

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 May 2026 12:03:24 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DISC/26/0122
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 12/05/2026 12:03 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Crays Barn Crays Lane Goose Green West Sussex RH20 2LR
Proposal:	Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Conditions 3, 4 and 5 to approved application DC/25/0446
Case Officer:	Jacques Burrowes

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address:	1 Crays Farm Crays Lane Goose Green
----------	-------------------------------------

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Design - Highway Access and Parking - Loss of General Amenity - Overdevelopment - Privacy Light and Noise - Trees and Landscaping
Comments:	I write to formally object to the approval of the details reserved by Conditions 3, 4 and 5 of the above application, and to place on record my strong objection to the progression of this development in its current form.

Whilst I recognise that the principle of development was established under DC/25/0446, the discharge of reserved conditions is not a mere administrative formality.

The Council retains a duty to satisfy itself that the details submitted are genuinely acceptable, and I submit that they are not, for the following reasons.

1. Highway Infrastructure: Roads That Cannot Bear the Load.

Crays Lane is a narrow rural lane with no footpaths, no passing places of any meaningful frequency, and a carriageway surface that is already under significant stress from existing traffic. Adding residential dwellings here will introduce a permanent increase in vehicle movements - including construction traffic, removal lorries, and the day-to-day car dependency that is unavoidable in a location with no public transport and no walkable services.

This concern is not speculative. West Sussex County Council has itself acknowledged, in its own published statements, that rural roads do not have the same underlying infrastructure as urban roads and that some local roads receive more patch repairs than would be desirable.

More starkly, the Council has admitted that roads are not permanent structures and deteriorate over time from constant use, the weight of vehicles using them and the effects of weather, and that the cost of resurfacing the full county network to an acceptable standard would far exceed available funding.

Indeed, the network has been experiencing a notable, year-on-year increase in the number of safety defects, reaching the highest level on record in 2024/25. West Sussex County Council + 2

Construction traffic alone - including heavy goods vehicles carrying materials, aggregate, roof trusses, and drainage equipment - will impose precisely the kind of weight-loading that accelerates surface failure on unclassified rural lanes.

No credible assessment of the cumulative highway impact on Crays Lane has been provided that addresses this specific risk.

Until such an assessment is provided, with binding commitments to make good any damage caused during construction, the highway details under Condition 3 (if this condition relates to construction management) should not be discharged.

2. Countryside Character: Pressure on a Landscape. That Has No Spare Capacity.

Goose Green sits within a quiet rural hamlet in the Horsham District. The locality type is described as rural hamlet and isolated

dwellings.

The area is in close proximity to the RSPB Pulborough Brooks Wetlands and the internationally celebrated Knepp re-wilding estate, and it sits on the fringes of a landscape characterised by hedgerows, ancient field systems, and undisturbed farmland.

The Horsham District Planning Framework places significant weight on the protection of the rural character of the countryside, and national planning policy through the NPPF makes clear that development in rural areas should not cause unacceptable harm to the character of the landscape. New houses in this location do not merely add to the countryside - they fundamentally and irreversibly alter it.

Once the rural grain of a hamlet such as Goose Green is broken by suburban-style residential plots, that harm cannot be undone. The countryside is not a reservoir from which development can be drawn at will. It is more like an ancient manuscript: once overwritten, the original cannot be recovered.

The submitted details should demonstrate convincingly, and with independent landscape assessment, that the scale, massing, materials, and boundary treatment of the proposed dwellings will not suburbanise this rural setting. I have not seen evidence that this bar has been met.

3. Wildlife and Ecological Harm

The wider Goose Green and Thakeham area supports a rich ecology. The proximity to Pulborough Brooks - one of the finest wetland habitats in the South East - and to the Knepp estate, which has pioneered rewilding to benefit turtle doves, purple emperor butterflies, white storks, and numerous bat species, means that the landscape surrounding Crays Lane is not ecologically isolated. It forms part of a functioning ecological network.

Construction works and new residential occupation will introduce noise, artificial lighting, domestic cats, and garden chemicals into this network. Bat foraging routes along hedgerows and tree lines are particularly vulnerable to light pollution and vegetation removal. Nesting birds - including potentially Schedule 1 species that use the surrounding farmland and scrub - are vulnerable to disturbance during the breeding season.

The ecological details reserved by condition must be scrutinised carefully. Any habitat management plan or biodiversity net gain assessment submitted must go beyond box-ticking. It must demonstrate genuine, measurable, long-term benefit rather than simply planting a few shrubs on a new garden boundary. I would urge the Council to ensure that an independent ecologist reviews whatever has been submitted, and that any lighting scheme

avoids spillage onto hedgerows and field margins.

4. Disruption During Construction

Construction works at this rural location will be acutely disruptive to existing residents of Crays Lane and the surrounding area. The lane provides the only reasonable access route, meaning that heavy vehicles will be traversing it for the duration of the build programme.

This will cause:

Noise and vibration from HGVs, particularly damaging for residents working from home or with young children or elderly family members.

Dust and exhaust fumes from construction plant.

Dangerous pinch points on a lane that is already barely wide enough for two passing cars.

Damage to verges, hedgerows, and the road surface itself, the cost of remediation of which typically falls on the public purse rather than the developer.

There is no credible Construction Management Plan that could fully mitigate these effects on a lane of this nature over an extended build programme. We regularly sight white storks, and there are nesting nightingales all around the proposed site. Not to mention amphibians like crested and common newts. The Council must require, before discharging any conditions, that a detailed, enforceable Construction Traffic Management Plan is in place, with restricted delivery hours, a pre-commencement road survey, and a developer-funded bond to cover any highway damage.

5. Cumulative and Long-Term Impact on Existing Residents.

The residents of Crays Lane and Goose Green chose to live in a quiet rural setting, and the character of that setting forms part of the reasonable expectation they had when purchasing or renting their homes. New residential development does not merely affect them during construction. The permanent introduction of additional households brings ongoing increases in traffic, artificial lighting visible across dark rural land, potential pressure for further development through incremental precedent, and strain on infrastructure - drainage, electricity, broadband - that was designed for a small number of rural properties.

The cumulative planning history of Crays Barn is itself relevant here. There have been successive applications for this site, including a prior approval for four dwellinghouses (DC/25/1756), an earlier approval for three homes (DC/20/1870), and now the current application.

Each stage has been presented as a modest, self-contained proposal. Taken together, however, they represent a sustained and significant transformation of what was an agricultural site in a protected rural setting.

The Council should be alert to this pattern and ensure that the discharge of conditions does not facilitate yet further intensification.

I respectfully urge the Planning Authority to refuse to discharge the reserved conditions under DISC/26/0122 unless and until the applicant provides:

A full and independently verified Construction Traffic Management Plan including a pre-construction road condition survey and a developer-funded reinstatement bond for Crays Lane
An independent landscape and visual impact assessment confirming the details will not suburbanise the rural character of this hamlet

An independently reviewed ecological assessment addressing bat foraging routes, breeding birds, and the integrity of the ecological network in the wider Knepp and Pulborough Brooks landscape
A detailed lighting scheme demonstrating zero spillage onto hedgerows, field margins, and public rights of way

The countryside is a finite and irreplaceable resource. Crays Lane and Goose Green deserve protection, not incremental erosion.

Kind regards

Telephone:

Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk



Horsham District Council, Albery House, Springfield Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 2GB
Telephone: 01403 215100 (calls may be recorded) www.horsham.gov.uk Chief Executive: Jane E aton