

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 08 July 2026 09:43:29 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0945
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 08/07/2026 9:43 AM.

Application Summary

Address: Abingworth Nurseries Storrington Road Thakeham West Sussex

Proposal: Variation of condition 1 of previously approved application reference DC/22/0773 (Variation of Condition 1 of previously approved application DC/19/1707 (Revised layout for Phase 3 of the Abingworth Meadows development (Original application ref: DC/10/1314) to provide for 75 dwellings including 26 affordable dwellings and community studio workshops). Amendment to buffer strip to reflect an additional swale with landscaping (part retrospective).

Case Officer: Jason Hawkes

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address: 15 Springett Close Abingworth Meadows Thakeham

Comments Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

- Loss of General Amenity
- Privacy Light and Noise
- Trees and Landscaping

Comments: FORMAL OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION
DC/26/0945

Reference: DC/26/0945

Proposal: Variation of Condition 1 of previously approved application reference DC/22/0773 (Variation of Condition 1 of previously approved application DC/19/1707) - Amendment to buffer strip to reflect an additional swale with landscaping (part retrospective).

Site: Abingworth Meadows Phase 3, Thakeham

Objector: Zoe Humphreys, 15 Springett Close

1. INTRODUCTION

I submit a formal objection to Application DC/26/0945 on behalf of affected residents of Springett Close and adjoining properties. For the avoidance of doubt, residents accept the principle of necessary flood mitigation measures, including the installation of additional SuDS infrastructure and swales where demonstrably required for flood alleviation and surface water management. However, residents strongly object to those aspects of the application which:

- materially alter the approved landscaping scheme;
- introduce public access opportunities into the buffer zone;
- introduce or retain the proposed vehicular gate at the Springett Close Hammerhead;
- remove or dilute previously approved boundary protections;
- fail to adequately show all required SuDS works and ecological measures;
- fail to honour approved and agreed landscaping commitments;
- fundamentally alter the purpose of the buffer zone from a protected ecological and amenity area to one susceptible to public access and intrusion.

2. STRONG OBJECTION TO THE GATE AT THE HAMMERHEAD

The revised Bellway drawings include a:

"1.2m high vehicular access five bar timber gate. Approx 4m width" (Drawing BELL23356-11 Sheet 4 of 8)

Residents strongly object to this proposal.

The introduction of this gate represents a significant and unacceptable departure from purchaser expectations, the approved development concept, and the protective function of the buffer zone.

Prior to these retrospective amendments:

- Springett Close terminated in a secure hammerhead arrangement.
- There was no open gateway encouraging movement between the development and the buffer zone.
- The boundary treatment acted as a clear separation between the residential estate and ecological land.

Residents purchased their homes based upon:

- approved planning layouts;
 - Bellway sales information;
 - landscape plans;
 - site representations;
-

- the understanding that the buffer zone formed a private ecological separation zone.

The introduction of a substantial access gate retrospectively changes the character and function of this area.

The Local Planning Authority should therefore require:

Immediate removal of the proposed gate.

Reinstatement of:

- original post and rail fencing;
- livestock/stock-proof fencing;
- continuous secure boundary treatment.

The revised proposal materially reduces:

- residential security;
- safeguarding of children;
- protection of pets and animals;
- privacy;
- amenity.

3. BUFFER ZONE MUST REMAIN CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

Residents strongly object to any proposal which would permit:

- public access;
 - permissive access;
 - informal access;
 - future Public Right of Way creation;
 - recreational use;
 - pedestrian use;
- within the buffer zone.

The buffer zone was approved as:

- ecological mitigation land;
- landscape screening;
- visual separation;
- flood mitigation infrastructure.

It was never approved as public open space.

4. THAKEHAM PARISH COUNCIL POSITION

The Local Planning Authority should note the unified objection submitted to Thakeham Parish Council dated 23 December 2025.

That representation records the collective objection of residents to any public access within the buffer zone.

The letter states:

"All affected households are aligned in this objection."

The letter further states:

"The buffer zone was never intended for public access."

and:

"Residents purchased their homes with reasonable and legitimate expectation based on all provided documentation that this land would remain an ecological buffer intended to protect residential amenity."

Those representations remain entirely valid.

5. EXISTING FENCING MUST REMAIN

Residents support the following annotation on Bellway's marked-up landscape plan:

EXISTING FENCE / BARRIER TO REMAIN
and
FLOOD WATER MITIGATION PROVISIONS TO BE
MAINTAINED - ALL OTHER AREAS TO BE LEFT TO NATURE
The existing fence line must remain intact.
Only flood mitigation works should be permitted.
The remainder of the buffer zone should be left in its intended
ecological state.

6. THAKEHAM PARISH COUNCIL BOUNDARY FENCING POSITION

Particular weight should be given to the approved boundary
fencing principles.

The submitted attachment states:

"the buffer area, which will be managed for nature with no right of
pedestrian access." (Boundary fencing arrangements, east edge
of sub-phase).

It further records:

"Members agreed that it is essential that clear agreement is
reached that this fence line should be 1.8m close-boarded fence
with no resident right to put gates in this fence."

This statement is directly contrary to any proposal facilitating
access through the buffer area.

The retrospective application should therefore be amended to
explicitly confirm:

- no public access;
- no permissive access;
- no pedestrian access;
- no future connection to a PROW;
- retention of secure fencing.

7. PRIVACY, SAFEGUARDING AND RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

The buffer zone sits on elevated land behind residential
properties.

Opening this area to public access would result in:

- overlooking of private gardens;
- overlooking of habitable room windows;
- increased trespass risk;
- increased burglary risk;
- safeguarding concerns for children;
- loss of residential amenity.

The Council is required to consider these impacts under:

- NPPF residential amenity principles;
- Horsham District planning policies;
- Human Rights Act 1998 considerations.

Particularly relevant are:

Article 8 ECHR

Right to respect for private and family life.

Article 1 Protocol 1 ECHR

Peaceful enjoyment of possessions.

Whilst these rights are qualified rights, the planning authority must
have regard to them when considering impacts upon adjoining

residents.

8. MATERIAL CHANGE FROM APPROVED LANDSCAPING SCHEME

The revised drawings introduce substantial changes from earlier approved revisions.

Drawing BELL23356-11 Sheet 4 Revision J and later Revision N show material alterations to:

- boundary treatment;
- swale arrangements;
- access arrangements;
- planting proposals;
- buffer zone layout.

Residents relied upon the approved scheme when purchasing their properties.

The Authority should therefore scrutinise whether the cumulative changes remain consistent with:

- approved planning objectives;
- purchaser expectations;
- landscape character;
- ecological objectives.

9. LANDSCAPING COMMITMENTS MISSING FROM THE REVISED DRAWINGS

The revised plans fail to include planting previously agreed with Bellway and confirmed through discussions with Carolyn Davies and Ross Gillespie.

The following agreed planting remains absent from Plot 69:

Shrub Relocation

- 10 No Skimmia japonica 'Fragrans'
- 13 No Mahonia aquifolium 'Apollo'
- 10 No Viburnum tinus 'Eve Price'
- 10 No Hypericum 'Hidcote'
- 8 No Camellia japonica 'Apple Blossom'

Boundary Hedge

Native hedge planting along the full rear boundary of Plot 69 comprising:

- double staggered rows;
- rows 500mm apart;
- plants at 400mm centres.

This planting should be incorporated into the approved drawings to ensure Bellway's commitments are formally recorded and enforceable.

10. INSUFFICIENT SUDS INFORMATION WITHIN THE RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION

Whilst residents support necessary flood mitigation works, the application drawings appear incomplete when compared with the design intent of the SuDS proposals.

The application should include:

Detailed SuDS Information

- swale cross sections;
-

- maintenance corridors;
- management responsibilities;
- ecological planting schedules;
- long-term maintenance arrangements;
- safety provisions;
- fencing requirements around drainage features;
- ownership and management responsibilities.

The Authority should not approve retrospective amendments without complete information enabling the public and consultees to fully understand the development.

11. BUFFER ZONE SHOULD REMAIN A NATURE AREA

The revised proposals should incorporate a condition confirming:

- the buffer zone shall remain ecological land;
- no recreational use shall occur;
- no public access shall occur;
- no future permissive path shall occur;
- existing fencing shall remain;
- flood mitigation infrastructure only shall be managed and maintained.

The buffer zone should therefore remain:

"managed for nature with no right of pedestrian access"
consistent with the previously agreed position.

12. CONCLUSION

Residents support the necessary flood mitigation works and additional swale infrastructure.

However, residents strongly object to the application unless it is amended to:

1. Remove the proposed five-bar gate at the Hammerhead.
2. Reinstate the original secure fencing arrangement.
3. Confirm the buffer zone shall remain closed to public access.
4. Confirm no PROW or permissive path will be permitted.
5. Retain existing fence and barrier arrangements.
6. Incorporate all agreed Plot 69 landscaping.
7. Include complete SuDS information and maintenance details.
8. Preserve the buffer zone as ecological land managed exclusively for nature.

Accordingly, I respectfully request that Horsham District Council either:

- (a) refuse Application DC/26/0945 in its current form; or
- (b) require Bellway to amend the application to incorporate the above safeguards before any approval is granted.

Zoe Humphreys

15 Springett Close

Abingworth Meadows

Thakeham RH20 3RF

Evidence References

- Thakeham Parish Council Representation Regarding Proposed PROW dated 23 December 2025.
 - Bellway Landscape Drawing BELL23356-11 Sheet 4 of 8
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(showing proposed 1.2m high vehicular access five-bar timber gate).

- Bellway Landscape Drawing BELL23356-11 Sheet 6 of 8 landscape proposals.

- 4.1 Boundary fencing arrangements: "the buffer area, which will be managed for nature with no right of pedestrian access."

Kind regards

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