

Objection to Planning Application Reference: **DC/25/1899**

Address: Land To The South of Amberley Close Playing Fields Rowlands Road Horsham West Sussex RH12 4LH

Proposal: Erection of 1no single-storey detached self-build / custom-build dwelling with associated works.

Customer's Address: 3 Waterfield Close, Horsham, RH13 5RR

Dear Ms Hannah Darley,

I am writing to object to this application on several substantive and procedural grounds. The proposal raises significant, complex, and unresolved issues which warrant careful scrutiny.

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

2. Pre-Application Advice

The application states that pre-application advice was received and is attached. However, aside from vague references within the Planning Statement (P-073), I have been unable to locate any record of the advice provided by HDC. The absence of clear and transparent pre-application advice is concerning.

3. Self-Build / Biodiversity Net Gain Misrepresentation

The application claims exemption from Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on the basis that the proposal is "self-build or custom-build". However:

- the land is owned by Upper Homes Ltd with multiple parent companies involved,
- the directors are active in numerous property-related companies,
- the proposed dwelling appears intended for commercial gain, through sale or rental, rather than personal occupation.

If correct, the claimed self-build status may not meet national policy definitions, and the BNG exemption may have been incorrectly applied. This is a material planning consideration which must be verified by HDC prior to any determination.

4. Detimental Impact on Local Character

The proposal would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area.

The surrounding properties all have small front gardens without walls or high hedges. This is a deliberate and consistent design feature intended to foster openness and community and it is a distinctive characteristic of this part of Horsham which contributes to a harmonious streetscape.

The proposed use of solid walls and high hedging is entirely at odds with the established pattern of development. It would disrupt visual cohesion, undermine the semi-public nature of front gardens and have a detrimental impact on the streetscape.

Even in the absence of formal deed restrictions, the consistency of surrounding development establishes a clear and locally significant precedent which this proposal fails to respect.

A similar proposal was refused elsewhere in Horsham earlier this year (DC/25/0235). The decision confirmed that development which results in loss of openness and fails to reflect prevailing character is contrary to Policies 32, 33 and 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015). The same concerns are present here.

5. Site Context, Overlooking and Privacy

There is insufficient information to properly assess the impact of the proposed dwelling on neighbouring properties and future residents.

The site slopes, and the bungalow is proposed to be partially set into the ground. However, no context sections or elevations have been provided to show how the building would relate to surrounding houses. Without this information, a proper assessment of visual impact, overlooking, and privacy is not possible.

It is likely that properties to the south would have views onto the roof of the dwelling from ground-floor windows and front gardens, which would be unacceptable. However, this cannot be properly assessed without adequate contextual drawings.

The applicant notes that surrounding properties have modest garden sizes. This reinforces the importance of retaining this open space as supplementary informal communal space.

The proposed garden would be overlooked from multiple neighbouring properties, raising serious concerns regarding the privacy and amenity of future occupants.

6. Historical Community Use of the Site

The applicant states that the site "has no history of community use". This is incorrect. The site has been used informally by the community, particularly children in safe proximity to their homes, for many years as a recreational area separate from the playing field to the north. While this use may not be formally recorded and the site is not registered as an Asset of Community Value, it is misleading to state that it has not been used by the community, particularly where no consultation with residents has taken place.

7. Infrastructure Constraints

National planning guidance expects development to avoid unnecessary disruption to existing infrastructure, demonstrate deliverability and coordinate with utility providers at an early stage. This application fails to do so.

7.1 Public Sewer

The proposed dwelling appears to be located directly over a public sewer serving several neighbouring properties. There is no evidence of a Build Over Agreement or approved sewer diversion from Southern Water.

Building over this sewer would be likely to obstruct access, risk damage, and cause substantial disruption to existing households. Any diversion would be complex, costly (to the applicant), and high-risk due to the number of connected properties, involving reconnections, temporary over-pumping, and excavation works with the attendant possibility of sewage backflow into properties. There is no evidence that Southern Water has been consulted.

7.2 Telecommunications Cables

Existing telecommunications cables oversail the proposed dwelling and are supported by a telegraph pole at the site corner, serving neighbouring homes. No agreement has been provided for relocation or protection of this infrastructure, and the pole and cables do not appear on the application drawings.

There is no evidence of consultation with the telecommunications provider, no approved diversion or mitigation strategy, and no assurance that service continuity can be maintained. Any alteration would risk service disruption and loss of amenity to existing residents.

8. Construction Logistics

The construction logistics required to clear the site of earth, divert utilities, deliver materials and remove site waste via 2 heavily used narrow, pedestrian alleyways make the site entirely inappropriate for any development.

Conclusion

Taken together — and even without considering other matters such as parking — these issues demonstrate that the application is highly complex, raises statutory and infrastructure conflicts, and carries procedural sensitivity.

I therefore request that the application be refused and, in any event, referred to Planning Committee to ensure appropriate scrutiny, transparency and compliance with policy obligations, including Biodiversity Net Gain.

Kind Regards,

cc Councillor Tony Bevis [REDACTED] – Roffey North

Councillor Belinda Walters [REDACTED] – Roffey North