

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 22 June 2026 16:17
To: Planning
Subject: Visual Impact DC/25/2114

Categories: Comments Received

Visual Impact DC/25/2114

Dear Mr Holmes

I wish to formally object to this planning application due to the unacceptable and long-lasting harm it would cause to the landscape character, rural setting, heritage assets, biodiversity and visual amenity of Upper Beeding.

The site lies on the northern edge of the village within the River Adur valley, an area that remains largely open countryside and forms a defining part of the village's rural identity. This landscape provides an important transition between settlement and countryside, which would be fundamentally eroded by the proposed development.

The proposal would extend built form beyond the existing settlement boundary and into the valley floor, breaching the natural edge of Upper Beeding. This would result in a clear urbanising intrusion into an otherwise undeveloped landscape that is valued for its openness, tranquillity and wildlife.

The visual impact would be significant. Views from public rights of way, the Heritage Walk and surrounding countryside are currently characterised by open meadows, wildlife-rich habitats and historic landmarks, including St Peter's Church and Sele Priory. These listed buildings are currently experienced within a rural landscape setting, separate from the built-up area of the village. The development would introduce prominent two-storey housing into these views, eroding that sense of separation and fundamentally altering the rural character of the area.

The Heritage Walk, in particular, provides important publicly accessible views across the valley towards these heritage assets. The introduction of modern housing into the foreground of these views would significantly diminish both the landscape experience and the appreciation of the historic setting of the Church and Priory.

The proposed dwellings would also be substantially more prominent than existing nearby development, including low-level park homes, and would be far more visible across the wider landscape. Landscaping measures are unlikely to adequately mitigate this impact, particularly as the proposed deciduous species will provide limited screening in winter and will take many years to mature.

I am also concerned about the approach to Biodiversity Net Gain. The site currently supports wildlife-rich habitat within the River Adur valley and contributes to the wider ecological network. It is difficult to justify the loss or degradation of an existing natural environment on the basis that biodiversity will later be "recreated" within the development. I have also provided photographic evidence showing heavily flailed areas of land which appear to have informed the baseline ecological assessment. I would ask the Council to ensure the Biodiversity Net Gain calculation is based on a genuine representation of the site's natural ecological value.

In addition, the site has previously been identified as "not currently developable", which raises further questions about its suitability for residential development in such a sensitive location.

The proposal would also harm the setting of St Peter's Church and Sele Priory, both of which derive significant value from their relationship with the surrounding rural landscape. The introduction of modern housing into this setting would weaken that historic relationship and diminish the sense of place that currently exists particularly as I understood the new owners of Sele Priory will be significantly reducing their surrounding Lylandii hedging to gain views of the river and surrounding countryside.

Overall, the scheme would result in the loss of open countryside, harm to important views, erosion of heritage setting, and significant landscape and ecological harm that cannot be adequately mitigated.

Planning Policy Considerations

The proposal is considered to conflict with key policies of the Horsham District Planning Framework, including those relating to landscape protection, countryside character, biodiversity and the historic environment, including Policies 25 (District Character and the Natural Environment), 26 (Countryside Protection) and 31 (Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity).

The proposal is also inconsistent with the National Planning Policy Framework, which requires great weight to be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in valued landscapes, and requires that heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

In this case, the identified harm to landscape character, heritage setting and biodiversity is not outweighed by the benefits of the scheme.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that Horsham District Council refuses planning permission

Yours faithfully



Oxcroft

Church Farm Walk

Please note date of flailing

All Ecological surveys and Biodiversity Nets Gain calculations commence on 11 August 2025

Steyping - Upper Beeding

4 August 2025 16:23

Height of vegetation prior to flailing





Sent from my iPad