

[REDACTED]
9 Station Road
Warnham
Horsham
RH12 3SR

Planning Department
Horsham District Council
Parkside
Chart Way
Horsham
RH12 1RL

27 May 2026

Dear Planning Officer,

RE: Formal Objection to Planning Application DC/26/0585

Land North of Station Road, Warnham, West Sussex RH12 3SR

I write to formally object to planning application DC/26/0585 for the proposed development of approximately 24 residential dwellings on land north of Station Road, Warnham.

While I recognise the general need for housing, this application represents an unsustainable and inappropriate form of development that would cause significant and irreversible harm to the character of the area, highway safety, local infrastructure, biodiversity, neighbouring amenity, and the wider rural setting. The proposal conflicts with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF), and the Warnham Neighbourhood Development Plan (WNDP).

My objections are set out below.

1. Overdevelopment and Harm to Rural Character

Station Road is a small rural hamlet consisting of approximately 21 dwellings, characterised by Victorian semi-detached properties, open green space, woodland, and a low-density rural form. The proposed addition of 24 dwellings would more than double the size of the settlement in a single phase of development and fundamentally alter its long-established character.

The site currently forms an important area of open land and informal community green space used by local residents and children. Its loss would urbanise a modest rural setting and erode the spacious and informal nature of the area.

The development is wholly out of scale with the existing settlement pattern and would introduce suburban-style housing into countryside outside the Warnham Built Up Area Boundary (BUAB). The application site is classified as countryside under both the HDPF and the Warnham Neighbourhood Development Plan, and Station Road was previously considered and rejected as a housing allocation during preparation of the WNDP due to concerns including access, flooding, and sustainability.

The proposal also risks coalescence between Warnham and Horsham, contrary to strategic countryside protection and landscape policies, including HDPF Policies 25 and 26.

Furthermore, the outline application provides insufficient detail regarding layout, scale, landscaping, levels, and appearance, making it impossible to properly assess the true visual impact on the rural environment and neighbouring properties.

2. Highway Safety and Unsustainable Transport

Station Road is entirely unsuitable for a development of this scale. It is a narrow, unlit, no-through rural lane with no pavements, no dedicated pedestrian or cycle infrastructure, and limited passing space.

The junction of Station Road with the A24, offset with Bell Road, is already recognised locally as dangerous and has a significant accident history, [REDACTED]. Visibility at the junction is severely compromised by the road layout, bends, and topography, making safe egress difficult even under existing traffic conditions.

The proposed development would significantly increase vehicle movements onto this hazardous junction and materially worsen existing safety concerns.

The Transport Statement submitted in support of the application is flawed and fails to accurately reflect local conditions. In particular:

- It overstates the sustainability credentials of the location.
- It fails to recognise that residents will remain highly dependent on private cars.
- It downplays the lack of safe walking and cycling routes.
- It omits or minimises known accidents and near misses at the A24 junction.
- It relies upon transport infrastructure improvements that have neither been approved nor implemented.

Pedestrian and cyclist safety is a major concern. Residents, including children, currently walk and cycle along Station Road to access Warnham village and the primary school. However:

- There are no pavements between the station and the A24 junction.
- There is no safe pedestrian crossing on the A24.
- Mercer Road and Langhurstwood Road also lack pavements and are used by heavy goods vehicles.
- Access to Horsham requires crossing the A264 where traffic speeds are high.
- The route to local facilities is unsafe for vulnerable road users.

The development therefore conflicts with the NPPF objective of promoting sustainable transport and reducing conflict between vehicles and vulnerable road users.

Public transport provision is also inadequate. Warnham Station provides only an infrequent service, with no trains after approximately 7pm on Saturdays and no Sunday service. There is no bus service connecting the station to Warnham village or wider services. As a result, future residents would inevitably rely heavily on private car use.

3. Parking and Access Issues

The proposed parking provision is inadequate for a rural location where car ownership levels are high. Existing evidence suggests households in the area commonly require two or more vehicles, yet the development fails to provide sufficient parking capacity for residents, visitors, delivery vehicles, and service access.

This will inevitably lead to overspill parking along Station Road and associated access lanes, further narrowing an already constrained road and increasing risks to pedestrians and motorists.

There are also serious concerns regarding displacement of existing parking and access arrangements, including:

- Loss of existing informal parking spaces currently used by residents.
- Obstruction of parking associated with No. 18 Station Road.
- Interference with long-established parking arrangements to the rear of properties.
- Reduction in manoeuvring space required to access garages and car ports.

Residents possess established rights of access along the rear lane behind the existing dwellings. The proposed layout appears incapable of accommodating the turning widths necessary for continued practical use of these access rights.

The Council should require detailed dimensioned drawings demonstrating that all existing rights of access and parking arrangements can be retained without obstruction or material interference.

4. Flood Risk and Drainage

Station Road and the surrounding land are already subject to regular flooding, particularly near Boldings Brook and adjacent fields. Residents regularly experience waterlogging and flooding during periods of heavy rainfall.

The proposed development would replace permeable land with hard surfaces, increasing surface water run-off and exacerbating flood risk to existing homes and roads.

This raises serious concerns given that Station Road represents the sole access route for both existing and proposed residents.

Importantly:

- Horsham District Council, acting as Lead Local Flood Authority, has already objected to the application in relation to surface water disposal.
- Southern Water has also objected and indicated that it would not permit connection to the foul drainage system as currently proposed.

The application therefore fails to demonstrate that adequate drainage and sewerage infrastructure exists to accommodate the development.

A detailed and independently reviewed Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy should be required before any permission is considered.

5. Pressure on Infrastructure and Utilities

Local infrastructure is already under strain and is insufficient to support a development of this scale.

Residents already experience:

- Regular power cuts.
- Occasional low water pressure.
- Existing pressure on foul drainage infrastructure.
- Limited local services and facilities.

The application contains no credible proposals for infrastructure upgrades and does not demonstrate how essential utilities and public services would cope with the additional demand generated by 24 new dwellings.

6. Ecology, Biodiversity, and Environmental Harm

The site and surrounding area support significant wildlife habitats and form part of an important rural ecological corridor.

Species regularly observed include:

- Bats
- Owls
- Deer
- Foxes
- Frogs
- Reptiles
- Nightingales
- Great crested newts
- Red kites
- Red and green woodpeckers

The site falls within a recognised impact risk zone for great crested newts, and multiple ponds exist both on and adjacent to the site.

The development would result in substantial habitat loss, increased disturbance, greater light pollution, and degradation of biodiversity.

There are also concerns regarding:

- Removal of mature trees, including protected oak trees.
- Harm to ancient woodland and established habitats.
- Increased carbon emissions due to car dependency.
- Failure of the application to demonstrate measurable biodiversity gain.

The ecological information submitted is insufficient and does not adequately address the environmental impacts of the proposal.

7. Harm to Residential Amenity

The proposed dwellings would overlook existing homes along Station Road due to the elevated position of the application site, resulting in loss of privacy and visual intrusion for neighbouring residents.

Increased traffic, noise, lighting, and activity associated with a development of this scale would also materially harm the quiet rural character currently enjoyed by existing residents.

8. Inconsistency with Previous Objections Submitted by the Applicant

It is also highly relevant that the party now seeking permission for this development, Wienerberger Ltd, previously objected to nearby planning application DC/25/0151 relating to development at Mercer Road, Warnham.

In their objection, Wienerberger Ltd raised concerns regarding:

- Inadequate screening and landscaping.
- Noise impacts from nearby industrial activity.
- Harm to residential amenity.
- Dust and fine particle pollution.
- The incompatibility of residential development with surrounding uses.

Specifically, Wienerberger Ltd argued that insufficient mitigation had been provided to protect future residents from operational impacts associated with nearby development, including HGV movements, industrial noise, plant equipment, kiln and dryer exhausts, and airborne particles.

These are material planning considerations which the applicant clearly considered significant enough to justify objection to another development proposal in the immediate area.

It is therefore notable and concerning that the current application similarly fails to adequately address a range of serious impacts on existing residents and the surrounding environment, including highway safety, flood risk, biodiversity loss, parking displacement, infrastructure strain, and harm to residential amenity.

The applicant's previous objection demonstrates clear recognition that developments in this locality must be assessed carefully against their impact on neighbouring uses, environmental quality, and the character of the area. Those same principles should be applied consistently to the current proposal.

The Council is therefore respectfully urged to give substantial weight to the cumulative and unresolved concerns raised by local residents, the Parish Council, statutory consultees, and indeed the applicant's own previous planning representations in the area.

9. Station Road as a Public Right of Way and Designated Pathway

Station Road is not simply a residential access road; it also functions as a public right of way and an important pedestrian route used regularly by walkers, cyclists, families, and residents accessing Warnham village, Warnham Station, and surrounding countryside.

The existing character of Station Road is that of a quiet rural lane with shared use between vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, dog walkers, and children. Importantly, there are no pavements, no street lighting, and no separation between vehicles and vulnerable users at any point along the road.

The proposed development would fundamentally alter the nature and safety of this designated pathway by introducing a substantial increase in vehicle movements associated with approximately 24 additional dwellings, delivery vehicles, refuse lorries, service vehicles, and visitor traffic.

This increase in traffic would materially reduce the safety and amenity of the route for non-motorised users and undermine its function as a rural public pathway. In particular:

- Pedestrians and cyclists would be forced to share a significantly busier carriageway with increased traffic volumes.

- Families and children walking to Warnham village and the primary school would face greater danger.
- The absence of pavements or passing places would create conflict between vehicles and vulnerable users.
- Increased traffic would erode the quiet rural character and recreational value of the route.
- The proposal conflicts with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework to prioritise walking and cycling and create safe, inclusive places.

The Warnham Parish Council has previously noted that better facilities for pedestrians and cyclists would be necessary if development were ever proposed in this location. No such adequate infrastructure is proposed within this application.

As such, the development fails to properly account for the status and existing use of Station Road as a designated public pathway and would result in unacceptable harm to public safety, accessibility, and rural amenity.

10. Potential for Further Legal Challenge

Given the scale of local opposition, the apparent conflicts with established planning policy, the unresolved concerns relating to highway safety, flooding, ecology, drainage, and infrastructure, together with the acknowledged deficiencies in the supporting documentation, it is highly likely that any decision to approve this application would face significant further challenge from affected residents.

A number of residents have already expressed serious concern regarding the lawfulness and procedural adequacy of the application process and reserve the right to seek independent legal advice, including consideration of a Judicial Review, should planning permission be granted without these material concerns being properly addressed.

In light of this, the Council is respectfully urged to ensure that all material planning considerations, statutory obligations, consultation responses, and policy conflicts are fully and transparently assessed before any determination is made.

11. Conclusion

For all of the reasons outlined above, this proposal represents unsustainable development in an unsuitable rural location. It would cause substantial harm to the character of Station Road, create unacceptable highway and pedestrian safety risks, increase flooding and drainage problems, damage biodiversity, overload inadequate infrastructure, and negatively affect the amenity of existing residents.

The proposal conflicts with the National Planning Policy Framework, the Horsham District Planning Framework, and the Warnham Neighbourhood Development Plan.

I therefore respectfully urge Horsham District Council to refuse planning application DC/26/0585.

Yours faithfully,

