



Nick Timothy MP

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON, SW1A 0AA

Re: DC/26/0683/RM – Reserved Matters Application: Hatchfield Farm, Fordham Road, Newmarket, Suffolk.

June 2026

I write as the MP for West Suffolk to object to this reserved matters application. My concerns relate to the scale and nature of the proposed development, its impact on residents, commuters and on Newmarket's hospitality sector and economy, and the thoroughbred racing and breeding industry.

The scale of development is inappropriate

Outline consent was granted in April 2025 for what was then described as a light industrial development. This reserved matters application reveals something very different: three distribution-scale commercial buildings, each with dedicated two-way HGV lorry access, and 408 car parking spaces.

I understand the West Suffolk Council planning officer was both disappointed and surprised not to have been consulted about these plans by the applicant before submission. That failure of process is itself a concern, and I would ask that it be taken into account in the assessment of this application. The size and character of this scheme is at odds with the surrounding area and with Newmarket's identity. This is not a town where large-scale logistics operations belong. It is the historic home of horseracing – a world-class industry of genuine economic and cultural importance – and planning decisions must reflect that.

The impact on Newmarket's residents, quality of life and economy

This proposal risks increasing the amount of heavy traffic on Fordham Road, a key route for accessing shops, schools and services which already becomes heavily congested and gridlocked at particular periods of the day. This will harm the quality of life of residents, impede commuters and undermine Newmarket's economy.

Strategic objective six (SO6) of the West Suffolk Local Plan – adopted in 2025 – requires the council to 'support Newmarket as the international home of horse racing and global centre for thoroughbred training for the significant role the industry plays in West Suffolk as an important economic contributor and employer and for its social and cultural influence on the town and the unique character of the built and natural environment'. This application fails to do this. Newmarket is home to thousands of racehorses, and training operations that are the envy of the equine world. Training thoroughbred racehorses in a semi-urban environment is inherently complex. These are highly sensitive animals, not bred or conditioned to share roads with heavy articulated lorries.

As well being a key route for residents and commuters, Fordham Road is an important artery for horses moving between yards, public gallops, and horse crossings. Heavy lorries heading along Fordham Road into Newmarket would bring them into direct contact with strings of racehorses using the horsewalk and horse crossing, rather than heading straight to the motorway via the A14. A Derby-winning trainer, whose main yard is on Fordham Road, has described the plans as completely unacceptable and a potential life-threatening risk to horses and staff. The Newmarket Thoroughbred Racing and Breeding Industry Forum says daily HGV movements along this corridor 'represents a risk to horse and rider safety'.

That risk is compounded by the proximity of fifty homes being built at Astley Place on Fordham Road, alongside the Hatchfield Farm development itself. Indeed, the full traffic impact of the adjacent new housing has not yet been realised. Adding distribution-scale HGV movements to that picture before it has been properly assessed would be irresponsible.

Tattersalls, whose concerns have been echoed by the Newmarket Trainers' Group, has objected to this application. The Council has a responsibility to protect an industry that is irreplaceable. Once disrupted, it cannot simply be rebuilt. Planning decisions that undermine the conditions in which that industry operates are not neutral – they are damaging, and the damage will be permanent.

A distribution centre is a poor use of employment land

Beyond the specific impact of quality of life and the local economy, a large distribution centre is a poor use of this employment site. It generates few jobs per hectare, creates concentration risk, and does little for local supply chains.

Additional pressure on Fordham Road

Fordham Road already experiences significant congestion, with early morning queues stretching back as far as Fordham village. This development – with HGV access to three large units plus 408 parking spaces – will compound those problems materially. The road infrastructure is already in place for access to the northern end of the site, close to the A14, but the prospect of heavy lorries using Fordham Road itself rather than proceeding directly to the motorway is the central concern that this application fails to resolve.

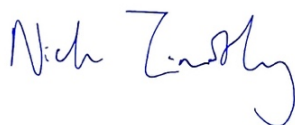
If the council is minded to approve this application despite these strong objections, I ask that a firm condition be imposed: all HGV vehicles associated with the development must access and leave via the A14 only, and must not be permitted to travel through Newmarket town centre or along Fordham Road.

This is the minimum mitigation necessary to protect road safety, other road users and the wellbeing of horses and stable staff using that route. It is also vital for protecting the quality of life of residents.

Conclusion

Newmarket Town Council's planning committee has submitted the strongest possible objection to this scheme. I support that position fully. The proposed development is disproportionate in scale, damaging to a key sector of Newmarket's economy, and an inefficient use of employment land. It conflicts with planning policy objectives on employment density, economic resilience, and protecting established industries. The Council should refuse this application and require a revised scheme that serves the long-term interests of Newmarket and the people who live and work here.

Yours sincerely



Nick Timothy
MP for West Suffolk