restaurants in The Broadway and Lindfield are over 30 minutes away. Balcombe Road has narrow pavements, which require crossing in several places, as the pavement is not continuous.

Distance to Primary School

Harlands School, is within a 15 minute walk, however, the school is full and has taken a bulge class for September 2023. The crossing point is busy and drivers frequently ignore speed limits. There are two junctions nearby - Hanlye Lane and Penland Road. For safety reasons, a traffic-light controlled crossing may be needed to cross the busy Balcombe Road, which would add an unwanted urbanising feature to this semi-rural edge of town area, as well as creating congestion. Transport modelling will need to be reassessed.

The nearest schools with spaces are Lindfield Primary School (1.9 miles) and Northlands Wood Primary School (2.8 miles).

NPPF 2023 Para 95 says that it is “important that a sufficient choice of school places is available.” Site 556 fails to meet this.

Distance to Health Centre or GP Surgery

Volunteers walked to the nearest facility at Newtons Surgery, which took over 20 minutes. This would take much longer if a patient was elderly or feeling unwell. Parking at Newtons is limited. Other practices are further away and have no spaces for new patients.

The Princess Royal Hospital is mentioned as a nearby facility, yet local residents often have appointments in Brighton, Crawley Urgent Treatment Centre, Lewes or East Grinstead instead.

Distance to Local Convenience Retail

Sainsbury's and Waitrose are approximately 20 minutes' walk, however, the hilly topography of the local area and lack of a continuous pavement along Balcombe Road would discourage pedestrians from carrying more than a few items.

Thank you for taking our concerns into consideration.

With kind regards,


Bramston, Summerhill Lane, RH16 1RW