



SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

Beeson House, 26 Lintot Square,
Fairbank Road, Southwater,
West Sussex RH13 9LA

Planning Department
Horsham District Council
Albery House
Springfield Road
Horsham RH12 2GB

28 November 2025

Dear Sirs

Re: Objection to Planning Application DC/25/1658

Woodfords Shipley Road Southwater Horsham West Sussex RH13 9BQ - Reserved matters application for the erection of up to 73no. dwellings, open space and child play provision, residential parking facilities and associated infrastructure, including access arrangements following outline application DC/21/2180, relating to layout, scale, appearance and landscaping.

Southwater Parish Council objects to the Reserved Matters application for Woodfords, Shipley Road (DC/25/1658) (layout, scale, appearance, landscaping and access arrangements, pursuant to outline permission DC/21/2180) for the following reasons.

The Parish Council notes that the principle of development has already been established through the outline permission. This representation is therefore directed to whether the reserved matters details deliver an acceptable scheme and adequately mitigate impacts, with particular regard to the neighbouring community of Southwater, which will experience the main day to day effects of the development.

1. Affordable housing provision

While the application claims to deliver 40% affordable housing, the key test is whether the affordable housing is the right size and tenure mix to meet local needs, and whether it is secured through the S106. Policy 16 expects qualifying schemes to provide affordable housing and to deliver an appropriate mix of sizes, types and tenures, with a tenure aim of 70% rented and 30% intermediate, subject to up to date evidence. The original application had stated up to 100% affordable housing. Despite this, the suggested allocation is insufficient:

- There is no provision for 1-bedroom units, despite there being identified local need for smaller homes.
- The affordable mix is skewed towards 2-bed units (16 rented, 4 shared ownership) with only 4 rented 3-bed units, failing to meet the demand for family-sized affordable homes.
- The Southwater Neighbourhood Plan and Parish Design Statement emphasise housing diversity and meeting local needs, which this scheme does not achieve.

Given the site's functional relationship with Southwater (including the RH13 postcode and day to day reliance on Southwater services), the LPA is requested to ensure the affordable mix is justified by robust evidence and, if necessary, revised to include smaller units and a more balanced range of family housing.

2. Disproportionate number of large private homes

The scheme proposes 15 four plus bedroom open market homes, representing 21% of total units, compared to the SHMA target of 15%. This over-provision of large houses:

- Conflicts with the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan and Parish Design Statement, which seeks a balanced mix and discourages dominance of large executive homes.
- Risks creating an exclusive enclave rather than an inclusive community.

In reserved matters terms, the over provision of larger dwellings also has a knock on effect on parking demand, massing, plot widths, and the overall form of the development.

3. Parking provision and highway impact

The application proposes 171.5 spaces for 73 dwellings, which equates to ~2.35 spaces per dwelling. While this meets WSCC standards on paper, there are concerns that:

- Visitor parking is limited (15 spaces), likely leading to overspill onto Shipley Road and onto surrounding roads used by Southwater residents, or blocked access ways on the development.
- The apartment block (three storeys) and maisonettes rely on communal parking, which may not be sufficient for multi-car households.
- Increased traffic will exacerbate congestion on Shipley Road and Worthing Road, routes already identified as at capacity in Southwater's Neighbourhood Plan evidence base.
- No clear commitment to traffic calming measures or relocation of speed limit signage, despite previous safety audits highlighting accident risks.

Southwater Parish Council previously highlighted that drivers accelerate rapidly where the speed limit changes near the site, that a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit recommended relocation of the speed limit signage, and that the Transport Statement refers to serious and fatal collisions in this location. The reserved matters should therefore secure safe access arrangements and associated highway mitigation, consistent with HDPF Policy 40 (including safe and suitable access for all users, and Travel Plan measures where necessary).

4. Design and character

The introduction of a three-storey apartment block is in direct conflict with the Southwater Design Statement, which states:

- Development should respect the rural edge and avoid urbanising features.
- Building heights should generally be two storeys; three-storey flats are inappropriate and visually intrusive. The proposed design does not integrate with Southwater's established character and fails to reflect the principles of vernacular architecture and farmstead-style layouts encouraged by the Design Statement and visible through Southwater and Shipley.

In addition, the Parish Council is concerned that the apartment block and associated parking courts create an urban form at the rural edge. The design should demonstrate how height, massing, rooflines, materials, boundary treatments and landscaping respond to the site context and soften views from Shipley Road and the wider landscape.

5. Infrastructure and community impact

Although the site lies within the Shipley Parish, future residents will rely heavily on Southwater infrastructure:

- Schools, healthcare facilities, and community services.
- Roads and transport infrastructure.

Yet no S106 or CIL contributions are allocated to Southwater, creating an inequitable situation where Southwater bears the impact without benefit.

The Parish Council recognises that CIL receipts and council tax are administered by statutory rules and are not, in themselves, determinative planning matters. However, the impacts of the development are a material consideration. In line with HDPF Policy 39, the LPA should ensure there is sufficient capacity in local infrastructure, including off site infrastructure, and that any necessary mitigation is secured by planning obligation or other appropriate mechanism. Where evidence shows impacts fall on

Southwater facilities or the Southwater highway network, mitigation and contributions should be directed accordingly, irrespective of parish boundary.

Whilst the travel plan highlights the nearest bus stops, it fails to consider that this bus stop is not operational after 7:30pm due to the restricted residential roads.

Given the limited bus service in rural parts of the district, the scheme should not overstate sustainable travel options. The applicant should demonstrate realistic walking and cycling connectivity into Southwater and provide deliverable mitigation through the Travel Plan.

6. Policies breached

Whilst the development does not sit within the Southwater Parish, it is situated directly on the border and needs to take into consideration the design requirements for the area. As such the following aspects are not considered:

- Southwater Neighbourhood Plan: Policies on housing mix, design quality, and infrastructure capacity.
- Southwater Parish Design Statement and SNP Policy 16: Guidance on building heights, rural character, and integration.
- HDPF Policy 16: Requires an appropriate mix of housing sizes, types and tenures, and sets affordable housing expectations, including consideration of tenure and unit mix against evidence of need.
- HDPF Policy 39: Requires adequate infrastructure capacity, including off site capacity, and securing mitigation to serve the development in time.
- HDPF Policy 40 & 41: Safe and suitable access, credible sustainable transport measures (including Travel Plan where necessary), and adequate parking provision that balances highway safety, amenity and good design.

7. Conclusion

Southwater Parish Council strongly objects to this application on grounds of:

- Inappropriate design and scale.
- Poor housing mix and lack of smaller affordable units.
- Over-provision of large private homes.
- Insufficient parking and unresolved highway safety concerns.
- Unmanaged and unfair infrastructure burden on Southwater, with inadequate secured mitigation.

If the Committee is minded to approve, we request:

- Removal or redesign of the three storey apartment block, including reduction in height and massing, and/or redesign to a form that better reflects edge of settlement character.
- Enhanced parking provision and a parking layout that avoids overspill and obstruction, and guaranteed traffic calming measures, including addressing the speed limit transition on Shipley Road and any Road Safety Audit recommendations.
- Financial contributions towards Southwater's infrastructure and services where the impacts are evidenced to fall on Southwater, secured through appropriate mitigation that meets the tests for planning obligations, and consistent with HDPF Policy 39.

Yours sincerely



JULIE CROWHURST
Assistant Executive Officer