

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 September 2026 15:30:23 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0266
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 24/09/2026 3:30 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Thakeham Mushrooms Storrington Road Thakeham Pulborough West Sussex RH20 3DY
Proposal:	Demolition of existing buildings and the redevelopment of the site to provide 150 dwellings, including affordable housing, land for the community land trust, works to public right of way and associated landscaping, biodiversity net gain bank, public open space, storage building, ancillary parking and all associated infrastructure.
Case Officer:	Sam Whitehouse

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address: The Pitons High Bar Lane, Thakeham Pulborough

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Highway Access and Parking - Other - Overdevelopment
Comments:	I wish to log a formal objection against planning application DC/26/0266.

While acknowledging the modifications made in this revised submission, the proposal fails to resolve fundamental, compounding issues regarding local educational infrastructure and unsustainable transport links. These were amongst the factors that affected the decision reached by the Planning Inspector when rejecting Bellway's Appeal for the refusal of planning permission for their application, reference DC/24/0021.

The current application remains in direct conflict with the Horsham District Planning Framework and West Sussex County Council (WSCC) infrastructure standards on the following specific grounds:

1. Severe Impact on Local Education Capacity and Unsustainable Pedestrian Access.

Based on West Sussex County Council child yield multipliers for family-oriented housing mixes, a 150-home development stripped of flats will yield a projected 41 primary school pupils and 22 secondary school pupils (~63 school-aged children overall). This influx introduces severe, unmitigated pressure on local provisions:

- Lack of Primary School Capacity: Thakeham Primary School is highly constrained. Forcing an influx of approximately 5 to 6 new pupils per year group will push local classes over capacity, compromising the quality of education for both existing and new residents.

- Unsafe Pedestrian Access: The Planning Inspectorate previously dismissed appeals on this site due to the lack of a continuous, safe pedestrian route to Thakeham Primary School. Forcing young children to walk along narrow, unlit rural roads with sections lacking proper footways is a direct safety hazard.

The current application fails to present a viable, dedicated, and safe walking route to school, conflicting with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sustainable travel mandates. In fact, this latest iteration of the application has deleted all support for sustainable transportation.

2. Deficient Public Transport and Unsustainable Car Dependency.

Although the proposed number of dwellings has been reduced from 247 to 150, that does not change the location of the site, nor change any of the concerns raised by the Inspector. The site is structurally isolated from major employment, retail, and secondary education hubs. The transport assessment provided by the developer downplays the practical reality of rural infrastructure:

- Inadequate Bus Services: Local bus services through Thakeham are infrequent and do not align with realistic commuting or school timetables. Secondary school pupils cannot reliably use public transit to reach designated secondary schools in Steyning or Billingshurst without facing restrictive schedules.
- Severe Car Dependency: Due to the failure of public transport options, this development will inevitably result in an acute

increase in private vehicle trips-estimated at hundreds of additional movements daily. This contradicts local policies aimed at reducing carbon emissions and promoting sustainable transit alternatives.

- Compounding Traffic at Critical Junctions: The additional vehicle traffic will severely exacerbate existing congestion points, notably the standard bottlenecks along the B2139, the Storrington Road corridor, and local rural lanes that are physically unsuited for high-volume commuter traffic.

It should also be noted that the Stantec Report commissioned by HDC to assess transport links as part of the Emerging Local Plan process identified significant issues with the Washington Roundabout and Buck Barn Junctions on the A24, the problems at these junctions were also referenced by the Planning Inspector when refusing the Appeal.

3. "Salami-slicing"

I recognise that in theory the Officers and Councillors should only look at the development plans in front of them. However, it is acknowledged as shown in previously produced Bellway documents that the aspiration was to build up to 600 properties (the Land Registry transfer document has a very poor-quality site plan showing that number). Therefore, although only referred to as a possibility, it must be assumed that Bellway will want to add the additional 85 properties, especially as Thakeham Parish Council have referenced those additional houses as part of future allocations for Thakeham in HDC Local Plans.

Add in a possible additional 6 houses to be built on the plot Bellway are selling for a nominal sum to Chanctonbury Community Land Trust and the total site would comprise 241 houses.

Therefore, while this application specifies 150 dwellings, it must not be assessed in isolation. It represents the front-loaded phase of a wider master plan that intends to deliver a minimum additional 85 homes as a future development on this site.

By evaluating this application incrementally, the true, compounding damage to local educational infrastructure and transport networks is being masked. When the full scope of 241 residential units is properly accounted for, the infrastructure deficit becomes entirely unsustainable.

3.1. Educational Capacity Impact

The combined educational infrastructure demand scales up as follows:

150-Home Base Application: Primary School Pupils 41 pupils;
Secondary School Pupils 22 pupils, Total 63 places

235-Home Cumulative Master Plan: Primary School Pupils 64 pupils; Secondary School Pupils 34 pupils, Total 98 places

241-Home Grand Total (with CLT Homes): Primary School Pupils 67 pupils; Secondary School Pupils 35 pupils, Total 102 places

- This represents complete overwhelm of Primary Provision: An influx of 67 primary-aged children equates to roughly 9 new pupils per year group. Thakeham Primary School and surrounding village provisions physically cannot absorb an entire extra third of a classroom per year group without severe oversubscription, directly disadvantaging local children.

3.2. Severe Traffic Generation

A development of more than 235 family homes will realistically introduce roughly 400 to 500 additional vehicle movements per day. This traffic will pour directly onto the B2139 and the already heavily congested Storrington Road corridor, worsening known bottlenecks. Expecting 34 secondary school students and 32 post-16 students to rely on the current infrequent rural bus services is entirely unrealistic.

4. Use of the Site for Employment Purposes

I note that the Emerging Local Plan Inspector, asked a question whether the Mushroom Farm should be protected for employment (reference MM121, Strategic Policy 30). I would like to ask if the Strategic Planning response to that question is going to be considered by the Officers and Councillors.

I note Bellway have dismissed the potential employment applications on the site, citing the marketing exercise conducted in relation to DC/24/0021. However the veracity of that exercise must be seriously questioned, although Savill's were the face of the marketing exercise, what was not revealed to interested parties was that Bellway had already acquired the site for £16.4 million and the survey was being conducted for Bellway, not Thakeham Mushrooms.

Conclusion

Bellway's revised proposal does not resolve the unsustainability of the location. It merely attempts to squeeze a family-heavy, car-dependent estate into an area lacking the baseline educational capacity and active travel infrastructure required to support it.

Assessing this application purely on the initial 150 homes is an inappropriate approach to planning that ignores the developer's clear intent for a 235-home site. The combined infrastructure demands fail to meet the sustainable development requirements

of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) or the Horsham District Planning Framework.

I strongly urge the council to uphold the principles previously validated by the Planning Inspectorate when considering the application for 247 properties (including flats) and to look at the cumulative impact of the wider site allocation for more than 235 houses and refuse this application.

Kind regards

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