

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 10 July 2026 16:47:58 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0945
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 10/07/2026 4:47 PM.

Application Summary

Address: Abingworth Nurseries Storrington Road Thakeham West Sussex

Proposal: Variation of condition 1 of previously approved application reference DC/22/0773 (Variation of Condition 1 of previously approved application DC/19/1707 (Revised layout for Phase 3 of the Abingworth Meadows development (Original application ref: DC/10/1314) to provide for 75 dwellings including 26 affordable dwellings and community studio workshops). Amendment to buffer strip to reflect an additional swale with landscaping (part retrospective).

Case Officer: Jason Hawkes

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address: 5 Strawberry Close Thakeham

Comments Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Reasons for comment: - Other

Comments: FORMAL SUPPORT to Planning Application DC/26/0945 - Amendment to buffer strip to reflect an additional swale with landscaping (part retrospective).

SUMMARY

- We SUPPORT this retrospective planning application to formalise the swale.
- Approval should be granted on condition that a separate consultation / planning application is made by TPC after land transfer to consider whether a public footpath should be allowed.
- In addition, a further condition should be included for AMMC / TPC as the new owners of the buffer zone to consider safety concerns and fencing identified by the risk assessment.
- This letter of support is written on the basis that TPC will legally be taking part ownership of the buffer zone via S106 protocol and to designate it as public open space and that anything relating to public access and fencing is outside the remit of this planning application.

BACKGROUND

Once Bellway had built phase 3 it became apparent that there was a surface water run-off issue for residents in Springett Close and Strawberry Close, made significantly worse due to the building of Springett Close. The storm of 27th November 2024 caused multiple issues in Springett Close and Strawberry Close. The issue of water runoff from adjacent fields was never considered in the original development plans for Abingworth, and the WSCC LLFA suggested to us during a site meeting that they should have been more involved with the planning process many years ago. Thus, the water management scheme addresses this oversight.

Bellway devised a water management scheme which was endorsed by WSCC LLFA. HDC agreed it be implemented without planning approval to ensure it was in place for the winter of 2025-26. It is estimated Bellway spent approximately £250000 to protect Springett Close and Strawberry Close and we are very grateful for their proactive and generous response to the issues facing residents. The scheme worked well over the 2025/2026 winter and now provides 1 in 100-year storm + climate change protection to Springett Close and Strawberry Close. In addition, it also virtually eliminates PROW run-off and will also attenuate peak flows to the northern culvert during extreme rainfall. The overall scheme benefits a great many downstream residents of greater Abingworth and beyond, and it is imperative that it remains.

TPC OWNERSHIP OF SECTION OF BUFFER ZONE

It is now likely that the buffer zone will be transferred into split ownership. AMMC will own and maintain the water management scheme and TPC will own the remainder. We support a zero-access policy for the buffer zone for multiple reasons, not just privacy. However, it appears that TPC must allow public access to their section of the buffer zone and it cannot be fenced off. This has caused much anger with Springett Close residents due to privacy concerns, particularly as the Bellway conveyancing pack

is rumoured to erroneously indicate that the buffer zone was to be transferred to a private company, meaning there should have been no automatic right to public access. The residents of Springett Close are rightly upset if this is the case. The real issue here is one of misrepresentation from the seller and lack of transparency from TPC, both of which are outside the remit of this planning application. It seems that nobody can stop TPC from taking ownership of part of the buffer zone via the S106 route and to designate it as public open access space. TPC have stated they would not proceed with any sort of footpath in the buffer zone without further consultation / planning approval.

SuDS RISK ASSESSMENT

Bellway have provided a SuDS Risk Assessment for the swale which essentially concludes only low to medium time limited risks, with fencing off the scheme from the public as the main mitigation method if necessary. Most of the risks are still shown as ongoing and my interpretation is that Bellway want to pass the responsibility of this onto the new owners of the buffer zone. The cumulative time there will be deep water in the buffer zone will be very small compared to what we currently see in the main culvert, which can be full for more than a day after severe weather and that is not fenced at all.

OBJECTIVE CONSIDERATIONS OF THE PLANNING APPLICATION

This planning application is predominantly concerned with the formalisation of the swale + associated drainage features and revised landscaping due to the inclusion of the swale. HDC should judge the application on the merits of the stated application alone. As far as we are aware, all residents want the water management scheme to be retained. The Bellway planning application does not mention or seek to formalise any access or restriction into the buffer zone so any comments relating to access and fencing should really be ignored by the planning officer. The planning application shows open access to each end of the buffer zone, and therefore suggest that Bellway have done this correctly, even though we don't agree with it. They will no longer own the land, they know TPC will make their section public open access and TPC / AMMC will need to assess the need for fencing any areas likely to have deep water. This may mean a dividing post and rail fence is installed between TPC and AMMC land. The issue of any footpath or unrestricted public access to the buffer zone should be treated as a separate consultation / application from TPC as new owners of part of the buffer zone after Bellway transfer the land title accordingly.

We note that WSCC LLFA have now responded with no comment, effectively confirming their previous comments and endorsement from last year. This means the scheme is acceptable.

MINOR ISSUES INCLUDED WITHIN APPLICATION

Other minor issues relate to the new gate at the hammerhead and the regrading of the PROW. Both have already been completed by TPC and presumably paid for by Bellway. Regarding the gate, this is presumably required to allow a dog bin to be installed by the buffer zone and for maintenance access for the buffer zone and drainage trenches and will normally be locked. Any comments applicable to these issues are essentially irrelevant, because it is believed they were previously agreed. Bellway should have explained this in their application.

TPC PLANNING MEETING ON 7th JULY 2026

Having attended the recent TPC planning meeting to discuss this application, TPC's stance on this application is to support it with comments, very similar to this letter of support. There was unanimous agreement that the water management scheme should remain. TPC also stated they would not proceed with any sort of footpath in the buffer zone without further consultation / planning approval.

FINAL THOUGHTS

We fully support the application and hope the planning case officer and applicable councillors understand the situation here and to ensure that common sense prevails by approving the water management scheme. This should be subject to condition that any proposal of public footpath to the buffer zone is dealt with by another consultation / planning application and the provision of safety fencing is considered by the new buffer zone owners, once the land has been transferred as per S106 requirements.

Owners of 5 Strawberry Close

Kind regards

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**Horsham
District
Council**

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