



SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

Beeson House, 26 Lintot Square,
Fairbank Road, Southwater,
West Sussex RH13 9LA



Planning Officer
Horsham District Council
Albery House
Springfield Road
Horsham
West Sussex RH12 2GB

09 April 2026

Dear Sirs

DC/25/0355 - Land to the Rear of The Copse Worthing Road Horsham West Sussex RH13 9AT - Construction of up to 23 residential dwellings, (including 9 affordable homes), including access, parking, landscaping and other associated infrastructure works.

Southwater Parish Council objects to the proposed development of this site.

The application has been considered following a pre-application meeting and full review of the submitted information. Whilst it is noted that the number of units has been reduced from previous schemes, this does not overcome the fundamental policy objection to the principle of development.

The Council highlights that a previous, materially identical proposal was dismissed at appeal in July 2019 under comparable policy circumstances. The current application does not present any material change that would justify a different conclusion.

The site lies outside the defined built-up area boundary of Southwater and is not allocated for development within either the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) or the made Southwater Neighbourhood Plan. The site was also rejected through the Neighbourhood Plan process.

The proposal is therefore contrary to the core spatial strategy of the development plan, including HDPF policies:

- **2 (Strategic Development)** – requires the management of development around the edges of existing settlements to protect the rural character and landscape.

- **4 (Settlement Expansion)** – requires that outside built-up boundaries settlements will only be supported where the site is allocated in the local plan or in a Neighbourhood Plan.
- **26 (Countryside Protection)** – requires the protection of inappropriate development outside built-up area boundaries.

In addition, the proposal conflicts with the following policies of the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan:

- **SNP1 (Core Principles)** – which requires a plan-led approach to development and resists unplanned growth outside defined boundaries.
- **SNP2 (Residential Development)** – which supports residential development only where it is appropriately located within the built-up area boundary or on allocated sites.
- **SNP16 (Design)** – which requires development to respond positively to local character and context. The proposed backland and edge-of-settlement form of development fails to achieve this.
- **SNP17 (Property Heights)** – which requires development to be appropriate in scale and height to its surroundings; the introduction of built form on this site would not respect the transition to the surrounding countryside.

The proposal represents speculative and unplanned development in the countryside, directly undermining the adopted development strategy.

The Council acknowledges that there is currently a shortfall in housing land supply and that paragraph 14 of the NPPF is engaged. It is also recognised that the proposal may deliver some benefits, including affordable housing, construction employment and increased local expenditure.

However, these benefits represent standard development expectations, not exceptional circumstances. They do not outweigh the significant and fundamental conflict with the development plan.

The absence of harm in terms of landscape, amenity or highway safety does not outweigh clear policy conflict.

Paragraph 17 of the NPPF emphasises the importance of a genuinely plan-led approach to decision making, consistent with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

There are no material considerations of sufficient weight to justify a departure from the adopted development plan.

In conclusion, Southwater Parish Council objects to application DC/26/0355 because:

- The site lies outside the built-up area boundary and is not allocated for development.
- The proposal conflicts with HDPF Policies 2, 4 and 26.
- The proposal fails to comply with Southwater Neighbourhood Plan Policies SNP1, SNP2, SNP16 and SNP17.
- The principle of development has previously been dismissed at appeal.
- The benefits of the scheme do not outweigh the clear and significant policy conflict.

The Council therefore urges Horsham District Council to refuse planning permission.

Yours sincerely



JULIE CROWHURST

Assistant Executive Officer