
Sent: [REDACTED] 17 May 2026 18:44
To: [REDACTED] Planning
Subject: [REDACTED] Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0530
Categories: Comments Received

FAO: Nicola Pettifer

I have been unable to use your website to comment on the outline planning application DC/26/0530 (Land at Hornbrook Farm, Brighton Road, Horsham). The website is not allowing me to register or search for this application. As the deadline for responding is soon, I have resorted to emailing you directly.

My details are as follows:

[REDACTED]
12 Sandeman Way
Horsham
RH13 6EL

I would like to register the following comments:

The Hornbrook marks Horsham's eastern urban boundary, and I see no reason to permit further development beyond it. This is especially concerning given its proximity to the AONB. The proposed plans would drastically alter the area's character, with the Hornbrook passing through a section of town. Proposed mitigation measures like preserving a narrow wildlife corridor along the stream's edge are insufficient and fall far short of the non-developed buffer found on other sections of the stream's east bank.

Beyond this, my primary opposition to any development on this site stems from several key concerns:

Flood risk issues (Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment, March 2026)

I have serious concerns about the flooding implications and whether the proposed plan has adequately considered the impact of the development. We've lived in our property for 11 years, and in February 2020, the bottom of our garden bordering Hornbrook and the other side of the stream was substantially flooded. While this only happened once to date, the extent of the flooding aligns closely with predictions for a 1 in 1000 event in the flood analysis report accompanying the application (see Flood zone 2 - Flood map for planning); this is well beyond the 1 in 100 event plus 45% climate change that the design is aiming to address (section 7.17). I can provide photos and videos to support this if needed to support the level of flooding witnessed. Given that the flood analysis report already questions whether the submitted plan adequately addresses flooding concerns in land parcel 5 (section 7.14 even states it to be unsuitable), I expect flooding issues in the area to worsen significantly.

I'm also concerned about the plan to allow water from the swales to directly enter the Hornbrook stream through a single outlet (see SuDS & Drainage Strategy map). Even if the predicted flow rate is similar to current rural runoff for the site as a whole, this single point entry would almost certainly increase erosion of the riverbank and localised flooding in that immediate area.

Protected Species Report (24 February 2026)

- Table 2.6 of the report reveals that all assessments have expired by over a year, rendering the report invalid.
- Section 0.3.4 states that current design proposals place dwellings in the central northern and western fields, currently dominated by low-suitability grassland habitats. However, the plans also show significant development in the eastern field, directly contradicting this claim.

- Some assessments in the report exhibit questionable bias, such as the Foraging and Commuting Bat survey. The executive summary (0.3.3) classifies the survey as being of Local Importance. However, Table 4.2 shows the actual score meets the threshold for Regional Importance. Despite this, the score was downrated to Local Importance due to relatively low numbers of rarer bat species detected.
- The study references outdated material and potentially fails to adhere to current best practice. For example, it cites Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, Edition 3 (2016), when the latest 4th edition was published by the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) in September 2023.
- The Good Practice Guidelines (section 8.2.49) recommend surveys of at least five consecutive nights, with longer periods potentially needed to detect rarer species or those using quiet echolocation. However, the surveys were conducted for the minimum five nights with several detectors failing to record data, some after just two days (Section 2.3.11). Given the presence of some rarer bat species, this falls short of best practice, especially considering the failed detectors. Richardson et al. (2019) (An evidence-based approach to specifying survey effort in ecological assessments of bat activity) demonstrated that most acoustic bat surveys under-record rarer species. Therefore, I question the legitimacy of ignoring the survey's "Regional Importance" score and whether even longer surveys beyond the 5-night minimum would be appropriate before considering any development.
- I struggle to believe that retaining some of the established hedges (currently providing good foraging for bats) would still offer the same opportunities or appeal should the surrounding fields become urban development.
- Bird surveys seem to have overlooked the birds of prey that operate on and around the site; owls can often be heard at the end of my garden bordering Hornbrook, and I regularly see falcons hunting in the area, along with buzzards on a few occasions. I doubt the complete loss of fields would be of "negligible importance" to such birds.

Social Considerations

The latest Horsham document (3.02 Sites with potential for allocation for housing development) shows an original plan for 117 dwellings. The report states that development would need to be sensitively designed to avoid adversely affecting the AONB and nearby listed buildings. Consequently, it's considered that the site has potential for around 100 dwellings. However, the new planning application is for 180 dwellings, almost double the original considered reasonable.

I have other concerns about the proposed development, but as others have already raised them, I feel mentioning them again might detract from the points made above.

Regards,

[REDACTED]