

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 03 April 2026 11:44:28 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
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 03/04/2026 11:44 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 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: 60 Blakes farm road Southwater

Comments Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

- Design
- Highway Access and Parking
- Loss of General Amenity
- Other
- Overdevelopment
- Trees and Landscaping

Comments:

I am objecting to the Berkeley Homes proposal to build 1,000 homes on farmland northwest of Southwater.

Southwater residents voted in a democratic referendum in June 2021 to approve a Neighbourhood

Plan that set a clear and legally binding limit on new housing in the village - between 420 and 460

homes. That was agreed through a proper community-led process.

Berkeley Homes is now proposing more than double that number - 1,000 homes. This is not a

slight overshoot. It is a 117% breach of the limit that residents themselves set.

National planning rules state clearly that where a proposal conflicts with the current and in-date

Neighbourhood Plan, planning permission should not normally be granted. The Southwater

Neighbourhood Plan is recent, legally adopted, and carries full weight.

Berkeley Homes has provided no independent evidence to justify overriding a community plan that

was voted for by local people just five years ago. Housing planners may state that the plan is "out

of date" being 5 years old but an online petition against this proposal has already attracted over

3000 signatories so the community sentiment back in 2021 is still current. As a resident who has engaged in the Neighbourhood

Plan it shows an understanding of the area and is in line with current need.

I am objecting to the Berkeley Homes proposal to build 1,000 homes northwest of Southwater

because the drainage works required could permanently damage two areas of ancient woodland.

Courtland Wood and Smith's Copse lie immediately alongside the proposed development site. Both

are designated ancient woodlands - habitats that have been continuously wooded for over 400

years and are considered irreplaceable under national planning law. Once damaged, ancient

woodland cannot be restored.

The threat is not just from bulldozers entering the woodland directly. Large-scale drainage

engineering on Weald Clay can lower or alter groundwater levels across a wide surrounding area. Ancient woodland trees have root systems extending far beyond the woodland boundary, and changes to soil moisture caused by attenuation ponds and drainage channels nearby can kill these trees silently over years, without any direct physical contact. This is a well-evidenced, recognised risk - yet Berkeley Homes has not submitted any independent hydrological assessment of the impact their drainage works would have on these woodlands. A developer's own consultant assessment is not sufficient for something this serious and irreversible.

Part of the reason for moving here 21 years ago was due to the amount of woodland and space in the locality. This area needs to be protected, not built over.

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, 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.

The department for education has not said that a new school is needed for Southwater. Bohunt have built one in Horsham which has capacity. The catchment areas need to be looked into before building, plus it is only land that is given NOT a school.

There are drainage issues for residents living in areas such as Roman Lane which regularly floods after rain.

There are parking issues at car parks due to commuters needing to leave the village. It doesn't matter what is said about extra buses, parking, park and ride facilities. In our area the best way to get to the station to get to London is by your own car. More houses will lead to at least 2 cars for each property over time.

Southwater has dealt with a huge amount of change over the last five plus years due to developments. It is time for over development to stop and for the area to be enjoyed by the residents. Time needs to be given for the structure currently in place to catch up with the amount of new housing rather than splitting it into two developments. One centre at Lintot Square, one hub, one village.

Kind regards

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