From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 28 September 2026 21:07:23 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0954
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 28/09/2026 9:07 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land South of Athelstan Way Horsham West Sussex
Proposal:	Residential development for 21no. 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom dwellings with associated parking, hard and soft landscaping at Land South of Athelstan Way, Horsham.
Case Officer:	Nicola Pettifer

Click for further information

Customer Details

Address:	22 Weald Close Horsham

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Design - Highway Access and Parking - Loss of General Amenity - Trees and Landscaping
Comments:	I strongly object to this proposed development. 1. Open Countryside, Landscape and Visual Impact The site lies outside the built-up area/settlement boundary of Horsham and forms part of the attractive open countryside

immediately south of the town. Its undeveloped character makes an important contribution to Horsham's setting, the transition between the town and surrounding countryside, and the recreational amenity of local residents who regularly use the area for walking, cycling and dog walking.

The development would result in the permanent loss of this open countryside and cause significant harm to the character, appearance and visual amenity of the landscape.

The site occupies elevated and visually prominent ground, making two-storey housing particularly intrusive. Its prominence was demonstrated when the applicant parked a caravan, significantly lower than the proposed houses, on the higher part of the field, where it was clearly visible from the surrounding area. This provides a useful indication of the potential visual impact of the proposed development.

The proposed bungalows at the highest point may reduce some of the visual impact, but the taller buildings in front would substantially diminish this benefit and obscure the bungalows from surrounding areas.

The site is not a self-contained parcel that can readily absorb development. It forms part of a wider rural landscape which rises from the existing southern edge of Horsham, and development would introduce a substantial built element into this open setting. The proposed houses would not adequately reflect the prevailing rural character or respond sensitively to the landscape setting.

If permission were granted, conditions should also prevent subsequent increases in building height or visual prominence, including loft conversions, dormer windows or similar alterations.

The loss of this valued recreational resource is contrary to HDPF Policy 43.

2. Previous Planning History

The Design and Access Statement acknowledges planning history to the south and east of the site where residential development was refused because of its significant impact on the countryside.

The high elevation of the land and its resulting impact on views were recognised by the Planning Inspector in relation to the development referred to in the statement. The current proposal occupies land at the same elevated level.

The fundamental characteristics that led to those decisions have not changed; the contours, elevation and relationship of the land with the surrounding countryside remain the same. Differences in the design or scale of the current proposal do not remove these

underlying landscape and visual constraints.

3. Wider Countryside and Environmental Value

The site forms part of a wider countryside area incorporating meadow, wetland, river and woodland habitats. Muggeridge Field, Chesworth Farm and the surrounding area have Local Wildlife Site status, demonstrating the wider environmental importance of this landscape.

Development would permanently alter this rural setting, reducing both its landscape and recreational value and weakening the undeveloped countryside setting to the south of Horsham.

4. Bridleway and Boundary Treatment

The western boundary currently consists of mature trees and hedgerows, providing an established, attractive and relatively open rural setting to the bridleway.

The proposal would replace this character with timber close-boarded fencing and a built edge, creating a more confined and urbanised corridor. There does not appear to be sufficient landscaping to adequately soften or screen this impact.

This would result in a permanent loss of the bridleway's existing visual amenity, rural character and recreational value, which cannot be adequately mitigated through landscaping alone.

5. Hedgerow Removal, Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

There are significant concerns regarding the treatment of existing hedgerows and the Biodiversity Net Gain calculation.

Mature hedgerows along the southern and western boundaries have already been removed. This appears inconsistent with the Design and Access Statement, which states that the layout has been designed to retain existing trees and hedgerows and avoid negative impacts on them in accordance with Policy 33.

The hedgerows had previously been identified as potential dormouse habitat, making their removal a matter that should be properly addressed within the ecological assessment.

Of particular concern is that the clearance appears to have taken place before determination of the application. Any Biodiversity Net Gain assessment should accurately reflect the site's condition before this clearance, rather than allowing the removal of established habitat to artificially reduce the biodiversity baseline.

The proposal should demonstrate how the relevant habitat creation and long-term management requirements will be met,

including the Neighbourhood Plan requirement under Policy HB10 for sufficient funding to support at least 30 years of post-development habitat management or land-use change.

6. Incorrect Reference to HB27
Paragraph 5.10 of the Design and Access Statement states that the site forms part of HB27: Athelstan Way within the Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036 and suggests that the site could be sensitively developed.

This appears to be incorrect and should not be relied upon as justification for the proposal. HB27 was subsequently removed and there is no adopted housing allocation supporting residential development of this site.

The former HB27 reference should therefore not be presented as evidence of an existing policy allocation or endorsement for development. This is particularly important given the apparent reliance on HB27 in support of the principle of development.

7. Design and Access Statement

There appear to be editing errors within the Design and Access Statement, including instances where planning policies have been duplicated consecutively. This makes the document unnecessarily difficult to follow and raises concerns about the accuracy and clarity of the planning justification.

Given the reliance placed on planning policy and previous planning history, the statement should provide clear and accurate information, particularly in relation to HB27 and the site's planning history.

8. Drainage and Flooding

There are concerns that development could increase surface-water runoff and exacerbate existing drainage or flooding problems affecting neighbouring properties.

The applicant should demonstrate that the development will not worsen existing conditions, taking full account of the site's topography and elevated position and the cumulative effect of buildings, hardstanding and access roads.

9. Parking, Highway Safety and Emergency Access

There are concerns regarding the adequacy of the proposed parking provision. Insufficient on-site parking could result in additional parking on Athelstan Way and neighbouring roads, which are already busy.

This could increase congestion and potentially obstruct access for

emergency vehicles, including access to neighbouring properties and the nearby care home.

10. Precedent and Cumulative Impact

Development of this site would risk encouraging further incremental development of neighbouring fields and the wider Chesworth Farm area.

The importance of this countryside lies not only in the individual site but in its relationship with the surrounding undeveloped fields and the wider rural landscape. Incremental development would progressively erode this countryside setting and the separation between Horsham and the surrounding rural area.

11. Conclusion

The site lies outside the built-up area of Horsham and occupies an elevated and visually prominent position within an important area of open countryside. It contributes significantly to the landscape setting of the town and provides a valued recreational resource for local residents.

The proposal would result in the permanent loss of open countryside and significant harm to the landscape, views, recreational value and rural setting of the southern edge of Horsham. These concerns are reinforced by previous refusals of residential development on neighbouring land because of its impact on the countryside.

There are also significant concerns regarding the removal of mature hedgerows, the ecological implications and Biodiversity Net Gain baseline, the treatment of the bridleway, drainage, parking and highway safety, and the accuracy of the Design and Access Statement. The reliance on the former HB27 designation is particularly concerning and should not be treated as an established planning basis for residential development.

Taken together, the proposal would cause substantial and permanent harm to an important area of countryside and to the character and setting of the southern edge of Horsham.

I therefore strongly object to the application and respectfully request that planning permission be refused.

Kind regards

Telephone:

Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk



Horsham District Council