

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 September 2026 17:50:42 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/26/1186
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 12/09/2026 5:50 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land North of Rectory Lane Ashington West Sussex
Proposal:	Outline Application for redevelopment of the site to provide up to 125 dwellings, access, public open space and associated landscaping, drainage and highways infrastructure with all matters reserved except access.
Case Officer:	Sam Whitehouse

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address: Virginia Cottage London Road Ashington Pulborough West Sussex

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 - Trees and Landscaping
Comments:	Position: Strong Objection
I formally strongly object to planning application DC/26/1186 for	

the development of 125 homes on the land north of Rectory Lane as it is unsustainable and therefore conflicts with the NPPF.

Ashington is defined as a medium village and it currently has 1114 homes. A further 226 homes were agreed in the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan which was formally "made" by Horsham District Council (HDC) and is therefore part of the statutory framework. Subsequent to the Neighbourhood Plan being made, HDC added a requirement for a further 74 homes in Ashington in its emerging Local Plan and planning for these 74 homes has been approved. None of the agreed 300 homes have yet been delivered or occupied. The infrastructure of Ashington is already under great pressure and it will need to accommodate these 300 homes, an increase in homes of 27%. I accept that new homes are needed and that Ashington must play its part hence it will have 300 new homes. To add a further 125 would be totally unsustainable. An application has also recently been made by Devine Homes (DC/26/1037) for 65 homes in the so called "Ashington Northern Cluster" and the impact of each one of these applications must be assessed based on their cumulative impact and must take into account the 300 homes already committed.

This proposed site was assessed by Horsham District Council in December 2023 as part of the Ashington Northern Cluster and in its report, Regulation 19 Site Assessment Report - Part IV Rejected Smaller Sites, HDC stated in its conclusion on page 223 that the collective impact of including this land (the Ashington Northern Cluster) would be "unsustainable in terms of the cumulative impact on local services and infrastructure" and that the development would not be appropriate to the scale and the status of the village. They also concluded that it may have a negative impact on social cohesion and the environmental fabric of the village.

The proposer and Devine Homes, two of the five sites which make up the Ashington Northern Cluster, have now submitted planning applications individually. This is presumably in the hope that each one will be approved as it is smaller. They must be considered together and also along with the 300 homes already agreed so that their true impact on Ashington can be assessed.

The Horsham Local Plan Sustainable Appraisal (July 2026) (HDCJB13) shows that, under Scenario 1, Ashington have been allocated a large percentage of houses due to unmet needs elsewhere. This requirement for HDC to identify land for housing cannot make the development of the "Ashington Northern Cluster" transform from an unsustainable site (HDC's own conclusion in December 2023) to a sustainable one. Nothing has materially changed since HDC came to its conclusion less than three years ago.

I would also like to make the following comments:

HIGHWAY SAFETY AND TRAFFIC ISSUES

The proposed site will exit onto Rectory Lane. Rectory Lane is already a very well used lane. It is a small residential lane with cars parked on both sides in places and residential side roads with reduced visibility. It eventually becomes a narrow rural lane by the access point to Ashington Northern Cluster. The first of the 300 homes agreed for Ashington are currently under construction and construction vehicles have to pull up on to the pavement at times to get through which is dangerous for pedestrians. The construction vehicles for this site are also already causing the surface of Rectory Lane to break up.

The nursery school is on Rectory Lane and it is busy in the vicinity at school drop off and pick up times. Rectory Lane is also used to access the church, primary school, community centre and recreation ground. The cumulative impact of the new housing will make this less safe.

Agricultural vehicles also use Rectory Lane as will the construction vehicles for the proposed site.

The impact of the traffic generated by this proposed site must be based on its cumulative impact taking into account the new homes in Ashington already committed to but not occupied. Rectory Lane already struggles to cope with the current level of traffic at peak times, it would not be sustainable to add vehicles from a further 125 homes in addition to those already committed.

The Rectory Lane junction with London Road can also be congested and is dangerous at times, particularly if there are cars parked close to the junction impacting on visibility.

London Road is also very busy at times, particularly during rush hour. It is a residential road with some businesses and there are cars parked on both sides in places preventing cars from passing each other. As well as restricting visibility, it also causes hold ups in the traffic. Steyning residents accessing the A24 generally do so via London Road as there is often congestion at the Washington roundabout. It is also a shorter route and satellite navigation will guide them this way. This will be worse when the 265 homes are built at the Glebe Farm site in Steyning.

The impact of all this additional traffic from the already approved sites and this proposed one will exacerbate these problems and have an impact on the quality of lives of existing residents. This should be taken into account as the cumulative additional traffic will generate more noise and air quality will deteriorate.

I live on London Road opposite the junction with Rectory Lane and I frequently have to wait several minutes before being able to pull off my drive due to the traffic on London Road and that exiting Rectory Lane or because the traffic is held up by parked cars. I include this statement to illustrate the current situation rather than relying on theoretical traffic analysis. This is before the impact of additional traffic from approved (but not occupied) developments in Ashington and surrounding villages are allowed for. Further vehicles from this proposed site would be unsustainable.

It should also be noted that larger emergency vehicles would struggle to access the Ashington Northern Cluster along Rectory Lane due to the width of the road near the proposed site and the volume of traffic.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Ashington has one bus service. It generally runs hourly which is not sufficient for residents to rely on for journeys to and from work. The proposer's Residential Travel Plan refers to this bus service as running "frequently" and that the service "represents a frequent public transport option for future residents". This is not the case. Upgrading the bus stop will not change this.

The service only runs between north and south and therefore does not travel directly to Steyning or Storrington which are where the nearest medical facilities are and where larger shops are. The proposer's reports fail to acknowledge this. There are also larger sports and leisure facilities in Steyning and Storrington which cannot be accessed by public transport.

The walk to the Rectory Lane bus stops is estimated in the proposer's reports to be 600 metres and take 3 minutes. It is unknown where in the site this measurement is taken from so it is impossible to know whether this is correct. The 3 minutes walk also does not allow for different ages, abilities, people with young children and pushchairs, etc.

It is very optimistic to assume that many residents travelling to work would rely on the bus to travel to and from Horsham and then catch a train. Horsham station, as with Pulborough and Billingshurst, is likely to be accessed by car.

The above factors mean that there will be a high prevalence of private vehicle use to access essential facilities and further services. This conflicts with the NPPF priority to reduce reliance on private cars.

ACTIVE TRAVEL

Rectory Lane and London Road are currently busy at peak times with limited visibility due to parked cars. With the additional traffic from the 300 homes already approved they will become dangerous to cross at these times. More homes will make this situation worse.

It should also be recognised that Ashington has very limited "everyday services and facilities". The majority of these services and facilities will be outside the village which will frequently require a car.

The roads out of Ashington are busy and unsafe for cyclists. The A24 carries a high volume of fast moving traffic and will become even busier with the 300 agreed homes in Ashington, the extra homes in Steyning and, potentially, 2000 new homes in Adversane. Billingshurst Road is also a busy road with recent Ashington Speed Indicator Device data showing 5,000 vehicles movements per day. It is known locally for speeding traffic and the Speed Indicator Device has recorded speeds of 60 and 70 miles per hour. It is narrow and has limited visibility in parts. There is a brickworks and a timber yard so there are large commercial vehicles making deliveries and collections. There are also farms so it is used by agricultural vehicles. These large vehicles have to pull on to the grass verges at times which makes it dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians. London Road and Hole Street will also become more dangerous. Local residents are not likely to cycle in and out of Ashington. Incentives and travel plans will not make these roads any safer.

The likelihood of a high prevalence of private car use again conflicts with the NPPF priority to reduce reliance on private cars.

EDUCATION

The primary school in Ashington is currently almost at full capacity. The school has land safeguarded in the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan to extend the existing school site. This land was secured for the 226 homes which were proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan only. A further 74 homes have already been approved by HDC which the school may not be able to accommodate.

If even more homes are approved then the primary school will not have capacity for them.

When calculating availability of places at the school for their own site, the proposer's Health Impact Assessment makes no allowance for the fact that Ashington already has 300 agreed new homes which have either not been built or occupied. It uses the current population as its basis. It also does not allow for the fact that Devine Homes have recently submitted a planning application

for 65 homes.

There is no land to extend into beyond that agreed in the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan as it is constrained by the boundary of the Land West of Ashington School application (DC/23/0406).

Pupils would have to travel to neighbouring villages (if capacity is available) which again would increase reliance on private cars and increase traffic on the village roads and surrounding roads in conflict with NPPF priority to reduce reliance on private cars.

The report on secondary schools presented by the proposer also does not take into account the agreed 300 new homes in Ashington nor the 265 homes in the Glebe Farm development in Steyning.

Financial payments made by Taylor Wimpey will not make this capacity available if the school cannot accommodate more pupils.

Horsham District Council need to be satisfied that places are available for children living in the proposed site as this currently is not the case.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Ashington does not have its own medical facility and the two nearest medical facilities are Steyning Health Centre and the Glebe Surgery in Storrington.

As a patient of Steyning Health Centre I can confirm that they are already under severe pressure and struggle with capacity. It is very difficult to get appointments. They will already have to cope with their share of residents from the approved 300 homes in Ashington when they are built (potentially around 800 adults and children) and the residents from the 265 homes which will be built in Steyning (the Glebe Farm development). Devine Homes have also submitted a planning application for a further 65 homes in Ashington which will have to be accommodated if it is approved. To add around a further 300 residents from the 125 homes proposed under DC/26/1186 is totally unsustainable.

The analysis the developer outlines in its Health Impact Assessment report, section "Local GP Surgery Provision" (page 19), is incorrect and cannot be taken as a reasonable assessment of additional GP requirements for this proposed site. It does not take into account the 300 homes in Ashington which are already committed to nor the 265 homes which will be built on the Glebe Farm development in Steyning. The needs of the residents of these homes must take priority over any further proposed developments.

Any financial payments made by Taylor Wimpey will not necessarily translate into capacity for their circa 300 residents if this capacity is not there.

It should also be noted that neither Steyning Health Centre nor the Glebe Surgery in Storrington are directly accessible by public transport from Ashington which will generate more private vehicle use.

RETAIL PROVISION

Ashington has one small Co-op which is already extremely busy. It has 10 parking spaces which are shared with two other units and also 5 places in a nearby lay-by. There are not enough spaces for existing customers (residents and passing traffic) and there are often cars parked on the pavement as well. This causes a problem for nearby residents. This will obviously be exacerbated when the approved 300 homes are built. The cumulative impact of a further proposed 125 homes would be unsustainable and cause severe disruption to the lives of the residents living close to the Co-op. The application for 65 homes already submitted by Devine Homes, if approved, would add to this.

Many of the residents of the proposed 125 homes are likely to drive to the Co-op. Some will call in while driving past, others will be too busy to walk, unable to walk, have small children or just not want to. Many existing residents living closer to the Co-op than the proposed site drive there and it is unrealistic to believe that the same will not happen with the residents of this site.

M & S Simply Food is a fuel station shop and has a limited selection of products. It is also expensive.

PROPOSED LOCATION

The location proposed is in open countryside outside the village's Built Up Area Boundary as defined in the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan. It is agricultural land divided by established hedgerows and mature trees. Development of this site would permanently change the character of the countryside outside Ashington's Built Up Area Boundary from open countryside to residential. This countryside can never be restored.

BIODIVERSITY

The proposed site is located on open countryside with mature tree lines and species-rich native hedgerows and will be home to many birds, wild animals and insects. There is also a nearby stream,

part of Lancing Brook, to the west and north. If DC/26/1186 is approved and this land is developed (and potentially the Devine Homes site), however many of these trees and hedgerows are retained, the loss of habitat and pathways for wildlife would be extremely significant. The noise and disturbance caused by the construction of the sites will displace them. When the homes are in place, the movement and noise from people moving and driving around will deter them from coming back and their pathways will have been destroyed. The resident's cats and dogs will also have an impact. The lights emanating from the homes, the street lights and the cars will deter night animals, insects and bats.

The site is located less than 10 miles from the Arun Valley SPA and Ramsay Site. A Horsham Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment for the "Ashington Northern Cluster" (HDCJB12) noted that the area is "sensitive to recreational pressure". It also states that it is "located on greenfield land and ... of a scale that could potentially support functionally linked habitat". This habitat will be lost.

The same report also notes that it is a "precautionary inclusion as habitat potentially suitable for SAC bats". Again this habitat will be lost.

As well as bats there are other protected and notable species such as dormice, slow worms and possibly great crested newts.

In summary, development of this area would result in loss of habitat with significant associated loss of wildlife. Biodiversity would be severely decreased and could not be replaced. The NPPF states that planning policies should minimise impacts on biodiversity, provide measurable net gains and protect irreplaceable habitat.

The significant adverse effect of developing this proposed site is a serious consideration when deciding whether the benefits justify it. It is impossible for Taylor Wimpey to increase biodiversity of the site when so much is being lost. This conflicts with the NPPF.

EMPLOYMENT

It should be noted that employment opportunities within Ashington are extremely limited. As mentioned earlier, cycling out of Ashington is not an option for the majority of residents due to the busy roads and the bus service is very limited. As with the existing population of Ashington, it is very likely that the majority of residents from the proposed site would drive to work conflicting with the NPPF.

Kind regards

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