

Sent: 01 October 2026 20:25
To: Planning
Subject: Save the Triangle – objection to DC/26/0954
Attachments: BA Dissertation.docx
Categories: Comments Received

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to object to planning application DC/26/0954 for 21 houses on the Triangle, in the north-west corner of Muggeridge Field. My objection concerns the harm the development would cause to the neighbouring Chesworth Allotments and the benefits they provide to plot holders and the wider community.

In 2022–23 I carried out research at Chesworth Allotments for my BA (Hons) Geography dissertation at the University of Exeter, titled *Wellbeing through Sustainable Practices: An Investigation into the Impacts of Allotment Gardening on Dimensions of Wellbeing*. Through in-depth interviews with plot holders, the study found that the site makes a significant contribution to their mental, physical and social wellbeing. I have attached the dissertation. Below I set out how its findings relate to material planning considerations, with references to the relevant sections.

1. Planning policy: healthy communities, green infrastructure and open space (Sections 1.1, 3.6 and 4.2.1) Chesworth is the largest of Horsham's ten allotment sites, with 133 plots across 4 hectares, a waiting list, and recorded use since 1922. Every participant was more physically active because of their plot, supporting NHS England's green social prescribing agenda. Allotments are also increasingly scarce, with UK plot numbers falling from around 1.4 million in the Second World War to about 300,000 by 2009.

Impact of the development: Placing 21 houses on the Triangle, directly against the district's largest allotment site, would degrade an established health and green infrastructure asset rather than protect it. This runs counter to the National Planning Policy Framework's aim of supporting healthy communities, and to HDPF Policies 42 and 43, which seek to safeguard health and wellbeing and valued recreational assets.

2. Noise and disturbance (Sections 4.1 and 4.1.1) Every participant described the importance of the allotments for their mental wellbeing. They spoke of the peace and quiet, birdsong and fresh air, which helped them relieve stress, recover from mental fatigue and cope with grief. Several said the site offered an escape from busy urban life, and one described it as "a lifesaver" during the COVID-19 lockdowns.

Impact of the development: These benefits depend on the site's quiet. Months of construction noise and vehicle movements on the Triangle, followed by the permanent noise, activity and evening lighting of 21 homes beside the allotments, would directly erode the calm that plot holders rely on for their mental wellbeing.

3. Overshadowing and loss of privacy (Sections 3.6 and 4.1) Allotment growing depends on full sunlight, and the research found this seasonal rhythm structures plot holders' entire gardening year, from spring sowing to the summer harvest. Plot holders also spend long periods working on their plots, which they described as a peaceful, meditative retreat.

Impact of the development: Houses built on the Triangle close to the allotment boundary would cast shade over neighbouring plots, reducing what can be grown and making them harder to cultivate. Upper-floor windows and gardens overlooking the site would also remove the sense of privacy and retreat that the research found central to its wellbeing value.

4. Design, appearance and character (Sections 3.6, 4.1 and 4.1.1) The allotments sit on Horsham's southern urban fringe, and participants valued the site's semi-rural character as an escape from town life. This character has built up over a century of continuous cultivation, and plot holders described a deep attachment to the site as a shared community place.

Impact of the development: The houses would line the public bridleway at the end of Arun Way for 100 metres, turning the open, tranquil setting shared by the bridleway and the allotments into a suburban edge. This would fundamentally alter the character that gives the allotments their value, and the loss of openness could not be mitigated.

5. Loss of trees and hedgerows, and biodiversity (Sections 3.6, 4.1 and 4.3.1) The site has dedicated wildlife plots (plots 54 and 78), bordering hedgerows and communal compost bays. Participants valued the birds and wildlife they share the site with, and several described gardening alongside nature rather than against it.

Impact of the development: Developing the Triangle and removing any trees or hedgerows along its boundaries would remove habitat that supports the site's wildlife. Construction disturbance and new hard surfaces could also alter drainage and run-off onto the plots, damaging growing conditions.

6. Highways, traffic and parking (Sections 4.3, 4.3.2 and 4.3.3) The site hosts the Transition Horsham community allotment, volunteer working parties, an on-site shop and a shelf exchange. Plot holders rely on vehicle access to carry heavy loads such as compost and manure, and the research found these shared facilities reduce loneliness and build community.

Impact of the development: The new access road from Athelstan Way would bring construction traffic and, later, cars from 21 new homes onto the surrounding streets. Increased traffic and on-street parking could make it harder for plot holders to reach the site with the vehicles they rely on, disrupting use of the shop and community activities.

Please find the full evidence for each of these points in the relevant sections of the attached dissertation. For these reasons, I urge the Council to refuse application DC/26/0954. Should the Council be minded to approve it, I ask that conditions are attached to protect the allotments, including a landscaped buffer along the shared boundary, retention of existing trees and hedgerows, a construction management plan covering noise, working hours and vehicle access, and controls on external lighting facing the site.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my concerns. I would be grateful to be kept informed of the progress of this application.

Yours faithfully,



38 Arthur Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 5BQ

