

**From:** Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 21 May 2025 14:59:52 UTC+01:00  
**To:** "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Comments for Planning Application DC/25/0629  
**Categories:** Comments Received

## Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 21/05/2025 2:59 PM.

### Application Summary

Address:	Former Novartis Site Parsonage Road Horsham West Sussex RH12 5AA
Proposal:	Residential development comprising approximately 206 dwellings, including the conversion of 'Building 3' and demolition of 'Building 36'. Vehicular access taken from Wimblehurst Road. Car and cycle parking, landscaping and open space and associated works. The replacement of the existing cedar trees at the site.
Case Officer:	Jason Hawkes

[Click for further information](#)

### Customer Details

Address: Rosedene 10 North Heath Lane Horsham West Sussex

### Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Design</li><li>- Highway Access and Parking</li><li>- Other</li><li>- Overdevelopment</li><li>- Trees and Landscaping</li></ul>
Comments:	Although we do not object to the land being developed, and we do accept we need more housing in the area, we object to the

application both to remove the cedar trees and to build 206 homes on this part of the site for the following reasons:

1. The application process, whereby this is only for half of the site: This is only for one half of the site (the western side, developed by Lovells), whereas there is obviously another application to build 244 homes on the eastern side, developed by Muse. The whole process has not been very transparent, and quite misleading to anyone unaware that the site is split in two: how can any impact assessment on traffic, water, biodiversity, drainage etc be taken seriously when the 2 parts of the site are listed on the planning portal as separate applications? Both must surely be considered together for any sense to be made of the whole situation?

2. The removal of the 9 cedar trees:

This is appalling. These trees are beautiful, mature specimens of - according to the IUCN Red List - an endangered tree, and have had TPOs on them since 1990. They have been an integral part of the local north Horsham urban landscape since the 1930s, and it is clear from newspaper and Parish Council articles, and the documents on the former planning permission granted in 2018, that the aim by the former landowner Novartis, and the current landowner WSCC, was to retain these trees. The planning permission granted in 2018 designed the buildings and allowed for the retention of the trees along the Boulevard; it is therefore unclear why this new planning application has re-designed the site and now states the trees must be removed. The developers have been telling the public that the trees have been 'neglected', and they have had a Tree Survey completed in January 2025 that grades the trees as B, C and U; it seems strange that merely 7 years ago the WSCC Design and Access Statement graded all 9 trees as A standard. How can mature, slow-growing trees, that require little maintenance according to the Royal Horticultural Society, have degenerated so much in just 7 years? Most of the trees are perfectly healthy and they are not 'neglected', as can be seen by anyone who passes the site. The developers should redesign the site to allow for the retention of the trees, put root barriers in, and remove the lower boughs and crown lift to make them more stable. To permit their felling would go against Horsham District Council's own Climate Action Plan, as well as the NPPF, not to mention making a mockery of the whole TPO system.

3. The impact on highways:

The junction on Wimblehurst Road has been deemed a dangerous one, which is why Novartis made it an entry-only route in the 1970s. It is very close to both the bridge over the railway crossing and a busy mini-roundabout. WSCC Highways have stated in their Consultation Response that there is already an acknowledgement that the traffic is going to be untenable at the mini roundabout in the future (no doubt partly due to the development of Mowbray to the north); it is therefore

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incomprehensible how a development can be given permission for 450 homes on the WHOLE site. If it is, what assurances will there be by WSCC to adapt this junction so that it can cope with the projected increase in traffic?

The public 'consultation' held by the developers on 12 December in Roffey Millennium Hall made a big point of stating that there would be less traffic with 100% housing, than if it was a mixed use site (for which planning consent had already been given). That may be so for traffic entering the site in the mornings, and leaving late afternoon, but doesn't consider the impact of the opposite being the case when it is 100% housing, together with the impact of increased traffic movements during evenings and weekends when the site is 100% housing instead of mixed use.

The whole site (not just this application) is proposing 450 homes, with just over 550 parking spaces; this is clearly not enough.

Where will extra cars of residents park? Where will any visitors park, other than on local roads?

There has been a huge missed opportunity to build a foot/cycle bridge over the railway line to Foundry Lane; this would clearly reduce traffic movements as there would be a quick, safe route for residents to get to the town centre/railway station without using a car. If this housing development is granted permission to go ahead, it should be a condition of the development, and would align with current council and national frameworks to reduce car use/emissions for the future, as well as contribute towards a 'vision-led' development as mentioned in the WSCC Highways Consultation Response.

#### 4. The Local Plan:

The current Local Plan states that the eastern side of the former Novartis site will be a mixed use development, creating employment opportunities; taking both applications into consideration, proposing 450 homes instead, therefore goes against the current Local Plan for the District.

#### 5. Biodiversity Net Gain:

It would seem, despite looking like there is lots of landscaping and new tree-planting, that there will be a net loss of 70.88% biodiversity from this part of the site, rather than a necessary 10% gain for new developments. The mature urban trees on the site contribute 16.18 of the baseline 25.02 Habitat Units; felling 33 of the current 44 trees (including the 9 cedar trees), and replanting with about 80 trees, will only add 1.1 Habitat Units. This illustrates how much biodiversity those cedar trees currently support. It seems bizarre that off-site compensation can be purchased, but details of who the providers are, and where they are located, don't need to be made available until planning permission is given. What assurances will there be that a provider will be obtained, and what are the consequences if this doesn't happen?

#### 6. Water neutrality:

The same can be said for water neutrality issues, whereby a

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deficit can be solved through SNOWS; what if this doesn't happen? The implications on the local drainage system of installing new pipework, and feeding it into the existing network, will be huge.

7. Contaminated land:

Some of the documents state that the land is contaminated, with petrochemical hydrocarbons and asbestos being two named substances. An explanation of how this will be prevented from becoming airborne once building starts, and the risks posed to the local residents if it does, is surely required. It also poses the question whether the land is suitable for residential use and gardens?

8. Protected species:

A pair of nesting peregrines are confirmed to be on site; we see and hear them most days from our garden. It is unclear, therefore, why the developer's main Application document has ticked that no protected species are on site? There is also evidence from the Biodiversity documents on the application that there are bat roosting sites in the trees and the building; again, why has the main Application document ticked that there are no protected species on site?

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Kind regards

**Telephone:**

**Email:** [planning@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:planning@horsham.gov.uk)



**Horsham  
District  
Council**

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**Horsham District Council, Albery House, Springfield Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 2GB**  
Telephone: 01403 215100 (calls may be recorded) [www.horsham.gov.uk](http://www.horsham.gov.uk) Chief Executive: Jane E aton