

46 Smugglers Way
Barns Green
West Sussex
RH13 0JY

Planning Department
Horsham District Council
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Chart Way
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By email via the Planning Portal

Dear Planning Officer,

OBJECTION: Application DC/25/2057 – Land North of Little Slaughterford, Chapel Road, Barns Green – 68 Dwellings (Miller Homes)

I am writing to object to the above planning application. I have lived in Barns Green since 1987 and have witnessed first-hand the cumulative impact that recent development has placed on the village's infrastructure, character, and sustainability. The concerns set out below reflect those shared by many residents.

While I recognise the need for housing delivery and do not oppose development in principle, this proposal is in the wrong location and conflicts with the development plan. If permitted, it would cause significant and lasting harm to the character and functioning of Barns Green.

1. Neighbourhood Plan – the Community Has Already Spoken

The Barns Green Neighbourhood Plan was approved by referendum on 4 September 2025 and formally made on 8 October 2025. It represents years of community engagement and clearly sets out where housing growth is considered acceptable.

The Plan allocates specific sites for housing. The land north of Little Slaughterford, Chapel Road, was deliberately excluded. This was not an oversight but a conscious planning decision by the community.

The applicant's Planning Statement suggests that the Neighbourhood Plan contains "no policies which prevent development" on this site. This fundamentally misunderstands the purpose of the Plan. By identifying acceptable locations for growth, it implicitly directs development away from sites such as this one.

Paragraph 14 of the NPPF is directly relevant. Where a neighbourhood plan is less than five years old and allocates sites to meet housing need, the adverse impacts of development that conflicts with it are likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. Both criteria apply here.

Furthermore, Government guidance accompanying the Planning and Infrastructure Bill (September 2025) states that decisions about what to build and where should be shaped by local communities. This application runs contrary to that principle.

2. Village Character and Heritage

The Neighbourhood Plan's Landscape Character Assessment identifies the fields to the north and west of the village as "important small pastoral fields" that provide vital green gaps and a transition between the settlement and the wider countryside.

The application site performs exactly this role. Development here would:

- Eliminate an important green gap that defines the village's rural character
- Harm the setting of nearby listed buildings, including Little Slaughterford, Bennetts, and the Queen's Head public house
- Surround the Queen's Head, a valued community asset, with housing and fundamentally alter its setting

The field is also used for important community events, including the annual Classic Car Show (which raises substantial funds for charity) and Run Barns Green in support of St Catherine's Hospice. These events would be permanently lost if the site were developed.

The proposal is therefore in direct conflict with the Neighbourhood Plan's landscape and character policies.

3. Electricity and Infrastructure Capacity

The Energy Statement confirms that all 68 dwellings would be heated using air source heat pumps, creating a substantial additional electrical demand. However, the application contains no evidence of consultation with UK Power Networks and no assessment of local grid capacity.

The recently completed Sumners Fields development nearby has required a backup diesel generator due to inadequate electricity supply, and, to my understanding, further house sales have been constrained pending resolution of supply issues.

In the absence of a robust grid capacity assessment, the application fails to demonstrate that the development can be served by appropriate infrastructure, contrary to national and local planning policy.

4. Transport and Sustainability

Public transport provision in Barns Green is extremely limited. The applicant's own data shows that 81% of residents drive to work. Christ's Hospital railway station is approximately 3.7km away, making regular walking or cycling unrealistic for most residents.

The Transport Statement's own bus timetable shows:

- Monday: 4 services
- Tuesday: 8 services
- Wednesday: 2 services (07:00 and 16:57 only)

- Thursday: 8 services
- Friday: 4 services
- No evening or weekend services

This level of provision cannot credibly support claims of sustainable transport.

More importantly, paragraph 116 of the NPPF requires assessment of residual cumulative impacts on the road network. The applicant has modelled only the site access junction and has dismissed wider impacts as negligible. This fails to take account of:

- The 32 dwellings at Sumners Fields
- The 50+ dwellings allocated through the Neighbourhood Plan
- The combined impact on key junctions, including Chapel Road / Two Mile Ash Road

The cumulative traffic impact has not been properly assessed, and the Transport Statement should be given limited weight.

5. Cumulative Impact on the Village

Barns Green has already accommodated significant recent and planned growth:

1. Sumners Fields – 32 dwellings, recently completed
2. Neighbourhood Plan allocations – over 50 additional dwellings

The addition of a further 68 homes would represent an increase of close to 40% in the size of the village within a relatively short period. This level of growth is disproportionate and unsustainable, particularly given existing infrastructure constraints.

Conclusion

Horsham District faces pressure to deliver housing, and our community has accepted growth through the Neighbourhood Plan by identifying suitable and sustainable sites. This application conflicts with that Plan, fails to adequately assess cumulative impacts, and would cause harm to village character, heritage, transport sustainability, and infrastructure provision.

For these reasons, the application should be refused.

Yours faithfully,

