

[REDACTED]

Sent: 05 February 2026 14:59
To: Planning
Subject: Planning Objection DC?25/2057

Categories: Comments Received

from: [REDACTED], Batchelors Farm, Emms Lane, Barns Green, RH13 0QG [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

commentator type: neighbour **Stance:** Object

Reasons for comment: Planning policy, case law and previous decisions, highway safety, infrastructure and services

Re: Planning Application DC/25/2057
Land North of Little Slaughterford, Chapel Road, Barns Green
Proposed Development: 68 Dwellings

I write to object to the above planning application in the strongest possible terms.

I have lived in Barns Green for **45 years** and have witnessed the cumulative impact that recent development has already had on a small rural village with limited infrastructure. Having reviewed the application documents carefully, I respectfully request that this objection is placed before the Planning Committee in full.

1. The application cannot be properly determined at this stage

Southern Water's consultation response dated 13 January 2026 confirms that further modelling of wastewater network capacity is required and will not be completed until 3 February, only days before the consultation period closes.

Given the well-documented sewage capacity issues in Barns Green, it would be premature and potentially unlawful to determine this application before Southern Water has confirmed whether the network can accommodate the proposed development. No committee date should be set until this information is available.

2. Conflict with the Development Plan and Neighbourhood Plan

The Barns Green Neighbourhood Plan was approved by referendum in September 2025 and formally made in October 2025. It is the most up-to-date part of the statutory Development Plan and carries full weight.

The application site was expressly considered and rejected during the neighbourhood plan process. Housing growth was accepted elsewhere, including at Sumners Fields and other allocated sites. This site was deliberately excluded.

Paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework is clear that where a planning application conflicts with a recently made neighbourhood plan that allocates sites to meet housing need, permission should not normally be granted unless the adverse impacts are clearly outweighed. No such justification exists in this case.

The applicant also accepts that the proposal conflicts with Policies 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework, being outside the built-up area boundary and unnecessary for a countryside location.

Reliance on the “tilted balance” does not override neighbourhood plan protection or policies restricting development.

3. Water neutrality and Habitats Regulations compliance

The site lies within the Sussex North Water Resource Zone, where development must demonstrate water neutrality to avoid harm to the Arun Valley Special Area of Conservation.

This is a legal requirement under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, not a matter of planning judgement. The application relies on eligibility for the Sussex North Water Certification Scheme, yet that scheme excludes housing outside settlement boundaries on unallocated sites.

With the draft Local Plan withdrawn and the site unallocated in the made Neighbourhood Plan, it is unclear how water neutrality can be lawfully achieved. In the absence of certainty beyond reasonable scientific doubt, the application is not capable of approval.

4. Sewage and wastewater infrastructure

Southern Water’s own data shows that in 2022 Barns Green experienced **43 sewage overflow events totalling 411 hours**. The network is already operating beyond capacity.

The proposal would connect 68 additional homes to a **175mm diameter sewer** in Chapel Road without properly accounting for existing and planned development within the village. Capacity has not been confirmed and cannot be assumed. Reliance on future upgrades or conditions is inappropriate where the principle of development is unsound.

5. Highways, road widening and loss of historic hedgerow

The proposals include the removal of an **established hedgerow within the centre of the village** to facilitate a significantly widened access road. This hedgerow forms an important part of the rural character of Barns Green and its removal would introduce an urbanising feature that would look wholly out of place in a traditional village setting.

The loss of this hedgerow would also result in the destruction of valuable wildlife habitat, including nesting and foraging areas for birds and other species. Such harm is neither necessary nor justified and runs contrary to the expectation that development should conserve and enhance local landscape character and biodiversity.

Introducing a wide, engineered road into the heart of the village would fundamentally erode its rural appearance and sense of place, causing permanent visual and environmental harm.

6. Highways and cumulative transport impact

Chapel Road is constrained by narrow carriageway widths, on-street parking, pedestrian activity near the village shop, school and public house, and limited forward visibility. It already operates at the limits of acceptability.

The development would introduce in excess of 100 additional vehicles, generating significant daily and peak-hour movements through a single access point. When assessed cumulatively with recent and planned development in the village, the residual impact on highway safety and network operation would be **severe**.

The Transport Statement’s assumptions about reduced car use are unrealistic in a village with minimal public transport provision and no evening or weekend services. Cumulative impacts have not been properly assessed, contrary to national policy.

7. Electricity capacity

All dwellings are proposed to use air source heat pumps, significantly increasing electrical demand. No assessment of local grid capacity has been provided, and no response from UK Power Networks has been secured.

It is understood that the nearby Sumners Fields development already relies on backup generation due to network constraints. This issue must be resolved before any decision is taken.

8. Ancient woodland, landscape and village character

The site adjoins Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland, an irreplaceable habitat afforded the highest level of protection under national policy. The proposed buffer is minimal, and the introduction of a public footpath through it is inappropriate and contrary to Natural England guidance.

The land also forms an important green gap between the village and open countryside, identified as such in the Neighbourhood Plan's Landscape Character Assessment. Its loss would harm the rural setting of Barns Green, nearby listed buildings, and the character of the Queen's Head public house.

The field is also used for valued community events, including the annual Classic Car Show and Run Barns Green. These would be lost permanently.

9. Conclusion

This application is not a matter of planning balance or mitigation. It conflicts with the statutory Development Plan, fails to demonstrate compliance with binding environmental law, and relies on infrastructure that is demonstrably inadequate.

For these reasons — individually and cumulatively — the proposal is not capable of lawful approval and should be refused.



Virus-free. www.avg.com