[redacted]

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk
Sent: 22 November 2026 12:56
To: Planning
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 22/11/2026 12:55 PM.

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 up to 1,000 residential dwellings (including affordable housing) (Use Class C3); up to 80 specialist accommodation units (Use Class C2); 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

Click for further information

Customer Details

Address:	7 Courtlands Southwater Horsham

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Member of the Public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Design - Overdevelopment - Privacy Light and Noise
Comments:	Objection to DC/26/0366: protected bats, The Mens Special Area of Conservation and ancient woodland. Berkeley's own Bat Survey Report Rev A (Environmental Statement Volume II, Appendix 8.7, February 2026), using 14 detector locations between June 2021 and August 2022, recorded at least ten bat species, Barbastelle at exceptional activity along Smith's Copse, a probable Bechstein's bat roost and a confirmed Brandt's bat roost. It concludes "low district importance", which CPRE Sussex disputes (CPRE Sussex letter, 31 March 2026). Barbastelle is the

qualifying species of The Mens Special Area of Conservation (UK0012716).
Measured from Natural England's published SAC boundary, about 88% of the main site (about 101 of 115 hectares) lies within 12km of The Mens SAC, and its nearest point is about 10.8km away (SRS distance study, 11 October 2026; distances can be checked on Defra's MAGIC map). This is the wider conservation area under the Sussex Bat SAC Protocol, where significant impacts and severance of flight lines must be assessed. The Local Plan's Habitats Regulations Assessment lists the allocations in this zone, including Barns Green, which is closer to the SAC, but leaves out this site (HRA Update, examination document HDCJB12, July 2026, paras 4.41-4.42), even though it accepts that barbastelles forage up to 20km (para 3.28).
The bat survey data are now more than four years old. The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Advice Note on the Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys treats data more than three years old as unlikely to still be valid. Under regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, the Council must make an appropriate assessment where a significant effect on a European site is likely, and may grant permission only if it is certain there will be no adverse effect on the site's integrity. The Local Plan Inspector left habitat matters to the planning application stage (post-hearings letter IDJB14, 30 October 2026), so that assessment must be done now. Berkeley says there are "no outstanding objections from statutory consultees" (Berkeley Strategic Land Matter 6b statement, examination document MJB6b.04, para 1.43), but SRS has not seen Natural England's response to this application.
The site is on Weald Clay, which limits infiltration, and the drainage strategy relies on above-ground attenuation basins near Courtland Wood and Smith's Copse. Berkeley's Design and Access Statement increases ancient woodland buffers from 15m to 20-50m only "where possible", and records the 2022 stakeholder request to "reassess proposed basin south of the Downs Link due to sensitive engineering impacts".
SRS asks that the application is not determined until:
1. updated bat surveys are carried out and published
2. the Council has screened the application against The Mens SAC and, if needed, carried out an appropriate assessment, with Natural England's response published
and that any permission secures by condition:
3. dark corridors retaining the Smith's Copse-Courtland Wood flight lines, with a bat-sensitive lighting strategy
4. fixed minimum ancient woodland buffers (no less than the 15 metres in Natural England and Forestry Commission standing advice, and the 20-50 metres shown by Berkeley), with no drainage basins or lighting inside them
5. a hydrological assessment showing the drainage will not harm the groundwater feeding Courtland Wood and Smith's Copse.

Closing paragraph
For these reasons Save Rural Southwater asks Horsham District Council to refuse application DC/26/0366. If the Council is minded to approve it, the requirements set out above should be secured by condition or Section 106 agreement, and no dwelling should be occupied until wastewater treatment, foul network and water supply capacity is confirmed in writing by Southern Water as available.

SRS can supply copies of the Southern Water correspondence referred to (refs. DSA000012586, EIR 3295 and DSA000051974) on request, and asks to be notified of the committee date and given the opportunity to speak.

[redacted] on behalf of Save Rural Southwater

Kind regards

Telephone:
Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk

Horsham District Council

Horsham District Council, Albery House, Springfield Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 2GB
Telephone: 01403 215100 (calls may be recorded) www.horsham.gov.uk Chief Executive: Jane Eaton