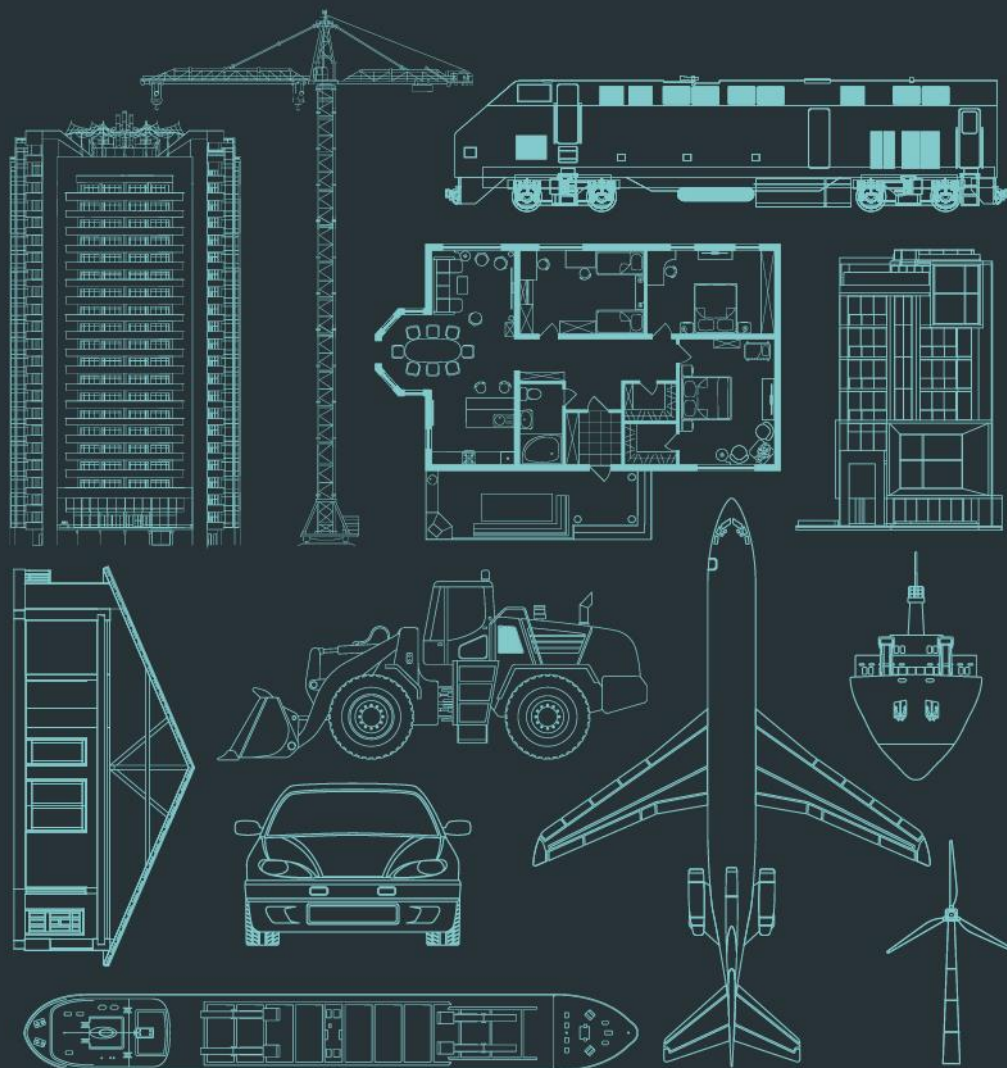


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# Statement of Community Involvement

Land off Henfield Road, Albourne

Prepared for Croudace Homes

July 2022

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# Executive summary

Croudace Homes (Croudace) is committed to consulting with the local community regarding the proposals to develop land at Henfield Road, Albourne to bring forward a development of up to **120** new homes and community enhancements, including space for the local primary school to expand and a village shop.

Residents and stakeholders were given the opportunity to give feedback regarding the proposals via a host of different channels. A website, freephone information line and project email address were made available throughout the process for interested parties to receive further details and to provide feedback. A virtual consultation was held between **28<sup>th</sup> June 2022** and **11<sup>th</sup> July 2022**.

A newsletter was sent to **3,107** addresses on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 2022, providing information about Croudace Homes' emerging plans as well as advising them of the consultation and how to access the consultation website. Paper copies of the plans as well as feedback forms with prepaid return envelopes were available on request, to ensure the consultation was inclusive.

During the initial consultation period, we received **28 feedback responses**, via the website and email concerning the redevelopment of land off **Henfield Road, Albourne**. Of the feedback received, positive feedback supported the principle of affordable housing and new homes, however also commented that the level of current infrastructure needs to be improved to help bring about any benefits for the local community.

Constructive comments and reservations were also received, that concerned how the proposals could add to traffic in Albourne and a perception that new housing development would destroy green land and irreplaceably change the character of the village. Other concerns included the impact of the proposals on local infrastructure, particularly relating to education and health services.

Croudace has carefully reviewed all the feedback received to date, and the main comments raised by the local community have been addressed within this document and the wider material submitted. Croudace is committed to engaging with the local community and will ensure that interested parties and key stakeholders remain informed and updated regarding the proposals. In order to assist with the community consultation and communication, Croudace appointed BECG, a specialist communications consultancy, to form part of its wider project team for the site.

This document provides a chronological account of the consultation undertaken and a review of the feedback received.

## 2. Background

### 2.1 Proposal site



*Location plan detailing the site in red*

- 2.1.1 The Site is located at land at Henfield Road, Albourne. The Site is formed of two large fields located to the west of Albourne, south of Henfield Road and adjacent to Albourne Primary School. A public right of way divides the northern and southern field.
- 2.1.2 Mid-Sussex District Plan (2018) states that the annual housing requirement between 2014 and 2023/24 is 876 dwellings per year. The policy includes a stepped trajectory which rises to 1,090 dwellings per year between 2024/25 and 2030/31. The Local Plan does not provide anywhere near enough land to meet the need for new housing in the district. A great deal of this need is made up of those who require affordable housing which, in many cases, would allow people to remain living near to family members and those areas where they grew up.
- 2.1.3 Since the adoption of the Mid Sussex Plan, the government has introduced the Standard Method for calculating housing need. This new measure of housing need demonstrates that Mid Sussex needs to deliver more housing than is currently planned. This is outlined in the Local Plan Review document which notes the need to make provision for 8,332 more dwellings than currently allowed for in the adopted Local Plan and site allocations plan. Development at this site would help to meet this increased demand.

## 2.2 Proposals

- 2.2.1 Croudace is looking to bring forward an Outline application which will seek to establish the principle of development as well as the detailed access matters. Detailed designs for the homes and final layout will then be submitted with a Reserved Matters application at a later stage.
- 2.2.2 Croudace's emerging proposals have sought to respect the site's features, such as maintaining views south from the public footpath toward the South Downs National Park. Existing trees would be protected by the development, and every opportunity taken to plant more to ensure the future environment is green and pleasant for all users. This is alongside much-needed new homes. The proposals are made up of:
- Up to **120 high quality new homes**, of which **30%** would be designated as affordable,
  - Helping Mid-Sussex District Council meet its housing targets
  - Extensive new public open spaces, wildlife habitat areas and landscape enhancements
  - Vehicular access will be provided from the B2116 Henfield Road as well as new footways and cycle links to the existing public right of way footpath running through the site
  - Enhancements to the primary school by offering land safeguarded for the potential expansion increasing capacity by 1 Form Entry.
  - Proposing a community shop at the entrance of the site with shared parking for the school
  - Achieve a target of at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain at the site
- 2.2.3 The proposed layout has sought to deliver a landscape-led approach, with new homes carefully located behind the school and a public footpath through the middle of the site that connects pedestrians with the village but also provides a buffer between homes and areas that have been reserved for public open spaces.

# Community Engagement

## 2.3 Statement of Community Involvement

### 2.3.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's policies for England and outlines how these policies should be applied.

- 2.3.2 Croudace has had regard to the NPPF at Paragraph 39 when it states that *“early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties.”*

2.3.3 The NPPF goes on to highlight at Paragraph 40 that *“Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.”*

2.3.4 Paragraph 41 outlines that the Local Planning Authority should encourage other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage, noting that *“the more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits.”*

### 2.3.5 Mid-Sussex District Council

Mid-Sussex District Council adopted its *Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)* in 2011. The Council then updated its SCI on March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019. The SCI acts as a guide and benchmark for all Council services to use when involving communities in planning and in designing Community Involvement Plans. As such it sets out key principles that need to be met when engaging with the public.

*“The NPPF states that “Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community” (Paragraph 39).”*

2.3.6 Therefore, in conjunction with developing the plans, Croudace undertook a detailed programme of community engagement.

## 2.4 Engagement with Officers

2.4.1 Before the indicative plans were shared with the community, appropriate steps were taken to discuss the principle of development with Council Officers. The detail of this is set out in other application documents.

## 2.5 Stakeholder meetings

2.5.1 Croudace felt it was important to discuss the early proposals for the site’s redevelopment with local stakeholders as part of the wider community consultation. An initial email was distributed on **28<sup>th</sup> June 2022**.

2.5.2 This email introduced Croudace’s interest in the site, detailed the plans for a mixture of new homes and public open space and offered an opportunity to join a one-to-one meeting with the team. It also included contact details for the project team. The following stakeholders were offered meetings:

- Cllr Judy Llewelyn-Burke (Conservative) – Councillor for Bolney (The site is in the Bolney Ward)
- Cllr Alison Bennett (Liberal Democrat) – Councillor for Hurstpierpoint and Downs Ward
- Cllr Colin Trumble (Conservative) – Councillor for Hurstpierpoint and Downs Ward
- Cllr Rodney Jackson (Liberal Democrat) – Councillor for Hurstpierpoint and Downs Ward
- Albourne Parish Council

2.5.3 A copy of this email has been included in the Appendices. However, none of the stakeholders contacted took up the offer of a meeting.

2.5.4 In addition, Croudace is in ongoing discussions with the Hurst Trust, and has held previous meetings with the School and Parish Council.

## 2.6 Dedicated website

2.6.1 A website was set up displaying information about the proposals and is being updated throughout the public consultation and planning process. The website is hosted at <https://albourne.consultationonline.co.uk/>



*An example of a consultation website*

2.6.2 The website address was printed on the invite and relevant correspondence.

2.6.3 The website included the following pages:

- Planning Policy
- Vision
- Access and Drainage
- Open Space
- Landscaping
- Benefits

- Online feedback form
- Next Steps

2.6.4 During the virtual consultation period, the website was viewed by **96 individual visitors** and a total of **20 website feedback forms** were received with **8** emails detailing feedback.

## 2.7 Virtual public exhibition

2.7.1 An invitation newsletter was distributed on the **28<sup>th</sup> of June** to 3,107 addresses.

2.7.2 Paper copies of the plans as well as feedback forms with prepaid return envelopes were available on request, to ensure the consultation was inclusive.

2.7.3 A copy of the invitation letter can be found in the Appendices.



*A map depicting the invitation distribution area*

2.7.4 Residents could provide feedback by submitting the feedback form on the project website, emailing our project team via **[feedback@consultation-online.co.uk](mailto:feedback@consultation-online.co.uk)** with comments or questions, or calling the freephone information line on **0800 298 7040**.

2.7.5 To ensure that as many members of the community could provide feedback as possible, the project team also offered for the virtual exhibition materials and a feedback form to be posted alongside a pre-paid envelope to provide comments on the plans.

2.7.6 A copy of the feedback form is included within the Appendices.

## 2.8 Post-paid and 0800 comment facility

- 2.8.1 During and after the consultation, access to a freephone telephone information line was offered to those who wished to find out more about the proposals, or to register their comments via the telephone.
- 2.8.2 The telephone number used (**0800 298 7040**) was in operation Monday-Friday between the hours of 9.00am and 5.30pm. A message facility was available for voicemails to be left and responded to at the earliest opportunity to ensure information was readily available and that queries or concerns were addressed.
- 2.8.3 Information was given to callers where possible and, if questions were of a technical nature, these were passed on to project team members.
- 2.8.4 A freepost envelope was available, on request, alongside paper copies of the virtual consultation boards and a feedback form

# Review of comments

## 2.9 Overall feedback received

- 2.9.1 A deadline of **midnight** on the 8<sup>th</sup> of July 2022 was set for feedback, however this was extended up until 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022. This feedback analysis reviews all feedback up to that date. During the consultation period, **28 individual feedback responses** were received, via online feedback forms and emails. Out of the 28 individual feedback responses received, 121 answers were recorded for a total of **eight** questions. This either was a response supporting or partially supporting the development, objecting outright, being unsure or providing no response. The answers are shown in the table below.

Support/ Partially Support	Object	Unsure	No response	Total
9	100	9	3	121
7%	83%	7%	3%	100%

- 2.9.2 7% of feedback was either supportive or partially supportive of the redevelopment of the site, however caveated that infrastructure, at the same time, must also be improved.
- 2.9.3 83% of overall feedback received objected to the proposals and raised concern about the impact of the development on existing traffic congestion problems and the present accessibility of green open spaces. Other recurring comments concerned the impact that proposals would have on existing infrastructure and local services.
- 2.9.4 A further 10% of feedback was either unsure or did not provide a response.
- 2.9.5 Below is a top-line breakdown of all comments received from the **28 feedback responses** received (via the website and emails) concerning the proposals for Albourne.

Theme	Frequency
We already have public green spaces	13
New homes are not needed/object to development	11
Infrastructure and Local Services will not cope	11
The character of the Village will be destroyed	9
The Village will not be able to cope with additional traffic	7
The local community will not benefit from the development	5
Green spaces will be destroyed	5
Other suitable sites for affordable housing	4
The area is already prone to flooding	4
Leave the land as it is	4

The development will cause an increase in noise, airborne and light pollution	4
Existing transportation routes in Albourne are poor	3
Rural views will be ruined	3
Will renewable sources of energy be included in the plan	2
Henfield Road is already busy	2
Safeguarding the land is not enough	2
If more school places are needed, then build a new school	2
Madness to build on farmland when we need agricultural land more than ever to grow food	2
A perfectly good community shop already exists in Sayers Common	2
What do you call affordable?	2
Villages need protecting not building	1
Mid-Sussex has already reached its housing target thus the scheme is not needed	1
Where will new residents work?	1
The site access point needs changing	1
The scheme will cause increased pressure on schools	1
There is already a new retirement village being developed	1
Proposed development is outside Local Plan	1
No firm commitment in building public spaces	1
Consult wildlife experts not builders	1
Not the place to build new homes	1
Create a new forest	1
Green land does not need enhancing	1
Existing trees should be preserved	1
Nesting birds should be encouraged	1
If development cannot be stopped, then housing should be affordable	1
Other areas have greater affordable housing with greater infrastructure ability	1
Affordable housing should be over 50%	1
Will local people get priority on the new homes?	1
Your idea of affordable homes is different to ours	1
If a new village shop is wanted, then the village will build one	1
Move the shop away from the village	1
Supportive of concept of a community shop but not development	1
I cannot comment as I do not live local	1
You will need to find employees to operate the shop	1
If new homes are not built, then there is no need for the school to expand	1
More land is needed for schools if new homes are to be built	1

Object to all development proposals	1
School already has plenty of space	1
There is no firm commitment to deliver expansion	1
The school is too small for residents	1
The area is already used for parking and Drop-Off	1
Drop-Offs are needed if the village grows	1
Build Drop-Offs if they are built away from schools	1
New Drop-Offs are welcome but not if a new development is to happen	1
Cut down on traffic; not increase it	1
Providing Drop-Off facilities will only encourage increased car use	1
Expanded schools will need safe Drop-Offs	1
Proposed development is too big in size	1
Overall strength of local feeling to the scheme is negative	1
Awful plan that should be stopped	1
Our close-knit community will unite against the plans	1
New home site is not in the best interest of the Village	1
The house shown is classically for maximum profit. Denser, functional, properties would use less land and meet housing needs, as in post war New Towns.	1
It is likely that any proposed expansion would be seen as a positive by Hurstpierpoint College	1
What will happen to the village springs?	1
Has the water course running through the designated site that was identified by the Environment Agency been taken into consideration?	1
Will the sewers be able to cope waste from additional homes?	1
Do all new homes have to be built in the south-east?	1
A development of this size will considerably reduce the attractiveness and amenity of the Village of Albourne	1
The development will considerably reduce enjoyment of the footpath running EW through the site	1
High Street in Hurstpierpoint is already severely congested at peak times and during the weekend	1
Car park at Hassocks train station is already too small to cope with demand	1
Church Lane is too small to accommodate anymore traffic and the local schools are too small	1
One GP which is already oversubscribed with a small dentist and very limited local shops	1
Far too much development in Hurstpierpoint already	1

2.9.6 **This part of the analysis relates to the 20 online feedback forms and eight emails. It should also be noted that not all respondents provided a comment to each question asked on the feedback forms.**

**Question 1: Do you support the provision of a residential development on the site, comprising much needed homes, including affordable housing?**

Support/ Support with comments	Object	Unsure	No response	Total
3	16	1	0	20
15%	80%	5%	0%	100%

**General comments**

*I understand the need for additional homes, however, there does not seem to be any plans to improve the local infrastructure.... schools, doctors' surgeries and transportation are all lacking when planning these developments. I live opposite a new development in Sayers Common...the land is prone to flooding, and this has not been addressed by the developer. Sadly, it's always profit over people. What sustainable measures will Croudace implement to make their homes future proof? These homes are never affordable!*

**Constructive comments and reservations**

*The building of 140 homes on the proposed site will drastically change the area and destroy green space. People have chosen to live in albourne because they value quiet village life and green space - this development will make the area feel like a town. There are not resources enough in the area to support such a development - Albourne school is small and would not be able to incorporate children from up to 140 homes without expanding significantly. This would inevitably change the school enormously: it is currently small and therefore has a unique welcoming feel. The site is fantastic with beautiful countryside surrounding it. These factors would be lost. More importantly the school, which struggles already financially, would be forced to find significant funding to expand. Furthermore, expansion would doubtless require building further on their precious green space. The infrastructure to support 140 new families is simply not present and building these homes will put more pressure on surrounding areas and resources such as doctors' surgeries. As a family that has moved deliberately out of a city to enjoy village life, I am very sad to hear of the many planned developments in the area and strongly oppose these. Finally, if homes are so in need, why are only 30% of those you propose to build planned to be "affordable"?*

*I strongly object to the idea of a further 140 homes on the A2116 in the small village of Albourne. We have recently been informed that a further 80 up to 250 units have been granted permission to be built on the old Hazeldene Nursery site, Albourne, on the old A23. Surely such a small hamlet can't cope with the additional traffic and the services infrastructure that is required for such developments.*

*Village life is precious equally as precious if not more is wildlife. I absolutely disagree with your proposal for developing this area for new homes. There is no infrastructure to cope with more homes. We need to protect our villages not to create sprawling towns. Villages are a lifestyle choice.*

*Mid Sussex District Council have already met their new housing target, so these new homes are not "much needed", and this statement is misleading. The area you are proposing to develop forms part of our local countryside, home to many different types of wildlife. You state in your leaflet that you will target at least a 10% gain in biodiversity. How can this be true when you're proposing to concrete over this area and squeeze in 140 homes. It's easy to have targets, and even easier to miss them, so your statement means nothing. The proximity to Albourne Primary school means that the works will cause disruption for the children, noise pollution, airborne pollution and increased traffic from heavy goods vehicles. Mid Sussex Healthcare is already under strain from demand. What provision will be made for healthcare for all these extra residents? I have read the reviews you have receive on Trustpilot and was quite shocked. 50% of reviewers give you a "bad" rating, with many criticising you for "bad workmanship", "poor craftsmanship", "shocking customer service", "un-caring and un-empathetic senior staff". Your unhappy customers call you "cowboys" and "the worst builders in the UK." If you think that a company with such a bad reputation will be welcome here, you are deluded.*

*You have no idea how much the area floods. It's a ridiculous proposal and a plain land grab. The community is already too big. This is landowners selling to developers. Albourne struggles with traffic as it is.*

*There must be hundreds of better sites than this. Why did Albourne need 140 new houses? Where will the residents work? We already have appalling traffic issues.*

*This is a ridiculous proposal*

*You clearly have not done any research here at all*

*This is lovely green farmland which surrounds a friendly primary school. Burgess Hill has hundreds of new houses being built currently. We do not need more in a small village with no amenities*

*Too much building in conjunction with other new developments; will ruin local countryside; no commitment to local infrastructure apart from car park for local school.*

*what's been overlooked is the impact on traffic as a result of your plans & the low numbers of affordability of only 30% homes.*

*I would like to see the site access point changed to much further away from the school, to help decrease the huge traffic issues for school drop off / collection. Your Site entrance / shop / parking should be further down the Henfield Road, the kids can easily walk to school from this new position and take required pressure away from parking within the village. If you applied this - all the Albourne's residency would be more happy! :) - at present all school parking is on The Street, which needs to change, you should embrace this issue, and solve it.*

*The lack of affordable homes is wrong, whilst I respect, you're a business, you should further respect what the majority of the population needs - affordable homes, 50% would be a better balance and lastly, as you will soon learn, the village has a lot of kids & pet animals. I would like to see improved playing facilities for kids, larger areas for the dogs, and perhaps your application can insist on a 20mph speed limit on the Henfield road, this would help traffic noise. I also see no info on how long this development will take, to complete?*

*Re the building of these houses are solar panels, other renewable power, insulation etc sources planned? One would certainly hope so. I sincerely hope the plans are not simply the minimum you can get away with but more of a leading target. For everyone's sake.*

*I strongly object to your proposal and will actively resist the development, for the following reasons. Our home looks directly onto the fields you are proposing to develop, it will completely ruin the rural view for which we purchased the property one month ago.*

*There is already a new retirement village being developed and more mature proposals for a large development on London Road towards Sayers Common from Albourne. For the size of the existing village this is already impactful.*

*You are not offering more school facilities - only maybe a part of a field for a fix amount of time. the school is already at capacity. There are no village shops, and the infrastructure isn't sufficient to support the existing population. Furthermore, the area of land floods every year, therefore, collectively members of the village are exploring all legal, local authority and political options to resist your proposal. We do not support it and will actively resist it.*

*No. Albourne is a small village with a lovely community feel. My children went to Albourne primary school and the reason we chose this school (& I know many others did) was due to its rural location surrounded by fields and the fact that it only had 1 class per year. The potential development threatens*

the small community feel and put increased pressure on a primary school already affected by the low West Sussex funding.

*I believe the plan would have a significant, negative impact on the character of the village and will cause particular problems in the following areas:*

- 1. Traffic and parking. Albourne is a small village with narrow roads, The Street and Church Lane, linking most of the houses. Henfield Road is already busy and the commuter traffic through Hurstpierpoint is awful. This development will add to these problems and potentially clog up The Street and Church Lane with the cars of visitors to the proposed site. Most potential residents of the site would require 2 cars as Albourne is semi-rural and public transport links are poor.*
- 2. School facilities and parking. "Safeguarding land for the potential future expansion" of Albourne primary school is simply not good enough. If this application were successful, the school would need significant extra funding for new buildings and expansion. Funds for this should come from the developer, but I do not see how this could happen now that Albourne is part of Hurst academy trust.*
- 3. Access to open countryside and views. The school and residents use the field of the proposed site for walks and to engage with nature, which has a positive impact on their wellbeing and health. The proposed development would decrease the area of open countryside around Albourne, increase noise pollution and limit views.*
- 4. Wildlife. Owls are common on the proposed site and many other species thrive. I do not see how the "biodiversity enhancement" could help larger mammals and nesting birds.*
- 5. Main access point. At peak traffic times it will be difficult to exit the site and cars waiting to enter the site will cause congestion.*

*I am strongly against this development in our small village. This development, along with the proposed retirement village will completely change the area and its community beyond recognition. I fail to see how this will be of benefit to the local area.*

*Dear Croudace*

*Having just received your leaflet and reviewed the plans on this website I wanted to leave my comments, which I hope you find helpful.*

*I am very conscious of the need for more housing in the area and was not opposed to the planning application on the former Hazeldene Nursery site, but I have serious reservations in this instance, based the following:*

*The proposed development is outside of the local plan. We have just purchased a house in the conservation area and the fact that these fields were not earmarked for development was a factor in our purchase. The development as proposed would have a serious effect on our views, noise and light levels, amongst other issues.*

*The scale of the development is too large. Albourne currently consists of approximately 260 homes, adding 140 to that total on a single site is unsustainable. This could be mitigated by building far fewer dwellings and keeping them closer to the Henfield Road at the northern end of the site, thus having a much smaller impact on the conservation area and the village in general, as the school would mask most of the development.*

*In particular, the plans to develop the south and west sides of the northern field would have a significant impact on the views from the conservation area and we would object most strongly on this basis.*

*I would be happy to annotate the map of your proposals to show where we would have the biggest objections and where we might be persuaded to be supportive.*

*I will discuss the plans in more detail with my wife and may leave more feedback, as I'm sure she will as well. However, as the plans stand, we would object and use all means at our disposal to have the plans denied.*

*Absolutely ludicrous!! Albourne is a beautiful little village with an idyllic primary school-which my daughter attends. The view they have is amazing and they are so lucky to be in the middle of the countryside. Your proposal would completely destroy this and they would then be overlooking a*

residential development. You will take away the areas they use for education around the school not to mention adding to an already problematic parking and driving situation. The existing roads are not made for traffic they already have let alone a load more you will create with this plan!!

My objection is based on deep concern for local infrastructure, especially impacting the village of Hurstpierpoint. The most direct and straightforward route to the nearest railway station, Hassocks, is right through the middle of Hurstpierpoint. The village already suffers adversely from excessive traffic and consequential delays and air pollution - the roads were not designed for the volume of motor transport currently passing through the village and the addition of so many extra houses and cars will have a seriously detrimental effect on the fabric and residents of the village.

Local facilities available in the village, such as the GP surgery, will be put under even more strain and current residents will suffer as a result.

**Question 2: The proposed masterplan for the site would also provide areas of public open space for the whole community to enjoy. Do you support the provision of the new public open space on the site?**

Support/ Partially Support	Object	Unsure	No response	Total
3	14	2	1	20
15%	70%	10%	5%	100%

#### Constructive comments and reservations

*This is a loaded question - I do not support the development of this site at all. There is already public open space in the form of fields and green space that you are proposing to build on*

*The site is already an open space, unspoiled countryside enjoyed by the public. Therefore, you are offering no benefit to the community.*

*I support open space to be left as open space in our surroundings & not to be disturbed by builders.*

*The proposal is untenable. The area floods. It will not cope with that amount of poured concrete.*

*The site is already an open green space. You should not be building on it. To say that you are creating a public open space is a total lie as you are building on lovely fields in the first place.*

*More land available if no building!*

*Re the building of these houses are solar panels, other renewable power, insulation etc sources planned? One would certainly hope so. I sincerely hope the plans are not simply the minimum you can get away with but more of a leading target. For everyone's sake.*

*As I object to the whole development. People are already able to enjoy outdoor space in Albourne, this is an attempt to lessen the blow of a huge new residential development and completely unnecessary.*

*You have made no firm commitments to this. It is already a public space with surrounding footpaths for all to enjoy*

*A new development is not a benefit for this area of predominately farmland, and i am not sure how building 140 houses improves access to public open spaces. We already have highly accessible public spaces in this area, we can walk directly from the village all the way to the south down national park.*

*As per the leaflet, I am not sure how you intend to restore tress and hedges that already have a rich eco system within and around them.*

*The existing open countryside is valuable, so I object to the proposed masterplan entirely. Of course, the proposals should include public open space, but I still object to the proposals.*

*Having lived in the village for 10 years, there is simply no need for more public open space. We have plenty of it and this development would simply take more of it away. There are a myriad of footpaths and open areas in the vicinity.*

*It doesn't need any new public space as they one they have is fine!*

*Development of this site would reduce the open space which are currently enjoyed. The development of these existing open spaces will destroy habitats and green space. It is a perverse logic to imply that building houses on green space and then providing fabricated open spaces for its residents is beneficial.*

**Question 3: The new public open space represents 65% of the total area of the site, in what way would you utilise this open space?**

**General comments**

*Leave it as it is now to provide natural green space, natural habitats for wildlife, lack of buildings*

*Leave it as it is*

*I would not involve builders to plan open spaces. I would consult wildlife experts.*

*100% of the area which you are proposing to develop is already available for us to use, in offering only 65% of it you are insulting us.*

*I would have to walk round the other 35% concreted space that you are dumping on the nice green fields!! This is not a place to build new homes.*

*Parkland, natural habitat*

*More kids play areas, way way way more trees - make a forest,*

*it should be left as it is for dog walkers and others to enjoy as they do now. it does not need enhancing*

*Existing trees and hedgerows should be preserved. New trees, ponds and plants to encourage wildlife should be included. Nesting birds should be encouraged. A higher percentage of public open space would make the plan more agreeable.*

*We would not use this space.*

*This is a misleading figure as much of this space lies within the proposed development of the north field, this would not be of benefit to anyone who does not live in that development.*

*Leave it as it is!!!!*

*I wouldn't. I would leave it 100% green and unspoilt.*

**Question 4: Do you support the inclusion of much needed affordable housing?**

Support/ Partially Support	Object	Unsure	No response	Total
7	11	2	0	20
35%	55%	10%	0%	100%

**General comments**

*I support the idea of affordable housing, but what does affordable mean?*

*Will there be a restriction on the people that will be able to move to these houses. i.e., people from the local area having priority.*

**Constructive comments and reservations**

*If the development cannot be stopped then yes, the housing should be affordable - and more than 30%!*

*What do you call "affordable"? there is no detail on the pricing structure of these proposed houses, so who is to say there are affordable?*

*I object to sprawling sites that do nothing for the village community or wildlife.*

*I object to all your development suggestions.*

*No housing is needed here. Burgess Hill has hundreds and hundreds of new houses being built now.*

*Other areas have affordable housing with greater infrastructure availability.*

*It should be 50%+*

*I object to any development at the site*

*build 10 affordable houses on the orchard and demonstrate your commitment via this route alone.*

*I object to the development of this site. Public transport links are poor, so there are other, more suitable sites for affordable housing.*

*Who is supposed to be able to afford the rest? I'm sure that your idea of affordable is a lot different to what mine and many others would think*

*I am supportive of the concept of affordable housing but as I strongly object to the overall proposal, I cannot say that I support it in this development.*

*Affordable housing as it is currently offered by the government's initiatives just do not work, but I appreciate this is not the developers issue.*

**Question 5: The proposed masterplan for the site would include the provision of a community shop. Do you support the provision of a community shop on the site?**

Support/ Partially Support	Object	Unsure	No response	Total
4	13	3	0	20
20%	65%	15%	0%	100%

#### General comments

*Providing you can find employees to operate it! Many local shops and businesses are struggling to find staff.... nice idea.*

*How will this work with Sayers Common community shop? Have any impact studies been conducted?*

#### Constructive comments and reservations

*As before - I do not support the development*

*There is already a community shop in Sayers common and the new development at Hazeldene has indicated they are also providing a community shop*

*If a village shop is wanted, then the village will open one.*

*I object to all your development proposals.*

*This is not necessary as the homes should not be built.*

*Move the shop away from the village, to reduce traffic / nuisance / etc  
Same for the site entrance, move it away from the Albourne's village*

*Needs to be aligned with existing community shop*

*I don't feel able to comment on this as I don't live in the village, and this would be a decision for the locals*

*the existing infrastructure does not support increased use - a shop will not help with this.*

*The proposed masterplan will have a negative impact on the community of this village, irrespective of whether a shop is included.*

*Highly object to a local shop. The addition of a shop will increase traffic and reduce the safety of the area for my children, as it has already done with the opening of a village shop in Sayers common. This shop has caused additional traffic in the main road and in turn made the main road more dangerous.*

*There is a perfectly adequate community shop based at Sayers common. Opening a new community shop here would actually harm that shop, which has been developed lovingly by volunteers over a number of years.*

*Sayers Common has a brilliant community shop so this would be completely pointless*

*I am supportive of the concept of a community shop but as I strongly object to the overall proposal, I cannot say that I support it in this particular development.*

#### Question 6: Do you support the provision of land that is 'safeguarded' for the potential future expansion of the Primary School?

Support/ Partially Support	Object	Unsure	No response	Total
6	10	3	1	20
30%	50%	15%	5%	100%

#### General comments

*Prefer no development at all but commitment I have seen is for car parking, not more school places or other facilities?*

*I am supportive of the concept of safeguarded land but as I strongly object to the overall proposal, I cannot say that I support it in this particular development.*

*Clearly the school will need to be expanded to accommodate the influx of residents! How about a doctor's surgery?*

#### Constructive comments and reservations

*If the development didn't go ahead then there would be no need for this land*

*you have made no firm commitment to delivery expansion - so who will? - you have merely suggested some land for a small amount of time will be provided. it will not support the children of a further 140 houses - and you must know that -disingenuous of you to suggest otherwise!*

*The plan should include funding for the expansion and redevelopment of the school. Safeguarding land is not enough.*

*There should not be a safeguard. If there is any chance of the area being developed, then the school should be uplifted before the building to ensure it is satisfactory. The school is already too small for local residents and badly requires a school sports hall and has no arts facility, I would imagine that the addition of 140 houses would increase the demand on the school and just reserving a space for development is not sufficient.*

*Absolutely sickening!!! If more school places are needed, then build a new school!!! Don't ruin the beautiful one we already have which is perfectly fit for purpose*

*Don't build in the first place and the school has acres of space already!!!*

*I object to all of your development proposals.*

*More land is needed for a school if more homes are built on a large scale. I disagree with sprawling home sites.*

*How can this land be safeguarded there is no such thing anymore?*

*If these houses are not built, there will not be current need for the school to expand*

**Question 7: Do you support the inclusion of a new school drop off and car park for parents?**

Support/ Partially Support	Object	Unsure	No response	Total
6	11	1	2	20
30%	55%	5%	10%	100%

**General comments**

*Only if it moves away from the school. To take all traffic OUT of the present village*

*Expanded school will need a safe drop off area.*

**Constructive comments and reservations**

*This area is already used for parking and drop off for the school*

*This would only be needed if the village grew.*

*I object to all your development proposals.*

*No. Don't built the development!*

*In theory parking and drop off would always be welcome but not at the sacrifice of a new development, loss of wildlife and unnecessary pressure on the school*

*New residents will need to use the new drop off and car park as pupil numbers will inevitably increase. This does not provide a benefit to existing parents.*

*This is just madness. We should be cutting down on the amount of traffic in the area not encouraging more.*

*We need long term investment on alternative travel arrangements, improved rural bus services.*

*This is still unlikely to be enough and given that I object to your entire plan it is completely pointless as it won't be needed*

*Providing such facilities will encourage car use. The school is within walking distance of current and proposed housing. Only parents (and carers) from outside Albourne would need to drive.*

**Question 8: Do you have any general comments about the proposals?**

N.B. This section also includes all written and email feedback received.

**Constructive comments and reservations**

**General objection to further building within Albourne**

*The whole idea makes me feel so sad that houses would be built in this area!*

*There are currently around 3000 houses being built in Burgess Hill, 1000 in Hassocks and 100+ in Sayers Common. All of these towns are a few miles from Albourne, so, therefore, why the need for more housing at this location.*

*I don't believe a new home site you propose is in the best interest of the village or villages close by.*

*I think that you'll find the overall strength of local feeling about your proposals to be negative.*

*The area will not cope with that amount of new housing. Nor does it need it*

*This is an awful plan that should be stopped.*

*As a close-knit community, we have begun developing our plan to unite against this proposal, we will explore and take every avenue possible to fight it.*

*I had a planning application for 2-storey side extension refused because it would change the character of Church Lane and set a precedent for other homeowners to do the same. It seems very clear to me that building 140 new homes in such proximity to Church Lane would have a much more devastating impact on the character of the area and the infrastructure of the village.*

*I am strongly against this development in our small village. This development, along with the proposed retirement village will completely change the area and its community.*

*You obviously care greatly about the local community... you didn't even have the time to address these proposals to the residents of each house hold in the village, you have no concern for the existing residents or the impact on the village.*

*We had a community referendum on the development of the village a few years ago and this was not within its remit, and therefore will not be welcomed by the existing residents. I am unsure what the point of this was if it is just to be ignored.*

*We already have highly accessible public spaces in his area and do not see how the building of 140 new houses would increase this space.*

*The School is already too small for local residents and badly requires a school sports hall and has no arts facility, I would imagine that the addition of 140 houses would increase the demand on the school and just reserving a space for development is not sufficient.*

*These developments will just turn our village into an out-of-town housing estate and lose the existing village and destroy some beautiful countryside.*

*This development is also in addition to all the existing developments both proposed and in progress within Albourne and in the surrounding villages, Sayers Common and Bolney to name but two. The last 10 years have seen a dramatic change to the local area.*

*Please be less greedy. The proposed development is just too big and will change the nature of the village forever. In particular the conservation area.*

*It is claimed that 30% of the housing will be affordable which means that 70% will be Unaffordable and will obviously be targeting buyers from outside the region. The infrastructure cannot cope now - this will make it worse.*

*The area proposed for public open space to the north of Church Lane is somewhat higher than the Lane itself and people walking in this public open space will be able to see over the hedges and into the homes of the residents of Church Lane thus compromising their privacy.*

### **Concern about development on a greenfield site**

*I am unsure why there is the constant need to build on (Green field) farmland in this area and on the boundaries of a national park, it is simply unacceptable*

*As for the benefits listed in your pamphlet:*

*A new development is not a benefit for this area of predominately farm land.*

*These developments will just turn our village into an out-of-town housing estate and lose the existing village and destroy some beautiful countryside*

*Please consider a smaller development that uses the northern half of the north field and orchard instead, with more of the site retaining its existing agricultural character.*

*I am not sure how you intend to restore tress and hedges that already have a rich eco system within and around them, and how you would support tis in the long term once the house have been sold and your company's interest has disappeared.*

*Please consider a smaller development that uses the northern half of the north field and orchard instead, with more of the site retaining its existing agricultural character.*

*I'm so disgusted by yet more plans to ruin our beautiful area and build yet more houses on our countryside!! I feel so lucky to live in such a lovely area, as do many others I know, and we are already having to endure more and more houses being built where we live. Soon there will be nothing left of the area we moved to and there will be no-one who can afford all these houses!!*

*Albourne and its surrounding villages are very prone to regular flooding and any extra building will impact and increase this - as it is, the flooding is getting worse every Autumn/Winter so that areas at Wellcroft Cottages in Church Lane now flood with the water originating from this land.*

*This land has several springs arising in it - hence Spring Cottage in Church Lane and until the 1970's -1980's the cottages in Church Lane all relied on this spring water for their supply until they were eventually connected to the mains. What will happen to these springs?*

*The Environment Agency flood map shows a water course running through the designated site - has this been taken into consideration?*

*The drainage sewers which run south through Church Lane frequently cause problems - have these been assessed for the extra burden a development of this size will cause.*

*The land in question is fertile, productive farmland which regularly grows oats, wheat, barley or maize - with the current situation regarding the production of food and the consequent soaring prices, it is madness to constantly build on farmland.*

*The Government has committed to building 300,000 houses per year - do they ALL have to be built in the South East?*

*The development will considerably reduce enjoyment of the footpath running EW through the site.*

*This is an area with relatively dark skies. The proposed development with light, both direct and scattered, from the houses and street lights would further pollute this.*

*In view of the current geopolitical situation, where it is becoming increasingly apparent that self-sufficiency in food will be necessary in the not too distant future, it seems very short-sighted to build on viable farm land.*

*During heavy rain, the water runoff from the field onto Church Lane can be sufficient to overwhelm the drainage system causing standing water in the Lane. The increased runoff caused by the proposed development would seem likely to exacerbate the situation.*

*Is DP12 being adhered to with the biodiversity of the land? We have so much wildlife here some of which has already been destroyed with The Nursery Barn building especially hedgehogs which as you will be aware is a protected species.  
There is already far too much development in this area (I live in Hurstpierpoint) This is another beautiful green area and should be left as it is.*

#### **Concern regarding local infrastructure**

*Not needed here. Local infrastructure cannot cope already. Ruins natural environment.*

*The addition of a shop will increase traffic, as it has already done with the opening of a village shop in Sayers common, which has made the main road more dangerous.*

*The infrastructure is not good enough in this area as it is, with poorly maintained roads, poor water supply (pressure), and poor internet connectivity.*

*The addition strain on the local infrastructure. The high street in Hurstpierpoint is already severely congested at peak times and during the weekend. This development and other planned development will only increase this problem.*

*I am not averse to additional homes being built but cannot see how the local infrastructure within this area will cope with 140 additional homes on this particular land. We are forever having power cuts, and issues with water and surely this will only make matters worse.*

*We have one GP surgery which is already oversubscribed and a small Dentist in Hurst high street, and very limited local shops.*

#### **Concerns relating to highways matters**

*In this area the transport links are poor. Low quality bus routes, a long distance to Hassocks (for a rail services), will only mean that this will introduce more commuting by vehicle, on already small roads. As the local economy will not support the jobs required to purchase these houses so would*

*think the majority of the new occupants will be commuting to work.*

*The proposed access for this development is on a dangerous corner, that is busy during commuting hours, school busses and parents dropping off children. This road is already cause of worry for all parents in the area.*

*The public transport from Albourne is very poor. The development will lead to a considerable number of additional cars and car journeys in the area.*

*The car park at Hassocks train station is already too small to cope with demand. Increasing commuter demand is likely to lead to higher parking fees and further inconvenience to local residents.*

*Church Lane is too small to accommodate anymore traffic and the local schools are small.*

*The Henfield Road is already far too busy and causes many accidents. Will the entrance to the village be from this road?*

#### **General comments and queries**

*What percentage are these 140 houses in relation to existing numbers of houses in Albourne and how many will be even affordable to locals?*

*Where are these newcomers working and shopping?*

*The offer of land to the School is ripe. Without your interference, the land would still be there.*

*We already have new homes in Sawyers Common, and a Retirement Village being built on the London Road which is already causing some disruption.*

# Response to comments

- 2.9.7 All comments received have been reviewed by the project team. Many of the issues raised are covered in the documents which accompany this response.
- 2.9.8 During the consultation feedback review period, Croudace's project team responded directly to a number of specific enquiries and questions relating to the proposals and individual responses were drafted and issued.

## 3. Post-Application Consultation

### 3.1 On-going Stakeholder Engagement

- 3.1.1 Given the interest shown by residents and stakeholders in the proposals, Croudace will ensure that information is shared through existing channels to interested parties.

## 4. Appendices

### 4.1 Stakeholder letter

Dear Councillor,

**RE: Land at Henfield Road, Albourne**

I am writing to introduce myself as the Strategic Land Promoter for Croudace Homes (Croudace), a well-established residential developer operating across the south-east. Croudace holds a long-term interest in the land at Henfield Road, Albourne, and is bringing forward proposals to deliver new homes and significant open space for the community.

As you may be aware, progress has stalled on Mid Sussex District Council's Local Plan review. It's last adopted local plan (2018) does not provide enough land to meet the need for new housing in the district. The right sites must therefore be found which are in sustainable locations that can be delivered for much-needed new housing without resulting in adverse impacts on the local communities or the environment.

In order to meet the need for new housing, we are proposing to bring forward new homes on part of the site and to establish substantial open space along with the provision of a community shop.

We will shortly commence a virtual consultation where we will be asking local residents and businesses what they would like to see included within the proposals for this site. The consultancy Built Environment Communications Group (BECG) is working with us to assist with the public consultation process. We have created a dedicated project website to share our proposals with the community: <https://albourne.consultationonline.co.uk/>

As an important stakeholder, we would welcome the opportunity to discuss your ideas for this site in more detail and to answer any questions you may have before we progress with our wider

engagement work. This meeting would be held via video-conferencing or telephone if you would prefer.

As a family-owned business, Croudace is committed to building high-quality new homes with first-class customer service, and it is this commitment that has seen us earn 5-star home builder customer satisfaction. Croudace's strength lies in the special attention to the internal and external design of our homes, as well as careful consideration for our social and environmental responsibilities. The new housing that we want to bring forward will encapsulate the ethos of our brand and will be something that the village can be proud of.

We will be in touch with you shortly to discuss a meeting further, but in the meantime please do get in touch on **0800 298 7040** if you have any queries or would like to discuss the plans further.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Challenger  
Strategic Land Manager  
Croudace Homes



Sent by Reece Pugh  
For and on behalf of Croudace Homes

## 4.2 Information newsletter

### COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Land at Henfield Road, Albourne

Croudace  
HOMES.CO.UK



Croudace Homes (Croudace) is bringing forward proposals to develop land at Henfield Road, Albourne with a landscape-led development of up to 140 new homes, 30% of which will be affordable. In addition, Croudace will be offering land that is safeguarded for the potential future expansion of the primary school, should this be required, along with dedicated school parking and drop-off area.

We are committed to consulting with the local community on our proposals. Before we submit our Outline proposals for the site to Mid Sussex District Council, we are keen to hear the views of the wider community on our initial plans. We are hosting a virtual public exhibition where you can find out more about our proposals for the site and provide your comments on our framework plan.

We have circulated this newsletter to encourage you to take part in our community consultation on our draft proposals, prior to the submission of an Outline planning application. Please see the reverse of this leaflet for more information on how to get involved.



### Tell us your views

Croudace will be running a community consultation regarding the proposals for new homes and parkland on land at Henfield Road, and we are keen to receive feedback from residents and other important local stakeholders.

To ensure as many people can participate as possible, we are undertaking a virtual public consultation of our draft plans, hosted on our project website, that will allow you to both explore our initial proposals in detail and respond to them with your views, comments, and suggestions.

The website will be open for comments:  
**At: [albourne.consultationonline.co.uk](https://albourne.consultationonline.co.uk)**  
**Between: 24th June - 8th July 2022**

You can leave feedback by:

- Email: [feedback@consultation-online.co.uk](mailto:feedback@consultation-online.co.uk)
- Phone: 0800 298 7040 - leave a message and a member of our project team will call you back
- Submitting the feedback form on our project website

### What if I don't have access to the Internet?

Croudace Homes is keen to ensure that as many members of the local community as possible are able to engage with our consultation.

If you do not have access to the internet, please contact us via our freephone information line - 0800 298 7040 - and a member of our project team will post the consultation materials and a feedback form out to you, enabling you to view and comment on our draft plans.

### About Croudace Homes

Croudace was founded in 1946 and to this day remains a family owned business.

We are committed to building high-quality homes backed up with a first-class customer service. Our strength lies in the care and attention given to the internal and external design, specification of fixtures and fittings, and a quality finish.

This applies equally to the buildings and the landscaping and surroundings which enhance the street scene. Our expertly designed homes are built by experienced professionals using high-quality materials, fixtures, and fittings.

The social and environmental effects of the developments we design and build are always considered and we take our responsibility towards the immediate and wider community seriously.

Incorporating play areas and sports facilities, protecting local wildlife, and hosting community events and raising money for charity are all part of a commitment to make Croudace developments desirable and socially pleasant places to live.

### Key Benefits of the Plans

Development at land at Henfield Road, Albourne, will deliver a host of key benefits, which will include:

- A new residential development located adjacent to Henfield Road (B2116)
- Restoration of existing trees and hedgerows in addition to planting of new trees and landscaping
- Proposals that are designed to complement and enhance the existing settlement form of Albourne
- Up to 140 individually designed homes comprising 30% affordable homes to help meet local housing needs
- Fully accessible, high-quality public open spaces set within carefully considered landscaping
- Croudace is committed to sustainable construction methods, utilising renewable technologies, as recognised by the Government's new Future Homes Standard
- New buildings delivered to a high standard of design seeking to complement the character of the surrounding area
- Protection of existing wildlife habitats and creation of new ones, targeting at least a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain at this site
- Full retention of the existing public right of way as part of a highly permeable development incorporating new pedestrian and cycle routes
- Provision of land safeguarded for potential expansion of the primary school, along with additional parking and improved pedestrian access
- A community shop is at the entrance to the site with shared parking for the school
- Creating local jobs during the construction phase

### Questions?

If you have any queries, please contact our Freephone information line on **0800 298 7040** or email us at [feedback@consultation-online.co.uk](mailto:feedback@consultation-online.co.uk)

We look forward to hearing from you and hope you find this newsletter useful.