

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk
Sent: 20 March 2026 22:43
To: Planning
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0266
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 20/03/2026 10:43 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Thakeham Mushrooms Storrington Road Thakeham Pulborough West Sussex RH20 3DY
Proposal:	Demolition of existing buildings and the redevelopment of the site to provide 150 dwellings, including affordable housing, land for the community land trust, works to public right of way and associated landscaping, open space and infrastructure.
Case Officer:	Sam Whitehouse

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address:	Terre Rouge High Bar Lane Thakeham Pulborough West Sussex
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Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Design - Highway Access and Parking - Loss of General Amenity - Other - Overdevelopment - Privacy Light and Noise - Trees and Landscaping
Comments:	Reasons for comment: - Design - Highway Access and Parking - Loss of General Amenity - Overdevelopment - Privacy Light and Noise - Trees and Landscaping Comments: STRONG OBJECTION

I wish to strongly object to the planning application DC/26/0266, Demolition of existing buildings and the phased redevelopment of the site as a residential led development comprising 150 dwellings and flexible non-residential floor space (Use Class E), with works to public right of way and associated landscaping, open space and infrastructure.

I am in agreement with the unanimous vote of the Thakeham Parish Council in strongly objecting to the proposed erection of 150 (or any number up to 660) dwellings as outlined in Belway supporting documents.

Belway's proposal is not in keeping with the Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan which is valid until 2031.

Please note that these objections and those listed below should equally apply to and should all be read in conjunction with each other as all of these are directly relevant to the future of Thakeham. - DC/26/0266, DC/20/2577, DC/23/2152 and DC/23/0269

I have reviewed my submission and my previous objections to the areas North of High Bar Lane and Rushfield's site, and would note that the original content of all of my objections equally apply to, and should be read as supporting evidence with this objection/application - should you require a copy of these please advise me within the time limit or I shall assume you accept these.

Herewith, please find my strong objection to any development of Thakeham and Abingworth villages, and specifically all land north of High Bar Lane, West Sussex

Overdevelopment

This application (and any future application to build in Thakeham) is well above the allocated number in both the Local, the Neighbourhood plans and the Horsham District Plan. It specifically contravenes the Neighbourhood plan (the contents of which were agreed and are legally valid until 2031!).

The historic Hamlets of Abingworth and Thakeham have already taken a high proportion of Horsham District Council's residential building requirements, and this has forced them from Hamlet status to Small village. Further development of the area is asking this status to be lost to a medium status village which I consider unacceptable.

Thakeham has already taken a 50% increase in housing since the baseline of 2016, and is proportionally higher than Horsham and/or any other village in West Sussex.

The current number of dwellings built since 2017, including those in build exceeds 400, which is a disproportionate number to the guidance and plans.

Thakeham is a Small village and not a medium village as was attempted to be inserted in settlement paperwork and terminology, something Thakeham Parish Council have objected to

This application proposes a disproportionate level of housing increasing the level set out in Neighbourhood Plan, and the 'Creep' of the Neighbourhood Plan sites has meant more development than ever envisaged.

Thakeham has already sustained a substantial and disproportionate increase of new homes during the 3 phases of the Abingworth Meadows development the latter still under construction despite the number of sales falling and unsold houses providing evidence that there is no further demand in the village.

Additionally the land to the North of High Bar Lane is relevant to this applications objection and should be read taking into account the current position from HDC. Equally the same applies with the Rushfield site along High Bar Lane. In conclusion the number of properties either green lighted or proposed for Thakeham Village is even more reason to deny this application.

It is argued that Thakeham/Abingworth has taken a much larger share of the Horsham District Council area quota for new housing, and any further development should be considered in larger towns and villages, and not in an overdeveloped small village such as Thakeham and Abingworth.

The Proposal is not compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 and remains an over development of a rural village.

Privacy Light and Noise

There is currently zero, or very little light pollution in Thakeham and Abingworth, which is to be commended. The proposed site has "Dark Sky designation (Thakeham Village Parish meeting 2024) and in general falls just outside an International Dark Sky Reserve, and HDC/HPC should do their utmost to NOT INCREASE ANY light pollution any further in the village or the surrounding area.

However much Belway suggest noise pollution will be minimal, the nature of this size of this proposal, where there is currently very little noise, will be very disruptive. Any housing built in the numbers Belway are proposing (150, with a question mark of increasing to 600 dwellings) will bring with it noise of the months of the build across phases, and then the occupations and increased vehicular traffic.

All of this will directly impact on resident wildlife and foraging routes.

The area in question also surrounds residential properties that have been private for years yet the proposals on the table would surround these properties.

Highway Access and Parking

Belway propose to utilise the junction onto the (already congested A2139). This originally utilised a questionable traffic survey which was flawed or in the favour of Belway in its results. I have seen nothing since 2024 to suggest any improved solution.

Thakeham Village Council contracted a qualified contractor to carry out its own data collection during normal working days (September 2023) and this found the proposed junction to present an accident risk/black spot. I do not believe this to have been addressed.

I would remind HDC that Belway asserted that High Bar Lane was not a bridleway. It both still is, and remains used daily by equestrians, despite Belway suggesting this is not the case.

This village already has [REDACTED] two ineffective calming islands that favour the Abingworth site access but do nothing to slow cars entering the village.

Due to the lack of infrastructure and amenities, it is highly likely any dwelling will own 2 cars. A large number of those will commute out of the village for employment elsewhere, and shopping in others areas. Therefore based on Belway's ambition, car movements onto the A2139 could increase by between 300-600 movements- This is STILL NOT ACCEPTABLE!

The A2139 to the north and south is not suitable for a significant and increased traffic flow particularly with anything larger than a car as the tarmac is simply not big enough for large vehicles and HGV's to pass. Our requirement to maintain the "sunken lanes" (dug by Napoleonic prisoners of war) and preserve historical significance leaves no scope for further development of this B road that extra housing would eventually look to.

Horsham District Council Local plan also notes "that public transport is poor and that site assessments are incorrect at the level of service provision. Not useful for commuters or high level education".

Belway's current presentation has not evidenced any practical solution but rather alludes to possible elements that may or may not be included or even dropped.

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Design

The design is not in keeping with a small village. The volume of dwellings bear no relevance to

a countryside development and are aesthetically displeasing and in no way sympathetic to the surrounding area. I would also suggest that a hamlet (sic. small village) status area has no place for any further increases!

Again! This is not in keeping with Thakeham Parish Council's plan. It is a direct overdevelopment of an already over developed village, in an area that requires the preservation of high quality green spaces and farmland/agriculture.

Water supplies; The proposal looks for water neutrality but also intends utilising Southern Water mains supply!!! Southern Water evidently have some concerns in the consultation response.

Has it been ascertained if Belway still rely on data from the 2011 census (as this is/was sympathetic to their scheme) or is there evidence of 2021 census data which give a quite different story.

Is Hydraloop technology still being proposed or has this been dropped - if the former, it remains far from proved at this time.

Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan (TNP) objectives include;

To protect natural existing ground water courses and their immediate surrounding vegetation in order to maintain essential ecosystem services, prevent water and soil pollution and to help retain the natural role in flood prevention provided by existing water courses

I would suggest that this proposal is not in keeping with the above objective.

I would suggest that if HDC become accountable by approving this application, an independent authority alongside Southern Water would need to conduct water sampling and testing for some time to determine public safety is not at risk and report these findings to HDC and all interested parties objecting to this application.

Sewer - It is a fact that though built to regulation (minimums) the Abingworth development has suffered numerous sewer issues. HDC need to ascertain and ensure that similar issues will not happen and crucially not affect those residential dwellings already using the capacity of the system. Southern water outline concerns in their consultation letter in respect of risk of water contamination

Connection to District Heating is recommended in Abbey consultants document - What District heating system are they proposing connecting to.

Electrical supplies; It is still unclear what Belway are proposing as their energy statement makes a lot of generic statements without specifically giving their No1 solution therefore more information is required;

- Photovoltaic solar panel installations seem to be the lead suggestion but not across the whole site. This electrical requirement and solution need specific information?

- Electric car charging points and infrastructure per property? (That said, the carbon footprint is still there but just pushed to the supplier.)

How will Belway guarantee the electrical supply is totally carbon neutral, from renewable sources, and crucially, will it meet demand?

Appropriate levels of new mains electric's to each property would be required to be ring-fenced and not utilise a shared main that impacts on the current residents during periods of peak use.

Particularly in an area of green countryside, every available option should be considered seriously.

Trees and landscaping

The area around the site is already listed in Horsham papers as a "bat sustenance area". The site is visited by bats daily (when not in hibernation). Bats require open countryside with unbroken trees and hedgerows. The site currently has 12 known species of bat that forage and visit.

Also seen, are Deer, [REDACTED] Foxes, Hedgehogs, Dormice, Woodpeckers, Buzzards, Barn Owls, Kestrels, Red Kites and recently the occasional Sea Eagle overhead, alongside the regular countryside and garden birds.

Of major note is the avian siting of the Black Redstart on this site. This species has a UK

Conservation status of "Amber" with fewer than 100 breeding pairs left in the UK. It is imperative that this species is not disturbed!!

This biodiversity is precious and would be completely lost were any application granted. There is little or no benefit to wildlife in this proposal and no mitigation that would balance a housing development.

Introducing more domestic cats and dogs to the area will devastate indigenous wildlife.

COP and CITIEs are voices for protecting the planet, its wildlife and bio diversity, and the UK Government is at the forefront of supporting this. Any further development in this hamlet will have a direct impact on existing wildlife, plant and insect life which the more we encroach on with building dwellings in green environments we face a danger to the planet.

I originally noted that Belway's submission was reliant on 2006 guidance in respect of local wildlife and I can't see that an independent survey has been carried out in the last 24 months? Belway's proposal gives Thakeham an adverse ecological impact when the land could be returned to countryside which would satisfy wildlife rewilding within the County.

Other

Education ; Belway give a very "conservative" estimate of 111 children requiring schooling yet the system has very strained admission rates in the surrounding area, and NO impact report on this subject has been made by Belway.

Air quality; I would cite that the increased vehicular footfall (from the proposal - 2 cars per dwelling on average) alongside daily deliveries will reduce air quality in the Village.

Amenities; A token village shop and a small veterinary practice were built retrospectively as part of the Abingworth development, alongside a cricket pitch, a football field, a changing room and village hall. All other requirements and large food shopping etc. require a car journey to neighbouring villages. Belway hint at community centre however their detail is at best, very vague.

- NHS services such as dentists and doctors have not increased proportionally in previous years and the suggestion that this could be accommodated in a building smaller than the current village hall are laughable.

- There are no surgeries in the village, and there are no spaces in surgeries to take new patients in the neighbouring area and thereby any newly granted development adds to the issue, and will not have this service to support its new residents.

The contaminated land should be restored by the current landowner as a moral if not legal obligation. This is not a bargain or trade off. This is a responsibility for managing the current site.

Air Quality in Thakeham and Abingworth - Building projects whether commercial or agricultural will naturally increase pollutants, ergo air quality will be affected.

Storrington, as the nearest village for essential retail shopping already has recorded some of the highest level vehicular pollutants in the county, and any further dwellings in Thakeham will only increase this problem further.

Transportation infrastructure; There is basic bus service but not one that would enable daily commuting to say work or an educational facility, certainly no easy return trip can be made. Again I would note Horsham District Council Local plan states; "that public transport is poor". Not useful for commuters or high level education".

Final points

Thakeham has already supported the Horsham District area housing targets and further development of this "Hamlet" should not be considered. I did not buy this property to eventually live in a large village (or worse)!

Thakeham has already exceeded Horsham housing targets.

Phase 3 of Abingworth is underway and undersold, and there should end Thakeham's contribution to HDC development proposals.

This application is not in any way sympathetic or offers anything to the neighbourhood plan, and is just another ill-considered method of making money for the developer.

"Community Communications Partnership"

Belway reached out to the neighbourhood in January.

Their first question (how do you feel about redeveloping this site for housing?) gained an

overall negative response!

Oppose (Strongly Oppose/Oppose) numbered - 38

Support (Strongly Support/support) numbered - 22

Neutral numbered - 6

Question 2 was far from conclusive (What do you think of the reduction in number of houses from 247 to 150?)

Oppose (Strongly Oppose/Oppose) numbered - 26

Support (Strongly Support/support) numbered - 27

Neutral numbered - 11

Question 3 (about 35% of homes being affordable homes instead of flats)

This is a carefully worded question and answers reflect the lessor of two evils

Negative (Very Negative/Negative) numbered - 16

Positive (Very Positive/Positive) numbered - 28 NB: there were no Very positive votes!

Neutral numbered - 20

I would suggest the number of neutral votes and wording of this question suggest the question does not allow a valid response and should be discounted.

Question 4 (What do you think of the plan for the homes to be all electric?)

Negative (Very Negative/Negative) numbered - 16

Positive (Very Positive/Positive) numbered - 28 NB: there were no Very positive votes!

Neutral numbered - 20

Belway suggest that this result is that residents do not consider this a high priority. I would suggest that the questions raised too many other questions for an informed decision to be made. I would suggest Belway's reading of this result be discounted.

Question 5 (further traffic calming measures)

Negative (Very Negative/Negative) numbered - 17

Positive (Very Positive/Positive) numbered - 20

Neutral numbered - 8

The results are again too close to take a reading from. This is probably due to the nonspecific detail in the question

Question 6 (plans for a mobility hub/sustainable travel)

Oppose (Strongly Oppose/Oppose) numbered - 29

Support (Strongly Support/support) numbered - 21

Neutral numbered - 23

The high number of neutral votes is likely to have been received through lack of specific information...again. (...could include, could support.) Equally this could also mean could not!! However the follow up question giving 4 options is welcome but in my opinion requires much more consideration and outreach to gain a usable insight.

Question 8 (What are your overall thoughts on the proposals)

Oppose (Strongly Oppose/Oppose) numbered - 43

Support (Strongly Support/support) numbered - 15

Neutral numbered - 6

Belway's reading of these results is rose tinted to note that half the responses Strongly opposed, ignoring the lessor Oppose votes

64 responders, 43 opposed, 15 supported

That said they do note the "concerns". One might also categorise these "concerns" as Objections!

Overall I find it concerning that the number of votes in total for each question varies so much and would question the validity and independent nature of this data collection. Supposedly 521 people visited the website, around 70 the consultation, yet the responses range between 50-100.

Either way I think the results as they are presented can be read as a community that is not in favour of the proposal.

With this in mind, Horsham District Council Planning should not approve this variation/proposal.

I have noted a Historic Environment advisor notes, "The presence of Roman and Anglo Saxon material to the west and north of the proposed development area indicates activity in the vicinity of the site during those periods in particular. Archaeological remains are both fragile and finite. The following condition is therefore recommended in line with the NPPF.
ARCHAEOLOGICAL

HDC should note that the Member of Parliament for Arundel and the South Downs, The Right Honourable Andrew Griffiths MP supports the Village concerns and has met with Thakeham Parish Council and advised Horsham district council of his concerns.
This concern gives HDC reason enough to halt all applications being thrown at Thakeham

The current/valid Neighbourhood plan states;

"Still rural despite the building of some housing estates in the 20th century in the south and centre of the village its access to employment remains by car. The network of sunken lanes, despite their beauty, makes walking and cycling difficult. Perhaps because of this relative isolation and the fact that the village still has a pub, school and churches, a strong sense of community still remains."

This plan has legal stature until 2031 and should be respected.

"The vision for Thakeham is to protect, maintain, enhance and improve our distinctive environment and community, to provide an outstanding quality of life for current and future generations of residents, to be socially and economically thriving and to conserve and protect our high quality natural environment, landscape, habitats and wildlife biodiversity. Future development during the plan period should maintain the character of the Parish through the adoption of appropriate building styles, low densities and open green spaces in order to mitigate its impact."

I would continue to push that this application and any previous or future proposals have forgotten Thakeham's roots and history and that it is not in keeping with the above vision and should be quashed immediately.

Horsham District Council have a duty to, and should turn down this application and ANY FUTURE applications within the Thakeham, Abingworth boundary.

To summarise;

I strongly reject this proposal and request that Horsham District Council rule that the responsible Landowner should clean the contaminated land, cease trying to make fast profits through unwanted and unrequired (in this village at least) housing and ensure the area is returned to agriculture (providing employment) and/or remains a habitat for flora and fauna, local wildlife and for local people to enjoy as they have done over many years

The proposal remains non-compliant with the Thakeham Neighbourhood plan which is legal in its framework until 2031.

Its increase in traffic is unacceptable as recognised by the planning inspector who refused Belway's original proposal. There is nothing of substance in this proposal to suggest a solution has been found.

These are my strong objections to DC/26/0266, and remain my objections to DC/24/0021, DC/20/2577, DC/23/2152 and DC/23/0269, and any other future amendments or proposals within the Thakeham, Abingworth vicinity.

Kind regards

Telephone:

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**Horsham
District
Council**



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