

FAO Sam Whitehouse, Horsham District Council

We are writing to object to the proposed development of 38 dwellings as set out in planning application ref DC/25/2006. The grounds for our objection are based in the most recent, previously adopted Slindfold Neighbourhood Plan, which remains the most relevant document for local people in the absence of a finalised local plan.

Whilst we accept that the site has been identified for potential development within the Neighbourhood Plan, the outline application as submitted is clearly incompatible with the vast majority of policies set out within that local framework. In broad terms, there are significant issues in relation to:

- Highway Access and Parking
- Loss of General Amenity
- Overdevelopment, and
- Privacy, Light and Noise

These are set out in further detail below:

1. Conflict with Policy 7: East of Hayes Lane – Scale, Layout and Form

Policy 7 supports development east of Hayes Lane only where it positively responds to the prevailing linear character of development on the west side of Hayes Lane and reflects the local vernacular

- The proposed 38 dwellings arranged in a circular “close” formation represents a suburban estate layout.
- This is fundamentally at odds with the established linear ribbon development that characterises Hayes Lane.
- The density and form would introduce an urbanising pattern inconsistent with the rural grain of the village edge.

Ground of objection:

The proposal fails to comply with Policy 7(1) and Policy 5 (Development Principles) by introducing an inappropriate layout and density that does not reflect local character or settlement pattern.

2. Inadequate Buffer to the Downs Link – Conflict with Policy 7 and Policy 3

Policy 7 requires proposals to “include an appropriate buffer to enable and improve access to the Downs Link”

Policy 3 seeks to protect the Downs Link and its setting as key green infrastructure.

- The outline application documentation, including proposed site plan indicates insufficient separation between housing and the Downs Link. See image below taken from plans.
- This would harm the rural setting, tranquillity, and recreational value of this strategic public right of way.
- Increased overlooking, noise, and activity would degrade user experience for walkers, cyclists, and horse riders.

Ground of objection:

The lack of a meaningful buffer directly conflicts with Policy 7(4) and Policy 3, resulting in harm to green infrastructure of parish-wide importance.



Insufficient buffer to Downs Link (purple line) – road immediately adjacent.

3. Diversion of a Well-Used Public Footpath – Conflict with Aim 4 and Policy 3

The Neighbourhood Plan places strong emphasis on maintaining and improving connectivity of Public Rights of Way, particularly those used for recreation and everyday wellbeing

- The application proposes diversion of an existing public footpath regularly used by dog walkers and local residents.
- No compelling justification has been demonstrated that diversion is unavoidable.
- Diversion would place the public right of way immediately adjacent to a roadway, reducing legibility, convenience, and informal recreational value of the route. The public right of way would effectively become a pavement.

Ground of objection:

The proposal undermines Aim 4 (Public Rights of Way) and Policy 3 by degrading the continuity and quality of an established and valued footpath.



Public right of way diverted to immediately adjacent to a road, effectively becoming a pavement.

4. Highway Safety and Access Constraints – Conflict with Transport Aims

Hayes Lane is identified as suitable for Quiet Lane designation, reflecting its narrow, rural character and shared use by walkers, young families (many of which have to walk to and from the school and live on Hayes Lane), cyclists, horse riders and vehicles

- The development would introduce traffic associated with 38 dwellings and 106 parking spaces and significantly increasing vehicle movements.
- Access would be taken from a narrow, predominantly single-track road, unsuitable for the level of traffic proposed.
- This would harm highway safety and the amenity of existing residents and non-motorised users.
- In addition there is a proposal to introduce double-yellow lines outside a significant number of properties opposite the proposed site entrance, which would have the effect of pushing already high levels of street parking further up and down this already crowded section of Hayes Lane. See images below for regular parking (red arrow indicates proposed site entrance).
- Documentation linked to site access by refuse vehicles appears to indicate that access into the site will be exceptionally tight, with refuse vehicles being required to be incredibly close to, or more likely on the pavement to enter the site. This is unsafe. See image below.

Ground of objection:

The proposal conflicts with Aim 5 (Quiet Lanes), Aim 3 (Village Centre & Highway Safety), and the Neighbourhood Plan objective to improve pedestrian safety, by intensifying traffic on an unsuitable rural lane.



Poor site access due to limited off-street parking on Hayes Lane, and very tight possibly dangerous access for large vehicles such as refuse vehicles.

5. Excessive Parking Provision and Car-Led Design – Conflict with Rural Character

While the Neighbourhood Plan supports adequate off-street parking, it does so in balance with rural character and sustainable design

- Provision of 106 parking spaces for 38 dwellings strongly indicates a car-dominated, suburban layout.
- Large areas of hardstanding would erode the rural edge character of the village and also present additional challenges for water run-off, drainage and flooding that have not been accounted for.
- The design prioritises vehicle movement and storage over landscape integration.

Ground of objection:

The parking quantum and layout contribute to an urbanising form of development inconsistent with Policy 5 and the Plan's overarching vision for a sustainable rural community.

6. Loss of Greenfield Land and Harm to Rural Setting – Conflict with Vision and Objectives

The Neighbourhood Plan repeatedly emphasises retention of the Parish's rural identity, green landscape, and countryside setting

- The site is greenfield agricultural land forming part of the soft rural edge of the village.
- Development at the proposed scale would erode openness and visual connectivity with the countryside.
- The development would likely require significant levels of street lighting, which would conflict with the sparsely-lit, rural nature of this section of Hayes Lane

Ground of objection:

The proposal conflicts with the Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Strategic Objectives 1, 2, 4 and 5 by causing unacceptable harm to rural character and landscape setting.

7. Disproportionate Scale Relative to Parish Housing Strategy

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies a total parish housing need of 60–100 dwellings over the entire plan period, delivered across five allocated sites

- A single scheme of 38 dwellings represents a disproportionately large share of that requirement.
- The Parish Council has indicated that it will support a maximum of 15 dwellings on the site
- Granting permission risks over-concentration of growth at one sensitive village edge location.

Ground of objection:

The proposal undermines the balanced and distributed growth strategy set out in the Neighbourhood Plan.