

**From:** Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 15 September 2026 05:42:48 UTC+01:00  
**To:** "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Comments for Planning Application DC/26/1186  
**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 15/09/2026 5:42 AM.

### Application Summary

|               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Address:      | Land North of Rectory Lane Ashington West Sussex                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Proposal:     | Outline Application for redevelopment of the site to provide up to 125 dwellings, access, public open space and associated landscaping, drainage and highways infrastructure with all matters reserved except access. |
| Case Officer: | Sam Whitehouse                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

[Click for further information](#)

### Customer Details

Address: Firtree Cottage Billingshurst Road Ashington

### 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:            | Formal objection - DC/26/1186<br>Land North of Rectory Lane, Ashington                                                                                                                                                                      |

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to formally object to planning application DC/26/1186 for up to 125 dwellings on land north of Rectory Lane, Ashington.

I recognise the significant housing pressures facing Horsham District and my objection is not based upon an assumption that Ashington should accommodate no further housing. Ashington has already accepted substantial growth through its made Neighbourhood Plan.

My objection concerns the suitability and sustainability of this unallocated greenfield site; the cumulative implications of developing the Ashington Northern Cluster; the requirement within emerging MM229/ASN2 for comprehensive site-wide masterplanning; pressure on highways, education, healthcare, drainage and wastewater infrastructure; ecology, landscape and dark skies; and the cumulative effect upon the rural character and amenity of Ashington.

1. Development Plan, HDC's previous assessment of the Northern Cluster and MM229

The application site lies outside Ashington's defined Built-Up Area Boundary and was not allocated for housing in the made Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

Importantly, this land forms part of the wider Ashington Northern Cluster, which HDC previously considered through its Local Plan evidence.

In its December 2023 Regulation 19 Site Assessment, HDC did not recommend the Northern Cluster for allocation and identified an estimated housing number of zero.

HDC concluded that the collective impact of development under consideration in Ashington would be "unsustainable in terms of the cumulative impact on local services and infrastructure" and that additional growth, particularly on the scale proposed, was "not appropriate to the scale and the status of the village in the settlement hierarchy". HDC also identified potential negative impacts upon social cohesion and the environmental fabric of the village.

These were HDC's own conclusions concerning this wider area and remain highly relevant to the determination of this application.

The Northern Cluster has subsequently re-emerged through proposed ASN2/MM229 for approximately 450 dwellings. However, MM229 remains part of the emerging Local Plan process and should not be treated as though it were already an

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adopted housing allocation.

There is also an important issue of consistency. MM229 specifically requires development to be in accordance with a "comprehensive site-wide masterplan".

If HDC considers emerging MM229/ASN2 sufficiently relevant to lend support to the principle of residential development within the Northern Cluster, it should equally have regard to the comprehensive masterplanning requirement contained within that same proposed policy.

I therefore ask HDC to consider how determining individual applications within the Northern Cluster at this stage is compatible with that requirement.

Taylor Wimpey, Devine Homes and any subsequent development within the wider Cluster should not establish separate layouts, accesses, drainage arrangements, green infrastructure and development edges which subsequently dictate how the remaining land must be developed.

The cumulative implications for highways, infrastructure, drainage, landscape, biodiversity and community facilities should be understood comprehensively rather than piecemeal.

## 2. Housing need, cumulative development and sustainability

I recognise that national planning policy gives significant weight to meeting housing need and that HDC's housing land supply position is relevant.

However, housing need does not by itself demonstrate that every available greenfield site is an appropriate or sustainable location for development.

Ashington has already accommodated, or is accommodating, substantial housing development. This application should therefore be considered alongside committed development and other pending or reasonably foreseeable proposals, including DC/26/1037 and potential development across the wider Northern Cluster.

Ashington has some useful local facilities, including a primary school, Co-op and pharmacy, but no GP surgery, dentist or secondary school. Residents need to travel outside the village for many healthcare, education, employment, shopping and leisure needs.

The No.23/23X bus service principally provides north/south connections towards Horsham/Crawley and Worthing, with no direct east-west service to Storrington or Steyning where

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important services used by residents are located.

The sustainability of this development should therefore be assessed according to realistic travel patterns rather than simply the measured distance to individual facilities.

### 3. Highways and traffic

The proposed development would take vehicular access from Rectory Lane.

Traffic generated by the development would subsequently disperse according to destination, including towards the A24 and through the existing village road network via London Road and Billingshurst Road.

Rectory Lane retains a predominantly rural character and the implications of introducing traffic from up to 125 additional households require careful consideration, including pedestrian and cycle safety and the cumulative effects of other development nearby.

Recent local Speed Indicator Device data has recorded approximately 5,000 vehicle movements per day on the B2133, alongside existing concerns about speeding and HGV movements.

I therefore ask that the Transport Assessment considers not simply the trips generated by these 125 dwellings but the combined effect of committed, pending and reasonably foreseeable development upon Rectory Lane, relevant A24 junctions and the wider Ashington highway network.

### 4. Education, healthcare and community infrastructure

HDC's own previous assessment of the Northern Cluster identified cumulative pressure upon local services and infrastructure.

Ashington Primary School already serves existing residents and substantial housing growth. I therefore ask HDC and WSCC to establish whether sufficient education capacity exists to accommodate children arising from all committed, pending and reasonably foreseeable development, rather than considering these 125 dwellings in isolation.

Ashington also has no GP surgery or dentist and residents must travel outside the village for these services.

Where education and healthcare needs cannot be met locally, additional housing inevitably generates further journeys outside the village, reinforcing concerns about car dependency.

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Housing growth should be accompanied by infrastructure capable of supporting its cumulative population.

## 5. Wastewater and drainage

Southern Water's consultation response to this application reinforces my concerns regarding cumulative infrastructure capacity.

Southern Water's assessment states that additional foul sewerage flows "may lead to a minor increased risk of impact on the sewer network" and requests that occupation is phased to align with delivery of any necessary sewerage network reinforcement.

Importantly, Southern Water also recognises that where several developments occur in close proximity a larger network reinforcement programme may be required to serve them collectively.

That is particularly relevant given the scale of development now proposed around Ashington and further supports the need for comprehensive infrastructure planning.

The application also proposes a new pumping station and there is an existing Southern Water pumping station on or close to the site.

Surface water is proposed to discharge to an existing watercourse, and Southern Water has specifically stated that the Council's technical staff and relevant drainage authority should consider the adequacy of those proposals.

Given known local surface-water and drainage issues, HDC should be satisfied that the proposals are resilient to extreme rainfall and climate change, will not increase flood risk elsewhere, and have been assessed alongside the cumulative development of the wider area.

## 6. Great crested newts, biodiversity and ecological connectivity

I am particularly concerned by NatureSpace's consultation response dated 9 September 2026, which concludes "Further Information Required".

The site lies within an amber impact risk zone for great crested newts. There are nine ponds within 500 metres, including one approximately 20 metres east of the site.

Although eDNA testing of some ponds returned negative results, not all relevant ponds have been assessed. NatureSpace identifies additional waterbodies with ecological connectivity to the site.

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The applicant's own Ecological Impact Assessment acknowledges that, given the density of ponds and suitable habitat within the surrounding landscape, it is considered likely that great crested newts are present on the site for at least part of the year.

NatureSpace consequently states that it is not satisfied that the applicant has adequately demonstrated that there will be no impact upon great crested newts and/or their habitat.

I therefore ask HDC not to determine the application until the outstanding ecological information identified by its specialist consultee has been satisfactorily addressed.

More broadly, the site forms part of a connected landscape of fields, hedgerows, trees, ditches and ponds. I regularly observe wildlife within this wider area, including bats, slow worms, tawny owls, kingfishers, herons, partridges, pheasants and foxes, and have previously submitted wildlife records through iRecord.

The cumulative fragmentation of this habitat through development across the Northern Cluster should therefore be properly assessed.

#### 7. Rural character, landscape, dark skies and cumulative construction impact

The countryside surrounding northern Ashington contributes substantially to the rural setting and character of the village. The open landscape and long views across the countryside, including views towards the Grade I listed Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Warminghurst, are an important part of the character and experience of this rural area.

I am concerned that development across this site, particularly when considered cumulatively with other potential development within the Northern Cluster, would progressively urbanise this open countryside and alter the relationship between Ashington and its surrounding rural landscape. I ask HDC to give appropriate consideration to the effects upon landscape character, important views and the setting and appreciation of nearby heritage assets.

Development would introduce not simply houses but roads, domestic and street lighting, vehicle headlights, noise and increased human activity. Cumulatively, development across the Northern Cluster has the potential to affect the area's relatively dark rural character and nocturnal wildlife.

My family moved to Ashington approximately three and a half years ago because we valued its rural village character, surrounding countryside, wildlife and relative tranquillity. My concern is the scale and cumulative transformation now being

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contemplated.

If Taylor Wimpey, Devine Homes and subsequent parts of the Northern Cluster are developed separately or sequentially, existing residents could experience successive years of construction activity, including HGV movements, noise, dust, lighting and disturbance.

The cumulative duration and impact of construction should therefore be considered. If permission is nevertheless granted, appropriate construction management and phasing should control working hours, HGV routing, noise, dust and artificial lighting and should, where practicable, be coordinated with other nearby major developments.

### Conclusion

For the reasons above, I respectfully request that planning permission for DC/26/1186 is refused.

This is not simply a question of whether one site can physically accommodate 125 houses.

This application forms part of the Ashington Northern Cluster which HDC itself previously decided was not appropriate for allocation, identifying an estimated housing number of zero and concluding that cumulative development would be unsustainable in terms of its impact upon local services and infrastructure and inappropriate to the scale and status of Ashington.

The subsequent emergence of MM229 does not remove those concerns. Indeed, the proposed requirement for a "comprehensive site-wide masterplan" reinforces the importance of considering the wider Northern Cluster as a whole rather than allowing its future form to be established through piecemeal applications.

There are also unresolved application-specific issues. Southern Water has identified an increased risk of impact upon the wastewater network and possible need for reinforcement, while NatureSpace has formally requested further information because impacts upon great crested newts and their habitat have not yet been adequately demonstrated.

I recognise the housing supply pressures facing HDC. However, housing need should not remove the requirement to demonstrate that this location and the cumulative scale of growth proposed for Ashington are sustainable and supported by appropriate infrastructure.

I therefore ask HDC to refuse the application in its present form.

Given the scale of this Major Development, its relationship with

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DC/26/1037 and ASN2/MM229, and its wider implications for Ashington, I also request that DC/26/1186 is determined by the appropriate Planning Committee rather than under delegated powers.

Yours faithfully

Melanie Kerr  
Ashington, West Sussex

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Kind regards

**Telephone:**

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