

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 26 January 2026 09:52:33 UTC+00:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0041
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 26/01/2026 9:52 AM.

Application Summary

Address:	Spring Acres West End Lane Henfield West Sussex
Proposal:	Permission in Principle for the erection of up to 9no. self-build dwellings.
Case Officer:	Hannah Darley

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address:	Old Barn House West End Lane Henfield
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Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Highway Access and Parking - Loss of General Amenity - Other - Overdevelopment
Comments:	I wish to formally object to the above application for Permission in Principle for residential development at Spring Acres, West End Lane, for the following reasons. 1. Development in the Open Countryside The application site lies outside the defined settlement boundary

of Henfield and forms part of the open countryside. Local and national planning policy is clear that new housing should be directed to sustainable locations within or adjacent to established settlements. This proposal would introduce residential development into an undeveloped rural area where it is neither allocated nor justified, contrary to the spatial strategy of the Horsham District Planning Framework and the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan.

The site does not adjoin the existing settlement edge, is not contained by defensible boundaries, and does not represent a logical or sustainable extension of the village. Allowing development here would undermine the purpose of settlement boundaries and weaken the plan-led approach to growth.

2. Harm to Landscape Character and Rural Setting

The land currently consists of an open field that contributes to the rural setting and visual amenity of West End Lane. The surrounding landscape has been identified as highly sensitive to change, characterised by open pasture, hedgerows and a strong rural identity.

The introduction of up to nine dwellings, together with access roads, parking areas, lighting, fencing and domestic activity, would permanently erode this rural character and result in the suburbanisation of the site. This harm would occur regardless of whether the lower or upper end of the proposed dwelling range is pursued.

Claims that the land should be regarded as previously developed are not credible. A small area of hardstanding associated with a partially implemented stable permission does not alter the fundamentally undeveloped nature of the wider site.

3. Flood Risk and Drainage Uncertainty

There is a well-documented history of surface water flooding affecting the lower part of the field and West End Lane, particularly during periods of heavy rainfall. Local knowledge strongly suggests that the land plays a role in natural drainage.

The application provides no robust evidence to demonstrate that development would not increase flood risk on the site or to neighbouring land and the public highway. Given the absence of detailed drainage proposals at the Permission in Principle stage, approving the application would be premature and potentially harmful.

4. Inadequate Utility and Social Infrastructure

Local residents already experience electricity supply problems,

including brief but frequent outages and restricted grid capacity. The local network is clearly under strain, and expensive upgrades have been quoted to address existing limitations. There is also no mains gas supply in West End Lane.

The proposal fails to demonstrate that essential infrastructure can be provided in a timely or proportionate manner to serve additional dwellings. Furthermore, local services such as the village primary school and GP surgery are already operating at or near capacity. The cumulative pressure created by new housing has not been adequately addressed.

5. Unsustainable Transport and Highway Safety Concerns

West End Lane is a narrow, unlit rural road with no pavements and limited passing opportunities. The site is poorly connected to public transport, with the nearest bus stop located some distance away and accessible only via unsafe walking conditions.

Future residents would be overwhelmingly dependent on private cars. Increased vehicle movements would add to congestion at already constrained junctions within the village and would heighten the risk to pedestrians, cyclists and other road users. This is directly contrary to policies that prioritise safe, sustainable and accessible transport choices.

6. Cumulative Impact and Precedent

Allowing residential development at this location would set an undesirable precedent for further applications along West End Lane and in the surrounding countryside. Incremental development of this nature would lead to gradual but irreversible erosion of the rural setting of Henfield, contrary to the objectives of the development plan.

The cumulative impact of multiple small-scale developments must be considered, particularly in locations where infrastructure, highways and landscape capacity are already limited.

7. Inappropriateness of Permission in Principle

Given the environmental sensitivity of the site, existing infrastructure constraints and flood risk concerns, a Permission in Principle application is not an appropriate mechanism for determining acceptability. Critical matters such as drainage, access safety and landscape impact cannot be adequately assessed at this stage, yet these issues are central to whether development is acceptable in this location at all.

8. Planning Balance

While there is a recognised need to increase housing supply, the

delivery of up to nine dwellings carries limited public benefit. This modest contribution does not outweigh the significant and lasting harm arising from development in an unsustainable countryside location with poor accessibility, inadequate infrastructure and clear landscape sensitivity.

Taken as a whole, the proposal fails to represent sustainable development when assessed against local and national planning policy.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, the adverse impacts of the proposed development significantly and demonstrably outweigh its limited benefits. The application conflicts with the Horsham District Planning Framework, the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework, and planning permission should therefore be refused.

Kind regards

Telephone:

Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk



**Horsham
District
Council**

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