

**From:** Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 14 September 2026 23:12:46 UTC+01:00  
**To:** "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Comments for Planning Application DC/26/1185  
**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 14/09/2026 11:12 PM.

### Application Summary

|               |                                                                                |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Address:      | Birchfield Nursery Kidders Lane Henfield West Sussex BN5 9AB                   |
| Proposal:     | Erection of 2no. commercial buildings to be used for storage and distribution. |
| Case Officer: | Nicola Pettifer                                                                |

[Click for further information](#)

### Customer Details

|          |                                                       |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Address: | 1 Kidders Cottages, Kidders Lane Henfield West Sussex |
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### Comments Details

|                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Commenter Type:      | Neighbour                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Stance:              | Customer objects to the Planning Application                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Reasons for comment: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Design</li><li>- Highway Access and Parking</li><li>- Loss of General Amenity</li><li>- Other</li><li>- Overdevelopment</li><li>- Privacy Light and Noise</li><li>- Trees and Landscaping</li></ul> |
| Comments:            | Planning Objection - Birchfield Nursery, Kidders Lane, Henfield, BN5 9AB                                                                                                                                                                    |
|                      | Planning Portal Reference: PP-15087470 Proposal: Two                                                                                                                                                                                        |

additional commercial buildings for storage and distribution

I strongly object to this application. The proposal is excessive, unjustified and completely unsuitable for this rural location.

Birchfield Nursery is a small existing garden nursery. It is not an industrial estate, distribution centre, HGV haulage depot or scaffolding yard. The proposal would further change the character of the site and contribute to its gradual conversion into a general industrial and commercial complex.

#### Unsuitable location

Commercial storage and distribution buildings of this scale should be located on a properly planned industrial estate with suitable roads, access, parking, loading facilities and separation from neighbouring homes and wildlife.

This garden nursery is not the right location. Storage and distribution activities would bring HGVs, deliveries, loading, unloading, noise, lighting and increased commercial activity into a rural setting.

The fact that some commercial activities are already taking place does not make the site suitable for further industrial expansion, particularly where those existing activities do not have planning permission.

#### Overdevelopment

The application proposes two additional commercial buildings alongside the substantial building already approved under DC/24/1448.

The combined number, size and appearance of these buildings would be excessive for this small nursery. Together with the hardstanding, loading areas, HGVs, trailers, scaffolding and outside storage, the development would be completely out of proportion to the site and the surrounding rural area.

Repeating the design of the previously approved building does not demonstrate that two further buildings are acceptable. The cumulative effect of all existing and proposed development must be considered.

#### Existing building advertised to let

The recently approved new building is currently being advertised "To Let."

This directly undermines the claim that two more buildings are needed for the nursery's storage and distribution requirements. If

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the nursery genuinely requires additional space, the applicant should explain why the existing new building is being offered to an outside occupier and why it cannot meet the claimed need.

There is a serious concern that the proposed buildings are speculative commercial units rather than buildings genuinely required by the garden nursery.

A general demand for storage space does not justify constructing industrial units in an unsuitable rural location.

#### Scaffolding yard

Scaffolding is currently being stored on the site, and part of the land is being used as a scaffolding yard.

A scaffolding yard is not a normal activity connected with a garden nursery. Unless this use has specific planning permission, it should not be taking place.

The Planning Enforcement Team should investigate this separately. The scaffolding activity must not be treated as an established use or relied upon to justify further commercial development.

#### HGV haulage

HGV haulage activity is also taking place at the site.

An HGV haulage depot or operating yard is not part of the normal operation of a garden nursery. Unless it has specific planning permission, it should not be there.

The existing HGV activity must not be used to support the applicant's claim that deliveries and distribution already occur and that the proposed buildings would have little additional effect. Potentially unauthorised activity cannot properly be used as the baseline for assessing a new planning application.

#### Low-loader trailers

Low-loader trailers and other commercial vehicles are being stored or worked on at the site.

This is separate from the garden nursery business and adds to the industrial appearance, traffic and intensity of the land. The Planning Enforcement Team should establish whether these activities are authorised.

#### Fields covered with road planings

Areas of the nursery fields have been covered with road planings.

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This is unacceptable on an existing garden nursery and further damages the rural character and appearance of the land.

Covering fields with road planings creates additional hardstanding that can support HGVs, low-loader trailers, scaffolding storage and other industrial yard activities. It contributes directly to the gradual conversion of nursery land into a commercial vehicle and storage yard.

It also raises concerns about drainage, increased surface-water runoff, soil contamination and effects on adjoining land and wildlife.

The Planning Authority should establish:

- Whether planning permission was required or obtained.
- How much of the nursery land has been covered.
- Where the road planings came from and whether they are suitable for use.
- Whether this constitutes an engineering operation or material change of use.
- How surface-water drainage and runoff will be controlled.

The road planings must not be treated as proof that these fields are established commercial hardstanding. Their use should be investigated separately and must not be allowed to justify further buildings or industrial activities.

#### Motorhome inside a polytunnel

A motorhome appears to be occupied residentially inside a polytunnel.

Residential occupation of a motorhome inside a polytunnel is not part of the normal operation of a garden nursery. This should be investigated separately and should not be confused with the merits of the current application.

#### Highway and traffic impact

The site access and surrounding roads are not suitable for an expanding storage, distribution, scaffolding and HGV haulage complex.

The proposal would be likely to generate additional HGVs, deliveries, employees and vehicle movements. This would increase noise and the risk of conflict between large vehicles, local traffic, pedestrians and other road users.

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The claim that traffic would not materially increase is not convincing when:

- Two additional storage and distribution buildings are proposed.
- Loading and unloading areas would be provided.
- Employee numbers could double from 12.5 to 25 full-time equivalents.
- HGV haulage and low-loader activities are already taking place.

A full transport assessment should address the number and size of HGVs, delivery hours, access visibility, parking, loading, turning arrangements and the combined traffic generated by every activity on the site.

#### Established badger sett

The land immediately adjoining the proposed development contains an established badger sett.

Construction, excavation, noise, vibration, lighting, HGV movements and intensified commercial activity could disturb the badgers and interfere with their established routes and foraging habitat.

A proper ecological and badger survey should be completed before the application is determined. It must consider both the construction work and the long-term effects of the proposed use.

#### Contradictory application documents

The submitted documents contain important inconsistencies.

The Design and Access Statement says that the development land is not occupied by a building, temporary structure or polytunnel. However, the biodiversity exemption statement refers to the "removal of existing poly tunnel and building."

The application form refers to an "application for commercial building," while the Design and Access Statement proposes two storage and distribution buildings.

These contradictions must be corrected before the application can be properly assessed.

#### Conclusion

This is not a modest improvement to an existing garden nursery. It is another major step towards turning a small rural nursery into an

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industrial storage, distribution, scaffolding and HGV haulage complex.

The proposal is in the wrong location, is out of proportion to the surrounding area and represents serious overdevelopment.

The claimed need for further buildings is undermined by the fact that the recently approved new building is being advertised to let.

The scaffolding yard, HGV haulage, low-loader trailers, road planings and residential occupation of the motorhome are separate matters. Each should be investigated individually and must not be treated as evidence that further industrial development is acceptable.

I strongly request that planning permission be refused. I also request a separate enforcement investigation into all activities and works that may not form part of the authorised garden nursery use.

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Kind regards

**Telephone:**

**Email:** [planning@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:planning@horsham.gov.uk)



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