From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 22 July 2025 17:30:13 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/25/0519
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 22/07/2025 5:30 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	The Slips West End Lane Henfield West Sussex
Proposal:	Change of use of land to the stationing of caravans for 5 gypsy and traveller pitches with 5 associated dayrooms, hard and soft landscaping and parking (revised description)
Case Officer:	Kate Turner

Click for further information

Customer Details

Address:	BN5 9QZ BN5 9QZ BN5 9QZ

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Other
Comments:	Dear Planning Officer, I write to strongly object to the above application on the basis that it conflicts with the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF), promotes planning inequality, and risks long-term harm to the integrity of both policy and public trust. 1. Conflict with Strategic Planning Policy The proposed development lies outside the defined built-up area

boundary, within protected countryside, and fails to meet the requirements of:

Policy 2 - Strategic Development, which prioritises sustainable growth in defined settlements.

Policy 26 - Countryside Protection, which restricts development in rural areas unless it is essential and clearly justified.

There is no demonstrable need or strategic justification for developing this sensitive site, which falls beyond established growth zones and local infrastructure.

2. Unproven Traveller Status and Misuse of Policy H18
The application is made under Policy H18 (Gypsy and Traveller Sites), yet fails to meet its core criteria:

There is no verified evidence that the applicants meet the national definition of Gypsy/Traveller as set out in the Government's Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS).

The application fails to demonstrate an established local need within this immediate area.

No evidence is offered to show that more sustainable or suitable alternatives have been exhausted.

This results in a planning application that is potentially using policy designed for inclusion and cultural support as a vehicle for land development gain.

3. Segregation and Inequality in Planning Access
This application introduces a serious and growing imbalance in the planning system, creating what is clearly a two-tier approach-where access to land development is granted preferentially to a narrowly defined group, while the wider public remains heavily restricted by policy.

Residents across the district routinely face refusals for modest development or rural accommodation-yet here, a substantial residential site is being considered solely on the basis of self-identified group status, without verifiable cultural justification.

This risks institutionalising planning privilege based on identity, not need or merit. It fosters division, resentment, and a loss of public confidence in HDC's impartiality and consistency.

Moreover, this application must be considered in the wider context. Nearby sites-including Furners Lane and Stonepit Lane-have already added a notable number of Traveller pitches to the Henfield area. These approvals have gone a long way to meeting both the district's legal obligations and its fair-share allocation.

Allowing a further Traveller site in this densely populated area, on protected land, risks policy distortion, social tension, and precedent-setting inequality. It sends a message that planning rules are selectively enforced-depending not on what the land is, but who is applying.

HDC's duties under the Equality Act 2010 are clear: not only to avoid discrimination, but to promote social cohesion and policy fairness. This application runs counter to both aims.

4. Pattern of Policy Exploitation and Strategic Land Uplift in the Immediate Area
This application follows a now well-established pattern seen in the immediate area, where planning permission has been gained under the Gypsy/Traveller policy framework and later converted into high-value residential development, contrary to the original justification.

A clear example can be found in the planning history recorded under the following applications:

DC/14/1674 - Initial permission granted for two static caravans, day rooms, and related infrastructure, based on claimed Traveller accommodation need;

DC/17/0528 and DC/17/0527 - Subsequent approvals for detached dwellings on the same site;

DC/19/2565 - Retrospective permission for further residential development.

Over time, this site transitioned from a culturally justified planning case into conventional residential housing, with the dwellings sold on the open market. The result: significant land value uplift achieved by circumventing standard countryside planning policy.

This shows how the Traveller site framework is being strategically used as a mechanism for land development gain, not cultural accommodation. The public rightly views this as unfair-especially when strict planning rules continue to apply to other residents and landowners in the district.

If The Slips is approved, there is every reason to expect a similar outcome. These precedents confirm that Traveller-status-based permissions are being used to unlock long-term residential value on land that would otherwise remain undevelopable.

5. Flood Risk and Environmental Harm
The proposed layout introduces significant hardstanding on sloped ground with no robust SuDS (Sustainable Drainage System) design. This will increase surface water runoff into

adjacent areas, presenting a clear flood risk to properties west of The Slips.

This directly conflicts with:

Policy 38 - Flooding, which requires developments to reduce-not increase-flood risk;

Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure, which promotes sustainable land and water management in rural areas.

As yet, no credible environmental assessment has been provided to address these concerns.

Conclusion
This application fails on multiple grounds-strategic, environmental, policy-based, and ethical. It represents a clear threat to the integrity of HDC's planning system by enabling preferential treatment and policy circumvention through identity-based planning claims.

To protect both policy fairness and public trust, and to ensure future Traveller site allocations are delivered where genuinely needed, this application should be refused in full.

Kind regards

Telephone:

Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk



Horsham District Council