

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 11 March 2026 09:47:33 UTC+00:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0366
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 11/03/2026 9:47 AM.

Application Summary

Address: Land North West of Southwater

Proposal: Outline planning application, with all matters reserved (except for primary access to the highway) for a phased development comprising: the demolition of existing buildings and the construction of residential dwellings (including affordable housing) (Use Classes C2 and C3); a mixed-use neighbourhood centre (Use Classes E and F); education facilities (Use Class F1(a)); business and employment floorspace (Use Classes B2, B8 and E(g)); redevelopment of existing agricultural buildings including construction of a building for community use (Use Classes E and F2); improvements to public rights of way; sports pitches; gypsy and traveller pitches/plots; public open space; landscaping, and associated infrastructure.

Case Officer: Matthew Porter

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Customer Details

Address: 7 Courtlands Southwater Horsham West Sussex

Comments Details

Commenter Type: Member of the Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

- Design
- Loss of General Amenity

- Other
- Overdevelopment

Comments:

I am objecting to the Berkeley Homes proposal to build 1,000 homes northwest of Southwater on the grounds that the sewage and wastewater system is already failing residents and Southern Water cannot be trusted to fix it.

Some Southwater Parish Council residents have been dealing with sewage overflow problems for years - problems that Southern Water has repeatedly failed to resolve. Adding 1,000 more homes to an already strained network, without a confirmed and funded upgrade, is irresponsible.

A serious new concern has emerged. Planning application DC/26/0366 reveals that foul sewage from the proposed development will be treated at Barns Green Wastewater Treatment Works.

Southern Water's own documents (Flood Risk Assessment and Outline Drainage Strategy, 27/02/2026, para. 11.1.3; Annex H) confirm that while it intends to increase capacity at Barns

Green, this will take at least 24 months - and potentially longer.

Approving development now would place the Barns Green works under severe additional load before any upgrade is in place, with a real and predictable risk of sewage discharging into local watercourses.

Southern Water's track record offers no reassurance. In 2020 it pleaded guilty to 51 criminal offences of deliberately dumping untreated sewage, was fined £90 million, and was described by

the Environment Agency as the worst case in its history. The company's financial conduct since

then deepens the concern further. Ofwat has determined that Southern Water must invest

sufficiently to require customer bills to rise by 44% by 2030 - a ruling Southern Water is actively

appealing. That appeal speaks for itself: this is a private equity-run enterprise resisting the

investment its regulator has deemed necessary, and there is no credible basis for assuming it will

voluntarily fund the future-proofed infrastructure capacity that 1,000 new homes would require.

Planning permission must not be granted on the assumption that a company actively resisting

investment will deliver the infrastructure needed. Southern Water must provide a formal, legally

binding commitment to expand sewage treatment capacity before any development is permitted.

The applicant's own drainage strategy - acknowledging a minimum 24-month upgrade timeline

- makes this requirement unambiguous.

I ask that the Berkeley Homes 1,000-home proposal be refused until Southern Water has provided a formally confirmed, independently verified, and legally secured commitment to upgrade sewage and wastewater treatment capacity for Southwater without unduly impacting neighbouring villages.

Kind regards

Telephone:

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