

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 28 April 2026 13:02:35 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0472
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 28/04/2026 1:02 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land North of Eastlands Lane Cowfold West Sussex
Proposal:	Erection of 9no. dwellings with associated car parking spaces, detached carports, garages and landscaping.
Case Officer:	Tamara Dale

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address:	Ingleside Henfield Road Cowfold
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Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Member of the Public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Highway Access and Parking - Loss of General Amenity - Overdevelopment - Privacy Light and Noise - Trees and Landscaping
Comments:	Objection to planning application DC/26/0472 - Land North of Eastlands Lane, Cowfold I object to the proposed development of 9 dwellings on land north of Eastlands Lane.

My objection is based on material planning considerations, particularly conflict with the Cowfold Neighbourhood Plan, impact on Local Green Space and green infrastructure, highway safety, traffic, rural character, biodiversity and the cumulative impact of further development in this location.

1. Conflict with Local Green Space protection

The Cowfold Neighbourhood Plan was formally made on 8 October 2025 and is therefore part of the development plan for this area. The Plan identifies LGS13 Eastlands Lane and LGS12 Eastlands Wood as designated Local Green Spaces. Policy 3 states that development proposals within designated Local Green Spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances, including where they complement the purpose of the designation, are ancillary to public recreational use, have a positive impact on biodiversity, or are required for statutory utility infrastructure.

This proposal is for private housing and associated access, parking, carports, garages and landscaping. It does not appear to meet the "very special circumstances" test in Policy 3. Any works affecting Eastlands Lane, including access alterations, traffic engineering, visibility splays, widening, surfacing or associated infrastructure, would be harmful to the purpose and character of the Local Green Space.

2. Harm to the rural and tranquil character of Eastlands Lane

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises that Cowfold's rural location and surrounding open countryside are a key reason people value the village, despite existing traffic pressures. It also describes designated green spaces as important to Cowfold's setting and to residents' enjoyment of tranquil rural surroundings.

Eastlands Lane is currently used and valued as a quiet rural lane and green space by local residents, walkers and others. Introducing a new housing estate access and a material increase in vehicle movements would urbanise the lane, erode its rural character and reduce its tranquillity. The proposal would therefore conflict with the purpose of the Local Green Space designation and the wider aims of the Neighbourhood Plan.

3. Highway safety and traffic impact

Eastlands Lane is a narrow rural lane used by walkers, cyclists, horse riders and vehicles. The Neighbourhood Plan specifically identifies Eastlands Lane as a lane that could be considered for Quiet Lane designation, recognising the importance of safer shared use between pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and vehicles.

Nine dwellings would generate additional daily vehicle

movements, including household cars, delivery vehicles, refuse vehicles, visitors and construction traffic. This would increase conflict between vehicles and vulnerable users on a lane whose character and function are not suited to estate traffic. If lane widening or access works are required to make the scheme acceptable in highways terms, that would itself be harmful to the rural character and Local Green Space value of Eastlands Lane.

I ask the Council and Highway Authority to give full weight to the cumulative highway and safety impacts of this proposal, not only the numerical traffic generation.

4. Green infrastructure, trees and biodiversity

The Cowfold Neighbourhood Plan supports development that conserves or enhances green infrastructure, and states that proposals resulting in the loss of green infrastructure will not be supported unless they deliver an overall net gain in green infrastructure, equivalent carbon-sink capability in the short term, and biodiversity net gain.

Eastlands Lane and the adjoining Eastlands Wood form part of an important local green infrastructure network. The proposal risks harm to the woodland edge, tree protection areas, hedgerows, habitat connectivity, tranquillity and wildlife value. I am concerned that the development would fragment and urbanise this sensitive rural edge and that any claimed landscaping would not compensate for the loss of established rural character and habitat value.

5. Settlement edge and cumulative development pressure

The development would extend built form into land adjoining Eastlands Lane and Eastlands Wood, changing the relationship between the village edge and its countryside setting. I am also concerned that permitting this application would make further housing development on adjoining land easier to argue for in future, resulting in incremental expansion and further harm to the rural setting of Cowfold.

The application should not be treated in isolation. The Council should consider the cumulative and precedent effect of allowing housing in this location, particularly where the Neighbourhood Plan has already identified and protected Local Green Spaces and has selected planned housing sites through its own process.

6. Water neutrality and infrastructure

The Neighbourhood Plan requires development within the Sussex North Water Resource Zone to demonstrate water neutrality through water-efficient design and offsetting of any additional water use. The Council should not approve the application unless

it is fully satisfied that the proposal complies with the relevant water neutrality requirements and that mitigation is secured, deliverable and enforceable.

7. Questionable local demand and cumulative housing supply

I am also concerned that there is no clear evidence of local demand for additional open-market housing in this location.

There are currently approximately 34 houses listed for sale in Cowfold village, some of which appear to have been on the market for close to a year. This suggests that existing housing supply in the village is not being readily absorbed by the market.

In addition, work is expected to commence soon on 35 new dwellings by the school, followed by a further 35 dwellings behind Thornden. This means Cowfold is already facing around 70 additional new homes, before this application for a further 9 dwellings is even considered.

Against that background, I question where the demand exists for another 9 houses on this sensitive rural edge of the village, particularly as these dwellings do not appear to be affordable housing. If the existing homes in the village are not selling, and around 70 more are already coming forward, the claimed need for this additional development should be treated with caution.

The cumulative effect of all this housing growth should be considered carefully, including its impact on local roads, village character, services, infrastructure and the rural setting of Cowfold.

Conclusion

For the reasons above, I ask Horsham District Council to refuse application DC/26/0472. The proposal would conflict with the Cowfold Neighbourhood Plan, harm the character and purpose of Eastlands Lane as a designated Local Green Space, increase traffic and highway safety risks on a narrow rural lane, and damage the rural setting and green infrastructure of this part of Cowfold.

I also ask that, if officers are minded to approve the application, it is referred to Planning Committee because of the level of local concern and the planning policy issues raised.

On a personal note, I use Eastlands Lane regularly for walking and recreation. Its value is not just as a route, but as a quiet rural green space close to the village. The increased traffic, construction activity and likely highway works would directly reduce my ability to use and enjoy it safely and peacefully - and that of many, many other villagers.

Kind regards

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