

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 22 March 2026 10:53:18 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 22/03/2026 10:53 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: TOWNINGS TWO MILE ASH ROAD 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
- Overdevelopment
- Privacy Light and Noise
- Trees and Landscaping

Comments:

I am objecting to the Berkeley Homes proposal to build 1,000 homes northwest of Southwater because the local road network is already at breaking point and this development will make it far worse.

The A24, which is the only realistic route in and out of Southwater for most journeys, is already at or beyond capacity at peak times. This is not residents' opinion - it is confirmed in Horsham District Council's own evidence base.

The Hop Oast roundabout, which would be one of the main access points for the Berkeley Homes development, is already at capacity according to the Council's own figures - and this is before a single Berkeley Homes home is built. Adding 1,000 new homes, alongside the 800 already approved at the Horsham Golf Club site, would bring 1,800 new car-dependent households through this single junction.

Adding 1000 homes will increase car dependency and increase the number of cars on local roads by approximately 1500 in the village which will add to the traffic attracted to the village for school drop off and pickup from villages outside Southwater. The problem will not simply be an increase of traffic due to houses but also due to the new school being promoted as part of the proposal.

When Berkeley Homes previously applied for 1,500 homes on the same site, West Sussex County Council Highways raised serious unresolved objections on traffic grounds. The application was withdrawn. Those concerns were never resolved - and the traffic position has got worse since then.

Adding traffic signals or road markings to an already-overloaded junction does not solve the problem. It delays it and makes it slightly more orderly. The underlying capacity is still exhausted and would create traffic bottlenecks within the village and on the A24 resulting in gridlock for new and existing residents.

I ask that the Berkeley Homes 1,000-home proposal be refused on the grounds that the A24 corridor and local road network cannot accommodate the traffic it would generate, and no viable mitigation has been demonstrated.

I am objecting to the Berkeley Homes proposal to build 1,000 homes on farmland northwest of Southwater on the grounds that the site cannot be safely drained.

The entire site sits on Weald Clay - a soil type officially classified by the Environment Agency as having almost no ability to absorb water. This is the fundamental hydrological character of this land. It is not a marginal issue that can be engineered away.

On Weald Clay, standard drainage solutions - soakaways, permeable paving, infiltration trenches - simply do not work. Berkeley Homes would have to rely entirely on large above-ground storage ponds, underground tanks, and

carefully managed outflows to local streams and ditches. At the scale of 1,000 homes, with thousands of roofs, roads and driveways replacing farmland, this is an enormous engineering challenge.

Planning rules now require drainage systems to cope with a 40% increase in rainfall intensity to account for climate change. The 2025 drought - the worst in 132 years - demonstrates this is not a theoretical risk. Berkeley Homes has not provided an independently verified drainage strategy that proves this is achievable.

Gardens on the Blakes Farm estate nearby have flooded repeatedly over many years - direct evidence of what happens when this clay soil is built over without adequate drainage.

I ask that the Berkeley Homes 1,000-home proposal be refused until an independent, specialist drainage engineer - with specific Weald Clay experience - has verified that flooding risk will not increase for existing residents or downstream watercourses.

I am objecting to the Berkeley Homes proposal to build 1,000 homes northwest of Southwater because no proper assessment has been made of the combined impact of all the growth Southwater is already absorbing.

Southwater is not starting from zero. Approximately 350 homes are already under construction at Broadacres. Around 800 more have planning permission at the Horsham Golf Club site. That is already around 1,150 new homes committed before Berkeley Homes has built a single house.

Adding 1,000 more brings the total to over 2,150 new homes - more than doubling the number of households in a village whose roads, schools, doctors' surgeries and sewage system were not built to cope with growth at this scale.

No one has carried out an assessment of what all this growth means for Southwater's infrastructure together. Berkeley Homes has assessed only its own proposal in isolation - ignoring the 1,150 homes already in the pipeline. That approach is not good enough.

The timescale of this development compounds the problem further. At Berkeley Homes' known build-out rate of 50-60 homes per year, and with a further estimated 200 units yet to be built elsewhere, construction on this site would extend over 20 years. A planning authority is only legally obliged to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply - yet approving this application would effectively hand a single developer a 20-year land supply in this location. Locking up this land for two decades since one developer's build-out capacity is not a sound or proportionate use of the planning system.

When Berkeley Homes applied for 1,500 homes on this same site in 2022, Horsham planning officers concluded the cumulative infrastructure impact was one of the key reasons the application was unacceptable. That application was withdrawn in February 2023. The infrastructure position has got worse since then, not

better - yet Berkeley Homes is now asking for 1,000 homes with no better evidence.

I ask that the Berkeley Homes 1,000-home proposal be refused until a full, independent cumulative infrastructure assessment covering all committed and proposed Southwater development has been completed and published.

I am objecting to the Berkeley Homes proposal to build 1,000 homes northwest of Southwater on the grounds that NHS and healthcare infrastructure is already overwhelmed, and no plan exists to expand it.

Anyone who lives in Southwater knows how hard it is to get a GP appointment. The surgeries serving the village are already under serious pressure from the population that is already here - let alone the 1,150 new homes already approved and under construction. The situation is not simply one of physical capacity: the local surgery appears to have room to accommodate additional GPs but is currently unable to recruit them. Approving 1,000 more homes does nothing to solve a staffing crisis that the NHS itself has not been able to resolve. Access to NHS dentistry in the area is also severely constrained, with many residents unable to register with any NHS dentist at all.

Southwater is also geographically isolated from the main hospitals. As a result, ambulance response times for our area are among the worst in the whole of Sussex. Adding over 2,000 more homes will put even greater pressure on emergency response capacity.

NHS England has not confirmed that primary healthcare capacity exists or can be funded to serve the additional population from Berkeley Homes' proposal. There is no costed, legally secured plan for a new GP surgery or expansion of existing facilities. 'We will work with the NHS to address this' is not a plan - it is a hope. Previous large Southwater developments came with promises of community infrastructure that did not materialise on time, or at all. Residents have already been let down once. Approving 1,000 more homes based on promises is not acceptable.

I ask that the Berkeley Homes 1,000-home proposal be refused until NHS England has formally confirmed that funded, deliverable primary healthcare provision exists to serve the combined population increase from all committed Southwater developments.

Kind regards

Telephone:

Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk



**Horsham
District
Council**



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