Hearing Statement: MM60 Land East and West of Malthouse Lane, Burgess Hill

Examination of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2021–2039

Matter 7 (continued): sites added by the draft Main Modifications

Hearing session: Tuesday 3 November 2026, 10:30

Representor: Clive Jarman

Introduction

1. I am a local resident living close to the junction of Jane Murray Way and London Road. I object to MM60, which I consider unsound for the reasons set out below.

2. My principal objection is that the evidence does not show that the existing road network, including Danworth Lane and Malthouse Lane, and a new roundabout on Jane Murray Way can be used safely. In addition, 54 hectares of countryside, habitats and wildlife connectivity, part of the Green Circle and public access to the land would be lost forever.

3. On a personal note, I can join the Green Circle and walk uninterrupted from London Road to Malthouse Lane and back. For many years this has given me over 5.5km of walking that is available all year round. I have found this very beneficial to my health, as no doubt have the many walkers, cyclists and horse riders I see and meet on a regular basis. I also use the public footpaths that criss-cross MM60, which give a true sense of being in the countryside.

a. Movement

Form of access from Jane Murray Way

Jane Murray Way and Sussex Way have a total of eight roundabouts. Their average inscribed circle diameter (ICD), the overall width of the roundabout carriageway, is approximately 40m, not including footways and flared approaches. A roundabout of similar size on Jane Murray Way adjacent to B&Q, with footways and flared junctions, would occupy land outside the developer's control, including land belonging to the WSCC highway authority, MSDC and B&Q.

In addition, a separate controlled crossing (Toucan type) would be required for safety between the new roundabout and the Tesco roundabout, again requiring land outside the developer's control. A Pegasus crossing for horses, cyclists and pedestrians would also be

required on the MM60 access road, set back from the roundabout and junction flares to allow safe crossing.

No evidence has been provided that two roundabouts can function safely when they are so close to each other (approximately 270m centre to centre).

No information has been provided as to how a roundabout of this size could be constructed. The location is constrained by B&Q / Boeing on one side and by the Green Circle, Maltings Grange and Maltings Livery on the other. It could not be built without closing Jane Murray Way and the Green Circle and causing considerable disruption to traffic. Disruption was experienced at length when B&Q was constructed, and for a shorter period earlier this year when crossings were installed to allow pedestrians to move safely between public rights of way.

The access road from MM60 onto Jane Murray Way would cut through and disconnect the Green Circle, fundamentally changing its nature. Both MSDC and BHTC have stated in their policies that the Green Circle is protected from development, and they have continued to improve it over many years, including improved access in 2026. Instead of unrestricted views across fields to the South Downs, users would look at a housing development.

Other developments in Burgess Hill are required to extend and enhance the Green Circle because of its known benefits, not diminish it as MM60 would.

The Green Circle is not just a walking route but also a major wildlife corridor and, in my opinion, a 'health and habitat zone'.

Without a junction design, evidence that the land needed is available, an assessment of whether two closely spaced roundabouts can operate safely, or any construction proposals, MM60 has not been shown to be deliverable. The allocation is therefore not effective, and the access proposals are not justified by proportionate evidence.

Proposals for buses, cycling, wheeling and walking and connectivity between the two parcels, the town centre and the station

No evidence has been provided that the connection between the two parcels can function safely for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and horses all moving between the parcels and Malthouse Lane.

In the absence of any evidence from the promoter on the walking route into Burgess Hill town centre and the railway station, I have used Google Maps. This shows the shortest route from Jane Murray Way going through part of the industrial estate. That route is inadequate: it lacks suitable crossing points, dropped kerbs, tactile paving and street lighting.

The Tesco roundabout presents a particular problem, as its junctions and crossing points were not designed to safely accommodate an additional 750 homes. From personal experience of walking to B&Q, the Charles Avenue junction with the Tesco roundabout is

particularly hazardous: there is no line of sight to see traffic turning left from the A273 into Charles Avenue. I would not want to cross there with children.

I can find no evidence of how the site would be served by buses: whether services would run into the site, how far residents would have to walk to a bus stop, or how frequent services would be.

The evidence does not show that MM60 can be safely connected between its two parcels, or to the town centre and the station, for people walking, cycling, wheeling, riding or using buses. The allocation is not justified.

Effect on the surrounding road network and highway safety for all users, including school children and horse riders, taking into account mitigation measures

The surrounding road network, particularly Danworth Lane (3.0m wide) and Malthouse Lane (5.5m wide), is not safe for all users in its current condition. For example, on Malthouse Lane I have had to pull over for oncoming lorries because of the lack of space.

There is reference to Danworth Lane improvements, but there is no evidence of what this would mean for a rural road barely 3.0m wide. It would no doubt require complete reconstruction along its entire length.

I can find no information on whether Malthouse Lane will be improved. Again, this is a substandard road that is not safe for all users. The hazards at the Tesco roundabout described above would apply equally to school children walking to and from the site.

Because the mitigation measures have not been defined, it cannot be concluded that the effect on the surrounding road network and on the safety of all users, including school children and horse riders, would be acceptable. The allocation is not justified.

b. Landscape, countryside and heritage

Effect on the separate identity of settlements taking into account landscaping and planting buffers

MM60 would be imposing on the landscape because it would be built on high ground. In particular, the land around Scotches Farm is 5.0m above Herrings Stream. When viewed from the fields and public rights of way near Hurst Wickham, MM60 would be clearly visible above the existing trees, giving the feeling that there is little separation between Burgess Hill and Hurstpierpoint.
Similarly, when viewed from Hammonds Meadows, houses would be seen above the existing hedgerow and the view of the Downs would be lost. Planting buffers would have little effect.

Effect on the significance of heritage assets

Views from the footpaths around MM60 of the spire of Holy Trinity Church, Hurstpierpoint, and the tower of Hurstpierpoint College Chapel would be lost. These views are part of how these buildings are experienced in their landscape setting.

Effect on the countryside and access to it, trees, woodland and wildlife

The impact of MM60 on the immediate landscape would be enormous. Many footpaths cross the site and would be re-routed through the development. I, and everyone who uses them, would lose the feeling of being in the countryside, the views of the South Downs, and the health benefits we get from them. Herrings Stream and the land beyond would feel cut off and inaccessible.

The hedgerows within the site are substantial and have been in existence for at least 150 years (they appear on OS maps from the 1870s). They provide habitat and corridors for many species, which would be lost when the hedgerows are removed for development.

Herrings Stream is an essential wildlife corridor. My own observations include carp, trout (identified by a local angler as brook trout), kingfishers, owls, birds of prey and at least three species of bat, all of which would be severely affected by MM60. The land on the south side of the stream is outside the proposed allocation, and its owner has told me he intends to keep it largely unchanged. The north bank, within MM60, is therefore critical to the corridor as a whole.

These observations contradict the Sustainability Appraisal of the Main Modifications (July 2026), which scores the site 0 against Objective 7, Biodiversity and Geodiversity, stating that "no or low impacts are identified on biodiversity assets".

The score appears to reflect only the absence of formal designations. Under the Appraisal's own scoring key, effects on "undesignated yet recognised local receptors", such as these hedgerows and Herrings Stream, should score at least minor negative.

MM60 would cause permanent harm to the landscape, the separation between settlements, the setting of heritage assets, the Green Circle and an important wildlife corridor. The evidence base, including the Sustainability Appraisal's biodiversity score, does not reflect what is actually there, so the allocation is not justified.

Conclusion

For the reasons above, MM60 is not justified by proportionate evidence and has not been shown to be deliverable, so it is not effective. It would also cause irreversible harm to the countryside, the Green Circle and wildlife habitats. I respectfully ask the Inspector to recommend that MM60 is deleted from the Main Modifications and that the site is not allocated.