

Bolney Parish Council

Written representation submitted

In relation to Matter 7

Bolney Parish Council submits this written representation ahead of the upcoming Examination hearings set to commence on 24th February 2026, in relation to Matter 7 (sites DPSC3 to DPSC7) and the issue raised by the Planning Inspector in his note 'Matters and Issues for Examination' dated 13th January 2026:

'b) The implications for the wider transport network (including the impact on nearby communities) and how necessary mitigation measures would be delivered'.

The Parish Council is concerned what the impact of 2,500 new homes proposed at Sayers Common (DPSC3 to 7) and 1,350 new homes proposed on the west side of Burgess Hill (DPSC1) will have on the highway network through the Parish of Bolney and particularly the rural country lanes and the junctions on the A272 Cowfold Road.

Since the last Examination hearings in October 2024, the developer of DPSC3 Land South of Reeds Lane, Sayers Common has produced a Masterplan Framework Document on which Bolney Parish Council wishes to make representations.

Background

At a recent consultation event on 30th January 2026 organised by Berkeley Homes (the developer of Site DPSC3 Land South of Reeds Lane) indicated that it was proposed to downgrade Reeds Lane in Sayers Common by closing the middle section of the lane to vehicle traffic, leaving it open to cyclists and pedestrians only so as to create an active travel route. The developer's Masterplan Framework Document proposes through traffic trips could instead use the Henfield Road, the new spine road through the development site and the A23 "as appropriate using the main junctions". At the consultation event, a representative of the developer suggested that through traffic could also use Twineham Lane.

Bolney Parish Council's concerns

The A272 Cowfold Road runs east/west through the Parish. It forms part of WSCC's Primary Route Network, and according to the most recent Department for Transport's Traffic Survey, 19,161 vehicles a day use the section of the A272 between Cowfold and the junction of the A23 in Bolney.

The high volume of daily traffic on the A272 results in congestion at several key road junctions in the Parish, particularly:

1. at the T-junction where the northbound A23 slip road/London Road joins the A272 by the Marylands Warehouse development; and
2. the Bolney Chapel Road/Foxhole Lane crossroads with the A272.

1. The T-junction of the northbound A23 slip road/London Road and the A272

Because of the high volume of daily traffic along the A272 in Bolney, turning right out of the T-junction from the northbound A23 slip road onto the A272 towards Cowfold can be very difficult and queues build up on the A23 northbound exit slip road, particularly, in peak hours. This means frustrated drivers regularly take risks and jump across the junction, resulting in almost weekly accidents and near misses.

To avoid the queues at this junction, a well-used alternative is that vehicles wishing to exit the northbound A23 to join the A272, instead leave the A23 northbound at the Hickstead junction, travel along Hickstead Lane and then turn north along Bolney Chapel Road so as to join the A272 at the crossroads with the A272 and Foxhole Lane.

This alternative route already results in queues down Bolney Chapel Road in peak hours.

2. the Twineham Lane/Bolney Chapel Road/Foxhole Lane crossroads with the A272

Twineham Lane runs in a northerly direction from the Henfield Road B2116 in the south through Twineham where the lane becomes Bolney Chapel Road and on to Bolney where it meets the A272 at a crossroads with the A272 and Foxhole Lane.

Twineham Lane/Bolney Chapel Road is a narrow rural lane with no road markings or pedestrian pavements. In places the lane is single track which makes passing difficult. There are three narrow bridges where vehicles are unable to pass alongside each other. Parts of the lane are residential and residents regularly park their cars on the lane, thereby restricting the use of the lane by through traffic. At the junction with the A272, the lane is narrow with residential properties on either side and visibility in both directions is poor. Approximately 25m to the east of the crossroads, there is access to a small industrial estate and a petrol station forecourt. Traffic regularly backs up in both directions along the A272 while vehicles wait to enter the small garage forecourt, and accidents along this section of road are frequent.

On 18th November 2025, MSDC granted outline planning permission (DM/25/1129) for 200 homes on land at Foxhole Farm, Bolney with a single access onto the A272 directly opposite the petrol station forecourt. The site was proposed for allocation in the draft District Plan as Policy DPA14. At the District Planning Committee meeting during which the planning application was discussed, several members of the District Planning Committee themselves, together with residents and representatives from both Bolney and Twineham Parish Councils, expressed concerns about the effects of increased traffic from the development on the local roads, and in particular the safety of the proposed access onto the A272. This section of the A272 is already a known accident 'black spot'.

Bolney Parish Council is concerned that without proper mitigation, the queues, congestion and accidents on roads in the Parish will be exacerbated by the increase in traffic from the 3,850 new homes proposed at Sayers Common and Burgess Hill, and the inevitable impact that this increase in traffic will have on the T-junction of the northbound A23 slip road and the A272, and on the crossroads of Bolney Chapel Road, Foxhole Lane and the A272.

Existing mitigation measures:

1. The Northern Arc housing development DM/18/5114

In 2018, a planning application was made (DM/18/5114) to MSDC for the Northern Arc housing development for 3,500 homes on the north western edge of Burgess Hill which had been allocated in the adopted 2018 District Plan (Policy DP9).

During the planning process, West Sussex Highways commented on 4th February 2019 that, as the impact of the increase in traffic from the proposed development on the T-junction of London Road (the northbound slip road from the A23) with the A272 was classed as 'material', measures were required 'to deter proposed development traffic from using the junction'. This was followed by a holding objection from Highways

England dated 10th February 2019 as Highways England said it was unable to support the development without proposals to deter development traffic from using the T-junction.

In a Transport Assessment Addendum dated 12th August 2019 prepared by AECOM (the transport consultants) in the Northern Arc planning application, the report notes that without mitigation, and not taking into account the Northern Arc new housing numbers, the junction will be at capacity by 2037. It states that 'the A23/London Road mitigation involving the upgrading of the junction to a signalised junction is proposed considering the length of the predicted queues on the London Road arm of the junction' and produced a drawing number SK-0015 entitled 'Cowfold Road Junction Improvements' dated 12th August 2019. On 4th October 2019 Highways England withdrew its objection to the planning application on the condition that signalisation of the T-junction of London Road and the A272 would be completed before occupation of the 400th dwelling. The Decision Notice for the Northern Arc development is dated 4th October 2019 and Informative 18 sets out the proposed upgrade of the junction before the occupation of the 400th dwelling as requested by Highways England. The signalisation work at the junction has not yet taken place.

Bolney Parish Council was not consulted on the proposals for signalisation of the T-junction and would have objected to the proposals. The mitigation strategy was to deter the use of the junction, not improve its efficiency and capacity. The Parish Council is concerned that traffic lights at the junction will simply mean that more vehicles will seek to use the exit from the A23 at Hickstead and access the A272 at the crossroads with Bolney Chapel Road, thereby putting more stress on the unsuitable narrow rural lanes and a substandard crossroads that is already struggling to cope with existing traffic.

2. Marylands Warehouse development DM/20/2640

In 2020 a planning application was made to MSDC to redevelop the 'Marylands' site and to construct three warehouse units on a site adjacent to the junction of the A23 northbound slip road/London Road and the A272 in Bolney. Initially, the developer offered a roundabout to replace the problematic T-junction of A23 northbound slip road/London Road and the A272 and offered land as part of the planning proposal to create the roundabout. However, this offer was withdrawn because MSDC advised that there were already proposals to signalise the junction even though the basis for these proposals was to deter drivers from using the junction, not to improve junction capacity. Instead the developer redesigned the junction to create two lanes at the junction so that vehicles exiting the northbound A23 and wishing to turn left onto the A272 towards Ansty could do so without being caught in the queue of traffic wishing to turn right towards Cowfold.

Despite the changes to the junction as part of the Marylands development, queues at the junction are still common, particularly at peak hours, and can still back up onto the northbound A23 carriageway.

The result of these two mitigation measures is that traffic still attempts to avoid the A23/A272 T-junction by leaving the northbound A23 at Hickstead and using Twineham Lane/Bolney Chapel Road to access the A272 in Bolney. Additional traffic from the 3,850 new homes at Sayers Common and on the west side of Burgess Hill will only exacerbate these existing problems.

Mitigation proposed in the draft District Plan

Systra, the traffic consultant for the District Plan Review, has produced several traffic models all which assess that the increased traffic from the additional housing in the draft District Plan will have a 'Significant' impact on the T-junction of the northbound A23 slip road with A272.

However at paragraph 8.3.2 of the latest Mid Sussex Transport Study Scenario 6 Interim Report dated 26th January 2026 (T10 the District Plan Evidence Base) the Report states that although the off slip diverge assessment triggers an upgrade of the northbound A23 slip road junction with the A272, an upgrade of the junction is not feasible as ‘the diverge commences on a bridge over pass’.

Paragraph 8.3.7 notes that discussions with National Highways are ongoing for improvements to the junction.

Conclusion

Bolney Parish Council asks that the Planning Inspector takes a holistic approach when assessing the impact of all the proposed housing developments on the west side of Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill and asks that he consider whether the proposed upgrades to the existing highway network will be sufficient to accommodate the increased traffic from the new homes. That is, not just to consider the two sustainable communities proposed at Burgess Hill and Sayers Common, but also the smaller housing developments proposed for allocation in the District Plan, particularly that at Foxhole Farm in Bolney for 200 homes that has already been granted outline planning permission. All of these developments will inevitably impact negatively on the efficiency of the wider local road network, including in Bolney.

The draft District Plan talks of active travel and buses, but the reality for small rural communities such as Bolney is that there are no cycle paths to connect to the nearer larger communities for daily needs, and the bus service is limited with no services at all on some days. The result is that residents have no option but to rely on private vehicles to access essential services and will continue to do so in the future. It is therefore essential that the road network operates effectively for both existing and future road users.

The Parish Council is concerned that the two junctions in the Parish highlighted above – the T-junction of the northbound A23 slip road junction with the A272 and the crossroads of Bolney Chapel Road and the A272 – are already struggling with the volume of daily traffic and it is imperative that proper mitigation measures are secured in this District Plan review to ensure that these junctions can operate efficiently at increased capacity.

The proposals in the Northern Arc development plan to signalise the T-junction of the A23 northbound slip road with the A272 in order to deter drivers from using the junction are outdated given the increased housing numbers proposed in the draft District Plan. The plans for the T-junction must be revisited and the assessments revised based on the increased traffic from the both the new homes to be built as part of the Northern Arc development, plus the proposed housing numbers in the draft District Plan. The proposals to signalise the junction will simply put additional pressure on the A23 Hickstead junction and Twineham Lane/Bolney Chapel Road. It is of concern to the Parish Council that the developer of DPSC3 for 1,850 dwellings is further suggesting that through traffic from the Sayers Common area should also use this route as well.

The Parish Council asks that instead of investigating ways to deter drivers from using the A23/A272 junction and thereby put pressure on other smaller unsuitable junctions, National Highways and West Sussex Highways should rather be directed by the Inspector to look at solutions to improve the capacity of the T-junction. The Parish Council suggests a starting point would be to replace the T-junction with a roundabout. The Parish Council also asks that the crossroads of Bolney Chapel Road and the A272 should be upgraded to accommodate the additional traffic in order to ensure highways safety, especially with the access proposed from the Foxhole Farm development onto the same stretch of the A272.

Bolney Parish Council
19th February 2026