

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk
Sent: 09 September 2026 20:25
To: Planning
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 8:25 PM.

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: 2 Muntham Drive Barns Green Horsham

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Design - Highway Access and Parking - Loss of General Amenity - Other - Overdevelopment - Trees and Landscaping
Comments:	OBJECTION - Application DC/26/0933, Land Between Muntham Drive and Smugglers' Lane, Chapel Road, Barns Green I live at 2 Muntham Drive, immediately adjacent to the application site, and I object in the strongest terms to this application. My objection rests on the following material planning considerations. 1. CONFLICT WITH THE MADE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan (2025) is made and, as Horsham District Council itself confirmed on endorsing it, "carries full weight as part of the development plan for this part of the district". The INP does not allocate this site for development. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the application to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. No such consideration has been demonstrated here. Granting permission on an unallocated site immediately after the community completed a lengthy, examined and referendum-tested plan would hollow out the neighbourhood planning process entirely.

2. COUNTRYSIDE LOCATION - CONFLICT WITH POLICY 26

The site lies wholly outside the Built-up Area Boundary and is therefore defined as Countryside. Policy 26 of the HDC Local Plan restricts development in such locations to that which is essential to its countryside setting. Housing of this type and scale plainly is not. This is, in policy terms, development in the open countryside and should be refused on that basis alone.

3. OVER-DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE

The draft HDC Local Plan indicates a capacity of 25 homes on this site. The applicant proposes 31 - a 24% uplift, with no justification offered for the departure. That over-provision is what drives the cramped layout and the resulting harm to character set out below. It is over-development on the applicant's own figures.

4. DESIGN OUT OF KEEPING WITH LOCAL CHARACTER

HDC Planning Framework Policy 34 requires that development "reinforce the special character" of its setting. The submitted designs do the opposite. The house types are suburban, pedestrian and generic - indistinguishable from estate housing anywhere in southern England, and divorced from the local vernacular of Barns Green. They do not reinforce the special character of the village; they degrade it. This is a straightforward failure against Policy 34.

5. HARM TO DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

The Grade II listed Bennetts sits close to the proposed development. It has no foundations and is at serious risk of structural damage both from construction activity - vibration, groundworks, heavy plant movements - and from the permanent alteration of ground and drainage conditions the development would cause. I am not aware of any structural or vibration assessment adequate to discharge the Council's duty under s.66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which requires special regard to the preservation of a listed building and its setting.

Beyond Bennetts, the urban character of the scheme would be dissonant with Blacksmith's Cottage, the Queen's Head public house and other listed buildings in the vicinity, harming their settings and the overall aspect of the village. Where less than substantial harm to a designated asset arises, the NPPF requires it to be weighed against public benefits - and the public benefits claimed here are weak (see 9 and 10 below).

6. WASTEWATER CAPACITY AND SEWAGE DISCHARGE

Southern Water has not been able to confirm that capacity exists. That is not a neutral position - it is an unresolved objection. There is manifestly inadequate capacity at current usage levels, and the addition of 31 dwellings would worsen it. Permission should not be granted on the assumption that capacity problems can be conditioned away after the fact; the consequence of getting this wrong is sewage discharge into the local watercourse network.

7. FLOODING, SURFACE WATER AND RUN-OFF

There is existing photographic evidence of flooding at the location of the proposed site access. The scheme would substantially reduce exposed soil and introduce a hard road

access at precisely that point, increasing and accelerating run-off. The application does not adequately address how surface water would be managed in a location with a demonstrated existing problem.

8. TRAFFIC, ACCESS AND HIGHWAY SAFETY

The proposal creates a new vehicle access onto Chapel Road at a pinch point, with blindspots, generating on a conservative estimate some 90 vehicle movements per day. That is a disproportionate increase onto a rural road not built for it, and the access is badly located from a road safety perspective. The cumulative position is worse still: taken together with the adjacent Miller Homes application and other development in the pipeline, the combined impact on residents and through-traffic would be severe. Cumulative impact is a material consideration and must be assessed as such, not application by application.

9. HOUSING MIX DOES NOT MEET IDENTIFIED NEED, AND DELIVERABILITY IS UNPROVEN

The proposed affordable provision is 72% one- and two-bedroom units, while the Housing Register shows 61% of demand is for three- and four-bedroom family homes. The scheme therefore fails to meet the need it purports to serve. Compounding this, no registered provider has been agreed to finance and manage the affordable homes - so even the limited benefit claimed is not demonstrably deliverable.

10. NO PROVEN HOUSING NEED

Sumners Fields, a recent nearby development, has many unsold units and building has stopped. That is concrete local evidence that the need generated by the Standard Method is not real need in this location, and that further permissions would produce wasteful and unwanted development rather than homes people want to live in.

11. ANCIENT WOODLAND INDICATORS, HEDGEROWS AND HABITAT LOSS

Details of the Wild Service trees on site - a recognised ancient woodland indicator species - are still awaited. Neither the Council nor the public can properly assess ecological harm while that information is outstanding, and determining the application in its absence would be premature. Separately, the site access construction requires removal of established ancient hedgerow. The loss of mature hedge is habitat destruction and permanently damages the rural setting; it cannot be meaningfully mitigated by new planting within any relevant timeframe.

12. INADEQUATE ELECTRICAL AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE

Local electrical supply infrastructure is demonstrably inadequate: housing at the recently built Sumners Fields has been running on temporary generators for months. Adding a further 31 dwellings to a network that cannot support the last development is not sustainable, and no evidence of network reinforcement has been provided.

13. PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND CAR DEPENDENCY

Public transport serving the village is infrequent and unreliable. Residents of this development would be wholly reliant on car ownership for daily travel, which undermines any claim that this is a sustainable location and directly compounds the traffic impacts at 8 above.

14. LOSS OF RURAL AMENITY AND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The Neighbourhood Plan's Landscape Character Assessment describes the fields north and west of the village as "important small pastoral fields". The field in question, with grazing animals adjacent to historic buildings, provides exactly the rural amenity the Assessment identifies and protects. Building here would destroy it irreversibly.

CONCLUSION

The proposal conflicts with the made Neighbourhood Plan, with Local Plan Policy 26 and with Policy 34; it harms designated heritage assets including a structurally vulnerable listed building; it is unsupported by demonstrated wastewater, drainage, highway or electrical capacity; it exceeds the site's own draft allocation by 24%; and it delivers a housing mix that does not match identified local need, with no registered provider secured. I respectfully urge the Council to refuse permission.

██████████
2 Muntham Drive, Barns Green, RH13 0PT

Kind regards

Telephone:

Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk



**Horsham
District
Council**



Horsham District Council, Albery House, Springfield Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 2GB

Telephone: 01403 215100 (calls may be recorded) www.horsham.gov.uk Chief Executive: Jane Eaton