

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk
Sent: 11 September 2026 12:26
To: Planning
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 11/09/2026 12:25 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land at 518017 129871 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:	68 Macleod Road Horsham
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Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Member of the Public
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:	**Objection to Planning Application DC/26/0954 - 21 dwellings on land south of Athelstan Way** I strongly object to planning application DC/26/0954 for the construction of 21 dwellings on land south of Athelstan Way. My principal objection is not simply to the number of houses proposed, but to the irreversible loss of an attractive and valued area of open countryside which currently provides significant landscape, recreational, visual and ecological value to the local community.

This is not simply an unused piece of land on the edge of an existing housing estate. It forms part of an attractive open landscape which is enjoyed by local residents and users of the surrounding public rights of way. Walking through this area currently provides a sense of openness and connection with the surrounding countryside that would be fundamentally changed by residential development.

The views across the fields are particularly valuable. There are far-reaching views across the landscape South, towards Denne Hill and Eastwards towards Mannings Heath. The openness of the fields also provides an opportunity to experience the sunrise across the surrounding countryside. These are genuine landscape and recreational benefits which would be lost if the site were developed.

At present, a person walking along the public right of way experiences an open rural landscape, with fields, wildlife and long-distance views. Under the proposed development, that experience would instead be dominated by houses, roads, gardens, fencing and other domestic infrastructure. In particular, boundary treatments and high fences would introduce a much more enclosed, suburban character and would substantially reduce the openness and the views currently enjoyed from the area.

The loss would therefore not simply be the loss of an agricultural field. It would be the loss of an established and valued part of the local landscape and of the experience of walking through it.

Previous planning decision

I am particularly concerned that this is not a new issue.

The land has previously been considered for residential development, with a proposal for up to 70 dwellings being refused at appeal in 2012. The previous decision recognised the importance of the site as undeveloped greenfield land and the harm that residential development would cause to the countryside and its enjoyment by the public.

The fact that the current proposal is for 21 dwellings rather than 70 does not, in my view, overcome the fundamental issue: the proposal would still result in the permanent conversion of an open greenfield landscape into residential development in an area valued for its connection to nature that is also an area of importance for local biodiversity.

The Council should therefore give careful consideration to what has materially changed since the previous appeal decision that would now make residential development on this land acceptable.

Landscape and visual impact

The Council's own assessment of the site is particularly relevant. The land has previously been identified as being outside the built-up area, forming part of the Chesworth Farm landscape, and as being within a landscape that is highly sensitive to development.

The Council has also recognised the importance of the area for local amenity, recreation and green infrastructure.

These conclusions are consistent with my own experience of the site. It is precisely the open, undeveloped character of the land and the views across it that make the surrounding walks so enjoyable.

Furthermore, the applicant's own landscape assessment does not conclude that there will be no harm. It acknowledges adverse effects on the rural character of the site and adverse effects on visual amenity from the public bridleway.

These impacts should not be dismissed simply because the development would be relatively modest compared with the previous proposal. Twenty-one houses, together with roads, parking, gardens, fencing, lighting and associated infrastructure, would still fundamentally

change the character of this currently open landscape.

Wildlife and biodiversity

The site is also important for wildlife and biodiversity.

The application itself identifies that the site falls within the Local Wildlife Site boundary, and the ecological work submitted with the application records a range of bat species using the area, including species of conservation interest.

The value of the land is therefore not purely visual. It provides habitat and forms part of a wider ecological and green infrastructure network.

I am concerned that the creation of new gardens, roads, buildings, fencing and associated lighting will inevitably alter the character and ecological function of the site.

The proposed biodiversity 'net gain' should not, in itself, be regarded as justification for developing an existing Local Wildlife Site. The first consideration should be whether the harm caused by developing this particular site can be avoided in the first place. The local bat population, and ground nesting birds that Chesworth Farm is drawing to the area, would be especially impacted by the new development.

Green infrastructure and public amenity

The site forms part of the wider Chesworth Farm landscape and contributes to the green infrastructure around Horsham.

Although the field itself may not be formal public open space, its value to the public does not depend upon people having a right to enter the field. The surrounding public rights of way provide people with access to an open rural landscape and the views across it.

That experience is a genuine amenity value.

The proposed development would substantially reduce that value by replacing the existing open views with a residential development and associated boundary treatments. This would represent a permanent and irreversible change to an area which is currently enjoyed by local people for walking, recreation, appreciation of nature and the surrounding landscape.

Other matters requiring careful consideration

I would also ask the Council to ensure that the technical aspects of the proposal are fully scrutinised, particularly:

- * the impact of the proposed access and additional traffic on the surrounding residential roads and public rights of way;
- * pedestrian and cycle connectivity and the practicality of the claimed sustainable transport benefits;
- * surface-water drainage and flood-risk implications, including the modelling of extreme rainfall events and climate-change allowances;
- * the impact of development and associated lighting on bats and other wildlife;
- * the site's relationship with the wider Local Wildlife Site and Chesworth Farm green infrastructure;
- * the potential archaeological and heritage implications arising from the site's proximity to Chesworth House and associated historic assets.

Conclusion

I recognise that Horsham needs to accommodate new housing, but the need for housing does not mean that every available piece of land is an appropriate location for development.

In this case, the proposal would result in the permanent loss of an attractive area of open countryside which has significant landscape, recreational, visual and ecological value. Those

qualities are recognised not only by local residents but also within the Council's own previous assessment of the site.

The previous appeal decision demonstrates that the principle of residential development on this greenfield land has already been found to cause unacceptable harm. The current proposal may contain fewer houses, but it would still fundamentally alter the character of the land and the experience of those who use the surrounding public rights of way.

I therefore respectfully ask Horsham District Council to refuse planning application DC/26/0954 on the grounds that the development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the countryside, the landscape and visual amenity of the area, local biodiversity and green infrastructure, and the recreational amenity currently provided by this important open landscape.

Many thanks,

[Redacted Signature]

Kind regards

Telephone:

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**Horsham
District
Council**



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