

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk
Sent: 25 March 2026 08:01
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 25/03/2026 8:00 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

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address: lanaways farm two mile ash road horsham

Comments Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

- 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 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.

The land which has already been developed over the past two decades needs to keep some areas of green space to allow the area to remain a village and the people living there to have access to footpaths that cross fields and agricultural land. This proposed scheme takes this away and the health and wellbeing of existing residents, including my family, will suffer as a result. I am objecting to the Berkeley Homes proposal to build 1,000 homes northwest of Southwater because the development will increase surface water flooding that already affects existing residents.

The 141-hectare site is currently farmland. Farmland, even on clay, slows the movement of rainwater into local streams and ditches. Once it is replaced with 1,000 homes' worth of roofs, roads, driveways, pavements and car parks, the volume of rainwater running off the site into local watercourses will increase dramatically - and it will arrive faster.

The scale of attenuation required to manage this runoff is substantial. The roofs alone - at 50m² per home across 1,000 properties and a rainfall of 0.75m - would generate enough water to require 7.5 hectares of child-safe attenuation area (defined as no more than 50cm water depth). Once anticipated climate change factors are applied, that figure rises to 10.5 hectares. This is an enormous land take within the development, and there is no evidence that Berkeley Homes has adequately planned for it.

Local streams and drainage channels in this area already overflow during heavy rain.

Residents already experience waterlogged gardens and flooded access routes after storms.

Adding the runoff from 141 hectares of new hard surfaces - however it is managed by attenuation ponds - creates a real and material risk of making this significantly worse.

Climate change is making extreme rainfall events more frequent and more intense. The drainage system for this development must be designed for the worst case, not average conditions. There is no evidence that Berkeley Homes has done this.

If flooding increases after the development is built, there is no remedy available to affected residents. The damage is permanent.

I ask that the Berkeley Homes 1,000-home proposal be refused on the grounds that it poses an unacceptable and unmitigated risk of increasing flood risk to existing Southwater residents and properties. This winter the field I look out onto (which will be part of this proposed scheme) has been flooded for the past month. The winter wheat that was planted has turned yellow and is completely waterlogged. This is land that will be built on and clearly is a flood area. I am objecting to the Berkeley Homes proposal to build 1,000 homes northwest of Southwater because this is one of the worst possible locations for large-scale housing in terms of car dependency.

Southwater has no railway station. Christ's Hospital station - the nearest - is remote from the village, served by infrequent trains and has no meaningful car parking. The bus service is sparse and does not serve newer housing estates. There is no viable cycling or walking route across the A24 dual carriageway or the railway line that separates Southwater from Horsham town centre and the district's main employment areas.

The result is that every new Southwater resident will need a car for virtually every significant journey. This is not a lifestyle choice - it is a geographical fact. HDC's own Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (2020) confirms that the A24 and railway are hard physical barriers that cannot realistically be crossed on foot or by bike.

Southwater has very limited employment of its own. People who move here for work will commute by car, adding daily vehicle movements to roads that are already at capacity. This is the opposite of the sustainable development that planning rules require.

The question of where new residents will look for services and schools deserve scrutiny. Berkeley Homes' supporting documents suggest a school linkage with the Horsham Golf Club development, but this connection has not been made sufficiently clear by the applicant. It is also unclear whether the Golf Club development is looking to Southwater more broadly for other services and infrastructure - or whether, in practice, residents of both developments will look to Horsham for schools, healthcare and employment rather than to Southwater at all. If the latter is the case, it further undermines the case for locating large-scale development here: new residents will not be served by Southwater's limited facilities, they will simply add to the traffic burden on routes into Horsham.

Berkeley Homes' proposal includes aspirational commitments to bus services and cycle routes - but these are not funded, not contracted, and not enforceable. Aspirations are not infrastructure.

I ask that the Berkeley Homes 1,000-home proposal be refused on the grounds that the site is inherently car-dependent by geography, with no credible prospect of genuinely sustainable travel alternatives being delivered. I am objecting to the Berkeley Homes proposal to build 1,000 homes northwest of Southwater on the grounds that the homes described as 'affordable' are not affordable to the people who live and work in Southwater.

In the planning system, 'affordable housing' means homes priced at up to 80% of the open market value. In Southwater, where the median house price is approximately [REDACTED], that means an 'affordable' home would cost around [REDACTED]. Berkeley Homes does not appear to be proposing any social rented housing at all - only affordable homes to buy. Yet 80% of market value is unaffordable to most people on local wages, making the distinction between 'affordable to buy' and 'market price' largely meaningless in practice.

The median wage for people in this area is approximately [REDACTED] per year. A person on that salary can borrow approximately [REDACTED] on a standard mortgage. That is less than half the price of an 'affordable' home.

This is not affordable. Calling it affordable does not make it affordable. The gap between local wages and local house prices is so wide that the standard definition of 'affordable housing' is essentially meaningless in this part of West Sussex.

Horsham District Council's policy requires 40% of homes in major developments to be genuinely affordable - 70% as affordable rent and 30% as shared ownership. Berkeley Homes must demonstrate, with independent evidence, that it will deliver this in a form that local people can genuinely access. Crucially, Berkeley Homes has not demonstrated that any registered provider has committed to taking on the affordable housing element of this development. Without that commitment, the affordable housing offer is unverified and cannot be relied upon.

Where housing is intended to accommodate residents displaced from other municipalities, it is essential that those homes are in places with good access to employment, schools, services and public transport. Southwater currently lacks all of these at the scale this development would demand. Placing displaced residents in a location where they cannot access work, education or services without a car does not constitute a housing solution - it creates a dormitory settlement. That would represent a serious failure of planning policy and an unacceptable outcome for the people placed there.

I ask that the Berkeley Homes 1,000-home proposal be refused until Berkeley Homes demonstrates, with independently verified evidence, that the affordable homes proposed will be genuinely accessible to people on local average wages in Southwater.

I understand that Berkeley Homes are currently advertising these houses for sale in Hong Kong before this planning has been granted.

Kind regards

Telephone:

Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk



**Horsham
District
Council**



Horsham District Council, Alberty House, Springfield Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 2GB

Telephone: 01403 215100 (calls may be recorded) www.horsham.gov.uk Chief Executive: Jane Eaton