



18th July 2023

For the attention of Planning Department

Horsham Golf Park DC/23/1178 – outline application

Although Planning Application DC/23/1178 is not in the Horsham Forest neighbourhood, Denne Hill is visible and easily accessible for many of our residents. It is well documented that there are major benefits to physical and mental health by taking part in outdoor activities. In Horsham Town and Forest Neighbourhood, right on their doorsteps, is an area for ramblers, horse riders, dogwalkers, joggers and cyclists who can use bridleways and footpaths that criss-cross ancient woodlands that has been documented over a 400 year span.

Denne Hill is an area of great ecological significance, and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) describes it as a “priority habitat”. These two words are noteworthy as the impact on the wildlife and environment by building 800 houses and concreting over acres of land, will be immeasurable. Protected and rare fauna and flora will be adversely affected, not only by the loss of their natural habitat but in the case of nocturnal wildlife by the effects of streetlights and floodlights.

It is essential that the strategic gap between Horsham and Southwater is maintained. Coalescing the built-up areas of Horsham and Southwater will have a detrimental effect on both infrastructures that are already struggling to cope with the current population demands. These deficiencies include healthcare and education. In the case of education, there is insufficient school places at secondary level both in Horsham and Southwater and local primary schools are full.

There are safety concerns that should be taken very seriously with this proposal. 800 households will enter and exit on to Worthing Road by one route. Added to this figure are local people who will visit the additional facilities at the Golf Park that are being offered by the developer.

But it is also the one access route for emergency services – there is no other option which, potentially, is frightening if any form of transport breaks down along this road.

A further safety concern is the narrow pavement along Worthing Road that is only suitable for pedestrians walking in single file and is not suitable for prams or buggies. The developer’s

aspiration to “promote active travel” and “discourage the use of private cars” is not feasible for families with pre-school and school-aged children. Whilst the developer is proposing new nursery facilities, this cannot be considered as the option that all families will choose for their infant children.

Denne Hill is an important catchment area of water to River Arun and is a vital source of drinking water. We are concerned that this Proposal is not realistically setting out how it is to be water neutral. Further clarification is needed as to how this development will not increase the risk of flooding downstream. We are also concerned about the amount of water that will be extracted from the boreholes.

Summing up, Forest Neighbourhood Council strongly objects to this outline application DC/23/1178 for the following reasons:

- Loss of a unique landscape; this complex biodiversity could never be replaced.
- Concreting over acres of land and reducing the gap between Horsham and Southwater that does not comply with Strategic Neighbourhood Plan 1. This was designed to guide future development in a controlled and sustainable manner.
- Putting additional strain on an already overwhelmed infrastructure that includes education, transport and healthcare.
- An unclear policy on water extraction and water neutrality - promises are not guarantees and it is not considered that there is substantiation to the claims made by the developer.
- Major safety concerns about access to the development
- Major safety concerns about pedestrians using a single width pavement along Worthing Road where the speed limit is 40 mph +

Yours faithfully

Horsham Forest Neighbourhood Councillors