

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk
Sent: 10 July 2026 10:32
To: Planning
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0782

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 10:32 AM.

Application Summary

Address:	The Warren Horsham Road Handcross Haywards Heath West Sussex RH17 6DX
Proposal:	Permission in Principle for a minimum and maximum of 7no. dwellings (including 4 flats above replacement garages, 3 dwellings on land off Handford Way, and to replace 2 existing dwellings (one on the site of the existing summer house outbuilding), and Estate Office extension to create up to 600 sq m of Class E floorspace.)
Case Officer:	Daniel Holmes

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Customer Details

Address: Crosstrees Handford Way Plummers Plain

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Highway Access and Parking - Loss of General Amenity - Other - Overdevelopment - Privacy Light and Noise - Trees and Landscaping
Comments:	We write as residents of Crosstrees, Handford Way, to object to the application for Permission in Principle, particularly insofar as it proposes three additional dwellings off Handford Way / Warren Virgate. Our concern is that the application seeks to establish the principle of further residential development on Handford Way before the planning history, impact on the private road, neighbour impacts, landscape implications and delivery of claimed benefits have been properly demonstrated.

Handford Way is not a village street or part of a built-up area. It is a small private road in the wooded countryside and within the High Weald National Landscape.

There are currently five established dwellings on Handford Way: Foresters, Long House, Weald House, Rowans and Crosstrees. They have existed in that settled arrangement for more than 50 years. The proposal would add three further dwellings, increasing the number from five to eight. That is a 60% increase in the number of houses on this small private road.

In our view, that is a significant local change. The issue is not simply whether three houses is a small number in district-wide terms, but whether three additional houses are acceptable in this specific location, having regard to countryside character, protected landscape policy, neighbour amenity, traffic, access, drainage, lighting, trees and cumulative impact.

We do not accept the description of the three proposed dwellings as "infill" or "left over" plots. The lower-side gap between Foresters and Rowans may be physically undeveloped, but that does not by itself make it acceptable for infill in planning terms. More importantly, the two upper-side plots near Warren Virgate and Crosstrees are not straightforward gaps between existing houses. They appear to involve further development of residual estate-side land.

The use of the words "infill" or "left over" risks understating the real planning issue. Handford Way is a private rural road within a protected landscape. The proposed development should be assessed as additional housing in the countryside and National Landscape, and not simply as the completion of a pre-existing and obvious residential street.

From the material we have seen, including historic deed-plan material, we do not understand that the original planning history preserved any consent, or planning acceptance, for additional dwellings over and above the five dwellings now established. If the applicant wishes to rely on the 1950s/1960s planning history as support for the current application, the original permissions, approved plans, conditions, later decisions, refusals and any appeal or enforcement records should be produced and assessed before Permission in Principle is granted.

We also wish to record Alan Chaplin's recollection of the earlier planning history. He recalls that, in or around 1970, the planning department wrote to him in relation to the remaining part of the larger plot out of which he bought the half plot on which Crosstrees was built. His recollection is that the letter indicated that further development on the remaining land would not be permitted. As he did not own the balance of the larger plot, he passed that letter to Major Handford, who was the owner at the time. We appreciate that the original correspondence may need to be checked, but this recollection reinforces the need for Horsham to examine the historic planning files before giving weight to the suggestion that the proposed sites are residual or previously accepted building plots.

We are also aware of historic issues concerning bats in relation to Handford Way, including the land opposite Weald House. Our understanding is that such concerns may have affected or prevented a previous proposal for building there. We ask that this is checked against the Council's historic planning and ecological records.

We are concerned that Permission in Principle is not an appropriate way to resolve these uncertainties. A grant of PiP would establish the acceptability of the location, land use and amount of development before many important matters have been resolved. The application relies heavily on future matters such as design quality, landscape screening, passing bays, turning arrangements, drainage, service-charge management, covenants, heritage funding and estate restoration. These matters are central to the applicant's justification and to the impact on existing residents, but they are not properly fixed at this stage.

The applicant also refers to a covenant by which the proposed dwellings would supposedly be the permanent extent of residential development on the estate. A private covenant is not the same as a planning control, and should not be given significant weight as a planning safeguard.

We are also concerned that the wider benefits relied upon by the applicant - including

restoration of The Warren, landscape improvements, biodiversity gains, public access improvements and restrictions on future development - are not clearly secured by the grant of Permission in Principle. If those benefits are essential to the justification for the Handford Way dwellings, they should be certain, enforceable and properly evidenced before the principle of the houses is accepted.

The proposal would also increase traffic and activity on Handford Way. The likely effects include additional private vehicles, visitors, deliveries, refuse vehicles, construction traffic, lighting, servicing, access works and pressure for road widening, passing places or turning areas. Such works may themselves change the rural and informal character of Handford Way.

Crosstrees is on the upper side of Handford Way, close to the area where the two upper-side plots appear to be proposed. If Permission in Principle is granted on a broad location plan, later technical details could still place built form, access, parking, lighting or boundary treatment in positions that materially affect Crosstrees. The impact on privacy, security, tranquillity and the wooded setting is not a remote technical issue; it goes directly to whether the location and amount of development are acceptable in principle.

The applicant presents the Handford Way dwellings as enabling development to support heritage restoration and wider estate benefits. Of course, we do not dismiss the importance of The Warren or the desirability of genuine restoration. However, enabling development must be properly justified. At present, it is not clear that three additional houses on Handford Way are the minimum necessary, that the proceeds would be ring-fenced for specific works, or that the works relied on as benefits would actually be delivered.

We are aware of the nature of objections that have been submitted, or that shortly are to be submitted, by another Handford Way resident, Mr Martin Markcrow of Longhouse. We do not repeat what we understand of all of those points here, but we support what we understand to be the substance of this objection insofar as it relates to Handford Way.

We have also seen that Lower Beeding Parish Council has raised concern as to the validity of the application for Permission in Principle. Those concerns trouble us, and we ask Horsham District Council to ensure that it does not proceed with any application that is not valid.

For these reasons, we ask Horsham District Council to refuse Permission in Principle for the proposed additional dwellings off Handford Way / Warren Virgate.

Yours faithfully,

[Redacted signature]

Kind regards

Telephone:

Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk



**Horsham
District
Council**

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