

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 01 April 2026 17:18:39 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0366
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 01/04/2026 5:18 PM.

Application Summary

Address: Land North West of Southwater

Proposal: Outline planning application, with all matters reserved (except for primary access to the highway) for a phased development comprising: the demolition of existing buildings and the construction of up to 1,000 residential dwellings (including affordable housing) (Use Class C3); up to 80 specialist accommodation units (Use Class C2); a mixed-use neighbourhood centre (Use Classes E and F); education facilities (Use Class F1(a)); business and employment floorspace (Use Classes B2, B8 and E(g)); redevelopment of existing agricultural buildings including construction of a building for community use (Use Classes E and F2); improvements to public rights of way; sports pitches; gypsy and traveller pitches/plots; public open space; landscaping, and associated infrastructure

Case Officer: Matthew Porter

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address: 31 Cedar Drive Southwater Horsham

Comments Details

Commenter Type: Member of the Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment: - Design
 - Overdevelopment
 - Trees and Landscaping

Comments: Planning Objection: Berkeley Homes Proposal - 1,000 Homes
 North-West of Southwater

I wish to formally object to the above proposal.

I am a resident of Southwater, and this objection is deeply personal. My family and I chose to live here because of the village's character, strong community, and the surrounding countryside. Southwater has already experienced substantial new-build expansion, resulting in the loss of significant areas of farmland. This proposal would continue that trend unnecessarily and to the detriment of the village.

My objection is grounded in established planning policy, particularly the brownfield-first principle. This principle prioritises the development of previously developed land before the use of greenfield farmland. It exists to protect the countryside, reduce the need for costly new infrastructure, and ensure that development is located close to existing services, transport links, and employment opportunities.

There is clear evidence that this principle has not been properly applied in this case.

Within Horsham District, brownfield sites remain available and underutilised. A key example is the former Novartis pharmaceutical factory site in North Horsham. This site already has planning permission for affordable housing (granted October 2025) and is located closer to Horsham town centre, rail services, and the district's primary employment areas. It represents a sustainable development opportunity that requires no significant new infrastructure, yet it remains undeveloped.

In addition, West Sussex County Council is investing in sustainable transport improvements along key corridors including the A264, A281, and the Horsham-Crawley-Gatwick route. These investments support development in locations where sustainable transport options are viable. Southwater does not benefit from these improvements, further undermining the sustainability of this proposal.

Horsham District Council's own December 2024 Brownfield Register reinforces this position. It identifies just 18 brownfield sites across the district, with a combined capacity of approximately 827 dwellings over 20.98 hectares. This figure includes sites already under construction, sites with lapsed permissions, and sites that have remained unimplemented for many years. Some permissions date back as far as 2014.

Notably, the largest site-North Horsham (former Novartis site)-remains unbuilt despite having permission for a substantial number of homes.

In contrast, this application seeks permission for 1,000 homes on a single greenfield site. This exceeds the total identified capacity of brownfield land across the entire district.

Before approving the loss of approximately 141 hectares of open farmland at Southwater, the Council must demonstrate that:

All brownfield sites have been fully assessed,
Delivery of these sites has been actively supported, and
The brownfield pipeline has been genuinely exhausted.

There is no clear evidence that this has been done.

Granting permission for large-scale greenfield development in these circumstances would be contrary to the brownfield-first approach that underpins national planning policy. It would also set a concerning precedent that greenfield land can be released without fully utilising previously developed sites.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that this application be refused.

Furthermore, I ask that the Council ensures that all identified brownfield land within the district is fully considered and progressed before any further greenfield development at Southwater is permitted.

This proposal would have a lasting impact on the character of Southwater and the quality of life of those who live here. I urge the Council to protect the village, its countryside, and its community.

Please, please refuse this application.

Kind regards

Telephone:

Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk

