

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 09 September 2026 10:58:28 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0933
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 09/09/2026 10:58 AM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land Between Muntham Drive and Smugglers' Lane Chapel Road Barns Green West Sussex
Proposal:	Erection of 31 dwellings with access from Chapel Road including roads, parking and open space.
Case Officer:	Alice Johnson

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address: Chapel House Chapel Road Barns Green, Horsham

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Highway Access and Parking - Loss of General Amenity - Other - Overdevelopment - Trees and Landscaping
Comments:	I am a long term resident of Barns Green who lives on Chapel Road. I have suffered from the inconvenience, heavy lorry traffic and noise for the last three years as a direct result of the Sumners Field development. I strongly object to the further years of

disturbance that the proposed development will inevitably bring to the village in such an inappropriate location.

General Comments on the process:

The whole process appears significantly tilted in favour of the developer who is able to pay to produce a significant number of professional consultant reports, in some cases in excess of 250 pages long over months and the local residents have only 21 days to review, understand and comment on what are technical documents. A summary of each should be offered by the consultants or HDC Planning as part of better transparency and ensure true engagement with the affected community.

It is particularly concerning that HDC refused a request from the Parish Council to extend the date further, given that extremely high level of response against DC/25/2057 and its resultant rejection in its current form. This implies that the council places priority with process over community response, given that the consultation period cover known holiday weeks where members of the community might have limited time to comment.

Site Selection, options, overdevelopment and Neighbourhood Plan:

The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) produced by the village was finally approved by a 92% majority of the over 500 residents that voted in September 2025. There were significant delays to the referendum imposed by HDC due to water neutrality and the rejection of the HDC district plan by the Inspector. Out of the control of the community who believe they contributed to and endorsed a plan relevant to their community and subsequently accepted and approved by HDC.

The sites proposed in the NP were formally assessed by criteria provided to the NP team by HDC. The two highest scoring sites (Sumners Field & Itchingfield School) were included within the NP. 29 sites were offered and assessed and the proposed development (DC/26/0933) was not only clearly assessed as "Not Suitable for Development" it was also voted the second least appropriate site for development by the residents.

Despite formal requests from the Parish Council to HDC as to how this site and the adjacent Miller Homes site (DC/25/2057) could somehow find themselves as the preferred development sites in the rejected District Plan and still being promoted by HDC as a site for development in the latest draft. The process to arrive at this decision MUST be made transparent and placed in the public domain before the planning committee review DC/26/0933.

I make further comment on the re-designation of the BUAB to include these sites later within my objection.

There has been zero engagement from Shanly homes with either the Parish Council or the village community. The "Public

Consultation" document they have posted is a sham, it includes a distortion of the general rejection comments into a positive in favour of the development. If evidence of engagement with the community is a key criteria in evaluating a planning proposal HDC Planning department are negligent in permitting this garbage to be assessed and posted within a public consultation. It seems that "IF" the planning application comes before the Planning Committee it will be the first engagement between the community and Shanly Homes. If the decision is delegated to the officers then the community will have had zero interaction with Shanly Homes prior to decision! A TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE POSITION FOR LOCAL COUNCIL TAX PAYERS!

Although I appreciate comments only referring to DC/26/0933 can be accepted, HDC must take into account in its decision that the two sites proposed within the NP are yet to be fully realised. Sumners Field has yet to sell more than 25% of the properties offered and this has significantly extended the disturbance and completion of the site. To date no planning application has been proposed for the Itchingfield School site. This either implies the local demand for houses is not there or indeed the pricing of these houses is inflated beyond local means. Please permit housing that meets local needs at a rate commensurate with this not permit housing to meet a defined district number!

The development would represent a disproportionate increase in the number of dwellings in the Parish, at a density which is out of alignment with neighbouring properties. The as-yet not made update to the HDC Local Plan allocates 25 homes to this site, whereas the Application is proposing 31 - a 24% increase.

Addition of this housing estate to the historic core of the Parish is a dramatic change, and would also follow closely after 2 most recent and significant developments in Barns Green: Sumners Fields and Ash Miles, with the potential of the Miller Homes site still a real possibility through appeal or re-submission.

The proposed affordable housing is 72%. The HDC Housing Register shows 61% of demand is for 3-4 bedroom family homes, those proposed are 1-2 bedroom properties. There is no agreed provider to finance and manage the homes in the proposal. This is very relevant because there is recent local precedent for developers being unable to deliver on Application-stage commitment of affordable housing as proposed, due to withdrawal from agreements (Sumners Fields). It throws the prospect of fulfilment of affordable housing commitment in this Application into stark question.

Sumners Fields remains with more unsold than sold properties despite completion of the build. The 'need' determined by the Standard Method is resulting in wasteful, destructive, pointless and unwanted development in rural communities. Barns Green is

only one such case across Horsham District which faces this prospect.

I am not against further housing, when and where it is appropriate for the community, however this site is in an inappropriate location and current local demand is demonstrably not there. Barns Green is a rural community and its NP clearly states this. It does not want to become a suburban dormitory town and does not have the level of infrastructure and transport links to support this. This implies that Shanly Homes are progressing the development not to meet local demand and housing need but families moving "Down from London."

Layout and Style of the Proposed Development:

Barns Green welcomed the addition of 68 units within Ash Miles as recently as 2015/2016. It has integrated well into the village. The design of the houses and layout of the estate fitted well within the rural environment being on the edge of the village. The success was in part due to the positive engagement process from Berkley Homes as opposed to Shanly Homes who have not even proposed a public meeting to engage with the community, nor offered any tangible benefits to the community in their proposal. The proposed style is not in keeping with that of a rural village but a suburban estate.

Environmental Impact

Within the property individual specimens of Wild Service Trees *Sorbus torminalis* (*Aria torminalis*) have been identified. This has been brought to the attention of Sussex Wildlife Trust - partners in HDC "Wilder Horsham" with whom the Village work closely. They have stated: that this species is a clear indicator tree for long established hedgerows. Ecologists and conservation organizations like the Woodland Trust treat the wild service tree as a primary sign of long-established or UK ancient woodland (habitats continuously wooded since at least 1600 AD) and advise us that under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 in England and Wales, a hedgerow is legally classed as an "important hedgerow" if it contains a wild service tree, granting it strong local authority protection against removal or destruction. The implications for planning policy I understand is that whilst individual trees do not carry a personal blanket preservation order, their presence on a development site flags the presence of potentially irreplaceable ancient woodland or species-rich habitats, which receive strict protection under local and national planning frameworks. This needs formal verification before any planning consent is considered.

The Ecology report on bats posted only refers to potential bat "roosts" in the small barns to the back of the site and does not consider any possibility of bat refuge in the adjacent houses such

as Bennetts or the houses on Mutham Drive. Residents have reported bat colonies within their properties - this must be investigated and noted.

Finally I strongly object to any proposal of close boarded fencing or walls in the design that border the ancient byway of Smugglers Lane. This is an ancient byway and must remain as a wildlife corridor not just along its length but across its length too.

Traffic and Transport

The increase in traffic with a further new access onto Chapel Road, not Church Road as stated in the WSCC report, will cause congestion and increased risk of accidents; this will be made worse by parking outside the village shop and pub, both vital assets to the village community, hubs of activity and valuable social and business resources, which will be put under immense pressure as a result of both the building operation, and the change in traffic implications.

To be clear: this site means a new vehicle access onto Chapel Road, at a pinch point, with blind spots for (conservatively) 90 vehicle movements per day. A disproportionate increase, horribly located, creating an out-of-place traffic and road safety nightmare.

If development of the Miller Homes site occurs through a revised planning application or through appeal, the combination will be unthinkable bad for locals & through-commute traffic.

The transport plan takes no account of the increased lorry movement during construction or indeed any public consultation on this. Despite this the transport plan has been signed off by WSCC Highways.

Living on Chapel Road we have lived with 3 years of construction of Sumners Pond with zero response despite requests, from WSCC to ensure that the site traffic in anyway complies with the agreed traffic plan, despite restrictions on movements before 0800 and after 1700 and indeed during school access times. I have no confidence in the report and ask HDC to question the premise on which it is based before the proposal goes to the planning committee.

Public Transport connecting Barns Green to Horsham, Southwater and Billingshurst can in no way be considered as a plus point as portrayed in the transport report. There are 12 buses to Horsham a week - none on a Saturday or Sunday - with only 2 days a week with more than 2 buses. But only two buses a week (one each on Monday & Thursday) to Billingshurst, location of the nearest doctor's surgery. Nor is there a road side footpath to Christs Hospital station so access to the station is still predominantly by car.

Infrastructure - Electricity, Sewage and Water

This development will increase in demand on services which are already strained and failing. This was extensively commented on during the planning committee review of DC/25/0933 only TWO MONTHS AGO and indeed stated in the motion as one clear reason for rejection by the planning committee. The situation for DC/26/0933 only differs in the number of dwelling. Should DC/25/2057 be re- submitted or taken to appeal the cumulative effect will be disastrous!

The sewage works capacity is already exceeded for the existing community, even before the most recent addition to the Parish - Sumners Fields. Discharge of raw sewage as an overflow due to volume is a matter of serious public health and environmental concern, which will only be made worse by adding the load from a 31 house development.

This was detailed extensively in objections to the Miller Homes site (DC/25/2057) with an expert report from a qualified water engineer. The premise and result is very similar for DC/26/0933 albeit for fewer dwellings - the principals of Southern Water's flawed assessment remain the same.

Plans have been announced to use the Barns Green Sewage Treatment Works for transfer of output from the growing Southwater developments. In addition, there are moves by SW to shut down capacity in the Itchingfield works. Under plans disclosed by SW, output from both would be diverted to the Barns Green Works. However, none of this public domain knowledge is stated by SW in their responses.

In their response to DC/25/2057, Southern Water have openly stated that they cannot confirm capacity, and have given numerous conflicting and erroneous statements. Their performance does not support more development, and recent legal proceedings raise questions about confidence in them as a competent service provider. Overflow from Barns Green Sewage Treatment Works is already routinely polluting the Adur. This was a major reason for rejection by the Planning Committee of the Miller Homes proposal for the adjacent land. Yet HDC still finds it acceptable to place on the portal in the public domain such "glib" exchanges as the one quoted below between HDC Planning and SW dated 20/08/2026:

Hi Alice

I hope you're well. Yes, there is currently capacity within the local foul sewer network for this development. However, tests are currently being undertaken at Barns Green WTW, and we do not expect to receive the results until around September. As such, if the Council decides to impose a condition requiring reinforcement works, similar to Condition 10 on application DC/25/2057, we would understand until the outcome of the testing is known.

Best Shae
Future Growth Planner
South East Region

I find this both unprofessional and symptomatic of the dismissive way in which SW have operated over the Barns Green WTP during this and the previous Miller homes proposal.

Many of the resident responses you received to DC/25/2057 made reference to a letter one local resident received in response to questions to Southern Water in April 2025. I was that resident. This letter is as relevant to DC/26/0933 as to DC/25/2057. I have not attached the letter again but refer you to my submission objecting to DC/25/2057 where it is attached.

Final Observations

The site is deemed undevelopable under both the current Horsham District Planning Framework and SHELAA which remain the current Standing Documents in the absence of a new Horsham Plan.

In addition the recently made Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan endorsed by HDC has the statement that it 'carries full weight as part of the development plan for this part of the district'.

A number of policy elements in these respective documents are relevant to this application and support refusal. Moreover, public response to the site when it was proposed in the Call for Sites for the Neighbourhood Plan was overwhelmingly negative.

Finally the proposed development site lies outside the current Built-up Area Boundary (BUAB) and is defined as 'Countryside'. This contravenes Policy 26 in the made HDC Local Plan. Changing the BUAB in the latest draft of the Horsham District Plan to include this and the Miller Homes site does not confer legitimacy for the planning proposal.

The Neighbourhood Plan's Landscape Character Assessment describes the fields north and west of the village as 'important small pastoral fields'. Building here will destroy the current Rural Amenity bestowed by the field with grazing animals adjacent to historic buildings.

Kind regards

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