

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 27 June 2026 12:26:09 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0530
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 27/06/2026 12:26 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land at Hornbrook Farm Brighton Road West Sussex
Proposal:	Outline planning application for up to 180 dwellings, open space and associated works and infrastructure with all matters reserved apart from access.
Case Officer:	Nicola Pettifer

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address:	4 Ghyll Crescent Horsham
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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 - Privacy Light and Noise - Trees and Landscaping
Comments:	OBJECTION 1: GEOTECHNICAL INSTABILITY AND STRUCTURAL RISK

I object to this planning application due to the critical geotechnical risks presented by the underlying Weald Clay Formation across the Hornbrook Farm site.

Preliminary ground data indicates that the site contains a high concentration of illite-smectite clay minerals, putting it into a High to Very High Plasticity category. The resulting shrink-swell potential means the ground will undergo massive volumetric changes down to the active root-depth zone. This poses a long-term risk of subsidence and heave to the proposed dwellings and nearby infrastructure.

Furthermore, the northern boundary of the site slopes down toward the Horn Brook stream corridor. This valley underwent severe periglacial disturbance (valley bulging and cambering) during historical freeze-thaw cycles. This process leaves hidden, low-angle shear planes locked into the shallow clay strata.

Disturbing these slopes with heavy civil works, deep foundation trenching, and altered moisture levels introduces a high risk of localised slope failure or lateral slippage. The developer has failed to demonstrate that these deep-seated structural weaknesses can be safely mitigated without threatening the integrity of both the new builds and the adjacent stream embankments.

Additionally, Weald Clay beds commonly contain authigenic pyrite and gypsum. When excavated and exposed to oxygenated groundwater, this creates an aggressive acidic environment that subjects buried concrete infrastructure to thaumasite and sulphate attack.

The extreme engineering measures required to combat this—such as specialized Design Chemical Class DC-4 concrete—highlight that this site is structurally unstable and inherently unsuitable for high-density residential development.

OBJECTION 2: HYDROLOGICAL FAILURE AND DOWNSTREAM FLOOD RISK

I object to this proposal due to the severe drainage constraints of the site and the knock-on flood risk it poses to the wider Horsham area.

The Weald Clay matrix across Hornbrook Farm is highly impermeable, with infiltration rates typically below 10^{-9} m/s. This makes standard Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) that rely on ground infiltration completely unfeasible.

Because the site cannot naturally absorb water, the entire 180-home estate will rely on artificial attenuation storage tanks and ponds designed to discharge into the Horn Brook stream corridor.

The Horn Brook is already a known hydraulic bottleneck that suffers from severe capacity issues during heavy rainfall. Forcing a massive, impermeable hardstanding footprint onto this tight catchment will significantly elevate the risk of downstream flash-flooding. This directly threatens vulnerable local properties and critical highway links like Kerves Lane.

Furthermore, rainfall on this site naturally filters laterally through the top 0.75m-1.5m layer of weathered yellow clay, forming an active winter perched water table that flows down-gradient toward the stream.

Constructing long rows of deep, continuous concrete foundations or piling barriers into this upper zone will act as a subterranean dam. This cut-off effect will block the lateral flow of the perched water table, trapping groundwater up-gradient.

This will cause severe, unpredictable surface water logging across garden plots, communal spaces, and neighbouring boundaries, permanently ruining the site's natural hydrogeology.

OBJECTION 3: MINERAL RESOURCE STERILIZATION

I object to this application on the grounds that it directly conflicts with statutory minerals planning policy.

The Hornbrook Farm footprint sits entirely within a designated Brick Clay (Weald Formation) Minerals Safeguarding Area. The underlying Lower Cretaceous Weald Clay is an economically valuable, finite regional resource prized for brick and tile manufacturing across West Sussex.

Approving a high-density, 180-home residential estate over this site will permanently sterilise this safeguarded mineral deposit, cutting off access to a resource of county-wide importance for future generations.

Prioritizing short-term residential targets over the long-term, legally protected conservation of natural resources directly violates the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan. The site should be preserved for its designated mineral safeguarding purpose, and housing should be redirected to alternative, non-safeguarded allocations within the district.

Kind regards

Telephone:

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