

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 14 March 2026 00:42:34 UTC+00:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0266
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 14/03/2026 12:42 AM.

Application Summary

Address:	Thakeham Mushrooms Storrington Road Thakeham Pulborough West Sussex RH20 3DY
Proposal:	Demolition of existing buildings and the redevelopment of the site to provide 150 dwellings, including affordable housing, land for the community land trust, works to public right of way and associated landscaping, open space and infrastructure.
Case Officer:	Sam Whitehouse

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address:	Kariba Storrington Road Thakeham
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Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Design - Highway Access and Parking - Other
Comments:	Infrastructure, Road Safety, and Sustainable Travel The application fails to meet the sustainable transport requirements of NPPF (2024) Paragraph 109 and the emerging standards of NPPF (2026) Policy TR1. The current road network,

characterised by narrow, sunken lanes, cannot safely accommodate the increased traffic. Historically, HGV deliveries to the site were obliged to avoid the northern approach due to these physical constraints. The roads remain unchanged since HGVs serviced the site.

To expect children to cycle to school in this environment is unfeasible; realistically no parent will allow their child to cycle to school on the the local roads. The 85% rate of journeys made by car cited by the developer proves the scheme is not "located where sustainable transport modes can be maximized," a direct breach of both current and proposed new national policy.

The application states that cycling to Pulborough Railway Station is "partially" possible via PROWs. What the application doesn't state is that the rest of the route is on roads which include blind bends, are unlit, and prone to flooding, making them unsuitable for regular use.

This application also fails to align with NPPF Policy TR3 which states:

"Development proposals which could generate a significant amount of movement, in the context of the area within which they would be situated, should be in locations that are, or can be made sustainable, by limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes for residents and users, unless the nature of the use makes this impractical"

The current Framework Transport Plan appears to have been a desk-based exercise and not one developed through experience of the local roads. The FTP itself states that it should be considered "indicative", so should be afforded little consideration until a full transport assessment is conducted.

Economic Vitality and Local Employment (NPPF Section 6 / Policy E1)

By repurposing a former horticultural site into a wholly residential one, the application lacks vision to create and support a "vibrant local economy". The loss of the Mushroom Farm, a major local employer, without any forward-thinking solutions, such as "live-work" or light industrial units, effectively forces the future population into commuting to other employment centres such as Horsham, Crawley and Brighton. This creates a "dormitory effect" that could well stifle the social and economic self-sufficiency of Thakeham.

Under NPPF Policy E1, weight should be given to the specific economic strengths of an area. This site's horticultural heritage offers a unique strategic opportunity to align with the "Sussex Six"

and the Council's "Drink Producers of Horsham District" campaigns. Using a portion of the site for viticulture support or small-scale artisanal commercial units would reduce car dependency and provide the "walkable, local jobs" that are essential for sustainable rural growth. As currently drafted, the application offers no net contribution to local employment, representing a missed opportunity that contradicts national policy for "Building a Strong, Competitive Economy."

Protection of Western Land and Prevention of Sprawl (NPPF Policy GB4, GB5 & GB8)

From Bellway's Design and Access Statement (page 87, Item 12):

"Hedgerows have not been included so as not to compromise connectivity between this and future phases of development."

Bellway admits here that hedgerows were excluded to ensure "connectivity" for "future phases." This acknowledgement of intended expansion potentially circumvents NPPF Policy S3, which requires a comprehensive assessment of a development's full impact. By failing to disclose a "Phase 2" while clearly planning for one, the developer is risking the "Green Gap" between Thakeham and West Chiltington.

Under the 2026 NPPF "Golden Rules" (Policy GB8), major developments are now required to provide high-quality, publicly accessible green space as a condition of development. Bellway has stated that 150 houses represent their "break-even" point; therefore, the land to the west is surplus to the financial viability of this scheme. Consequently, this land should be designated as Permanent Green Infrastructure and gifted to the community. This would not only secure the Green Gap but also provide the compensatory environmental improvements required under NPPF Policy GB5, ensuring that this development contributes to local nature recovery rather than contributing to further urban sprawl.

Lack of Solar PV

The proposed scheme fails to demonstrate a commitment to NPPF (2024) Paragraph 165 & 168. Despite the site's optimal North-South orientation, the application provides no evidence of a comprehensive Solar PV strategy. To meet the national 'Golden Rule' for Net-Zero Ready Homes, every south-facing roof should be designed with solar PV. The current omission of integrated PV and home battery storage constitutes a 'poor design'.

I strongly object to this application. The adverse impacts of this

proposal, regarding highway safety, loss of employment land, poor environmental choices, and the erosion of the "Green Gap" substantially outweigh the benefits of 150 homes. This is the test set out in Paragraph 11 of the NPPF (2024) and reinforced by Policy S3 of the Draft NPPF (2026). The scheme crucially fails the "Social Value" test; it places a significant burden on local services without providing any tangible benefit or infrastructure improvement to the community. I urge HDC to refuse this application.

Kind regards

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