
Sent: 29 January 2026 15:01
To: Planning
Subject: Objection to Planning Application DC/25/2057 – Land North of Little Slaughterford, Chapel Road, Barns Green

Categories: Comments Received

Dear Planning Officer,

Objection to Planning Application DC/25/2057 – Land North of Little Slaughterford, Chapel Road, Barns Green

I write to formally object to the above planning application.

I do not oppose housing in principle. Barns Green has accepted growth and has already delivered, and is continuing to deliver, new homes through the planning system. However, this proposal represents development in the wrong location, at an inappropriate scale, and in a form that would cause substantial and lasting harm to the parish. My reasons for objection are set out below.

1. INACCURATE ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE: SEWAGE CAPACITY, SURFACE WATER RUNOFF AND FLOOD RISK

The most serious and troubling aspect of this application is the fundamental misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the site's environmental context, particularly in relation to sewage capacity, surface water runoff and flood risk. These matters relate directly to infrastructure capacity, flood risk and environmental protection, all of which are material planning considerations.

Firstly, multiple submitted documents incorrectly refer to the River Arun as the receiving watercourse. This is factually incorrect. Surface water runoff and any storm overflow discharge from the local sewage treatment infrastructure drain to the River Adur catchment, via and directly into Parsons Brook, not the Arun. By extension, downstream impacts affect the Adur and environmentally sensitive areas including the Knepp Rewilding Estate.

This is not a minor error. Identifying the correct river catchment is a basic requirement for any credible flood risk, drainage or environmental assessment. This repeated error calls into question the reliability of the modelling, assumptions and conclusions that follow.

Secondly, the application repeatedly claims that there is "no evidence of flooding". This statement is demonstrably incorrect. Local residents have provided consistent and repeated evidence of surface water flooding along Chapel Road, water flowing downhill across the site, and flooding affecting nearby buildings including the village shop. These issues arise precisely because the site currently functions as permeable land that attenuates runoff. I have attached multiple images of flooding events directly affecting the village shop area and the field opposite in question to this objection letter.

The proposed development would replace that permeable land with roofs, roads and hardstanding, increasing both the volume and speed of surface water runoff. The attenuation measures proposed would be insufficient in slowing the flow of water once the development is complete, as already evidenced at the nearby Sumners Fields development, which drains into the same watercourse. In an area already experiencing flooding, this represents a clear and foreseeable worsening of existing conditions.

Thirdly, the sewage treatment infrastructure serving the village is already known to be under strain, with a documented history of storm overflow events. Yet the applicant's and Southern Water's responses focus narrowly on connection points rather than addressing overall network capacity, treatment works performance or cumulative impact.

While drainage capacity and sewage treatment capacity are sometimes considered separately, both form part of the same functional sewerage system. Where treatment works are known to overflow, conclusions based solely on drainage capacity cannot be relied upon to demonstrate that additional development will not worsen existing environmental harm.

Surface water, foul drainage and flooding are not separate systems; they are interconnected. Increased runoff increases infiltration and surcharge within the sewer network, raising the likelihood of overflow events. In a catchment already experiencing problems, adding development of this scale without robust, catchment-accurate assessment is not supported by sound evidence.

In addition, it has been brought to my attention that a grid reference used by Southern Water in its assessment (TQ12265901) appears to correspond to a location outside the local catchment and outside Southern Water's own sewerage area, reportedly within Elmbridge in Surrey. In that area, sewerage services are the responsibility of Thames Water rather than Southern Water. If correct, this would indicate that the sewerage assessment is based on an incorrect spatial reference, raising serious concerns about the accuracy and reliability of the underlying data and conclusions relied upon for this application.

Given the known flooding issues and the inconsistencies within the submitted material, it is essential that the Lead Local Flood Authority scrutinises the baseline assumptions and conclusions in detail before any determination is made.

Taken together, the incorrect identification of the river system, the dismissal of known flooding, and the failure to properly assess sewage capacity represent a fundamental failure to understand baseline conditions. Where baseline conditions are incorrect, the conclusions drawn from them cannot be relied upon.

2. CONFLICT WITH THE RECENTLY ADOPTED ITCHINGFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan was prepared over many years by parish volunteers and the Parish Council at significant personal and financial cost. The parish was asked to identify where housing could be delivered without substantial harm, and it did so.

The Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan is recently made, forms part of the statutory development plan, and is therefore entitled to significant weight in decision-making.

As part of that process, 28 sites were submitted and assessed, with this site scoring the worst of all sites due to its impact on village character, landscape role, infrastructure constraints and environmental sensitivity. The community accepted housing elsewhere, in two locations, with one allocated site now nearing completion.

Where a site assessed as least suitable through a community-led, evidence-based process is later promoted for allocation, the reasons for that change must be clearly explained and supported by robust evidence.

The Plan was endorsed by referendum with over 400 residents voting and more than 92% voting in favour. Conflict with a recently adopted neighbourhood plan is a material planning consideration that must be afforded significant weight.

We are not anti-housing. We are strongly opposed to development on this site.

3. LOSS OF HABITAT, LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND INADEQUATE ENVIRONMENTAL BUFFERS

The removal of the Chapel Road ancient hedgerow would result in the loss of an important wildlife corridor and landscape feature, contributing to habitat fragmentation, biodiversity loss and further urbanisation of the village edge.

The proposed buffer to the adjacent ancient woodland is minimal, despite the scale of the development and the increased pressures arising from lighting, noise, domestic activity, pets, recreational use and altered drainage

patterns. Equally concerning is the lack of meaningful buffers to Smugglers Lane, a historic rural route, and to the existing hedgerow boundary with the Sumners Ponds site.

Within this context, the applicant's Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal mischaracterises the neighbouring Sumners Ponds Camping and Fishing site in order to downplay impact. The appraisal refers to views within the campsite as being part of an "already developed vista" and describes "significant visual clutter" at the campsite entrance. This is a misleading and dismissive portrayal of an intentionally low-impact, carefully managed rural site that has received multiple national awards, including AA Campsite of the Year, precisely because of its landscape quality, tranquillity and rural character.

The proposed development would face directly onto three boundaries of the Sumners Ponds site, including Betty's Lake, Bluebell Park and Smugglers Lane, with inadequate buffers, increased building height, domestic lighting, noise and year-round activity. These impacts cannot be meaningfully mitigated by future landscaping and would fundamentally alter the experience of the site for visitors.

The success of Sumners Ponds as a rural tourism business is directly dependent on its environmental setting. No credible assessment has been undertaken of the economic harm arising from the erosion of that setting. Reliance on future mitigation does not overcome harm arising from inappropriate site selection and inadequate baseline assessment.

4. LAYOUT, DESIGN AND RELATIONSHIP WITH THE VILLAGE

As articulated clearly in Harry Whittaker's objection, the proposed layout follows a generic suburban model that fails to respond to the historic form, grain and evolution of Barns Green.

The access arrangement, positioned directly opposite the village shop and the Queen's Head public house, introduces congestion and conflict at one of the most sensitive points in the village. Rather than reinforcing the village core, the scheme would undermine it.

5. SCALE, HEIGHT AND MASSING

The proposed development is not only excessive in dwelling numbers but overly imposing in its physical form.

The average house height proposed is materially greater than surrounding development, resulting in buildings that would appear dominant and visually intrusive within a village characterised by modest, lower-rise housing. Increased height amplifies the perceived mass of the scheme, increases visual prominence when viewed from Chapel Road and surrounding land, and further erodes the rural edge of the settlement.

6. IMPACT ON LISTED BUILDINGS, THE VILLAGE SHOP AND THE QUEEN'S HEAD PUBLIC HOUSE

There are multiple Grade II listed buildings in close proximity to the site, including Herons Reach and the Queen's Head public house. These buildings derive much of their significance from their rural setting and relationship with open land. That setting would be eroded by the proposed development.

The impact on the village shop will be immediate and quantifiable. Currently, customers can park legally and safely along Chapel Road, allowing up to approximately 15 vehicles at any one time. Under the proposed scheme, this would be reduced to 9 designated spaces. The impact of development on existing community facilities and services is a material planning consideration, and in a rural village where short car trips are unavoidable, this loss of parking capacity would directly undermine the viability of a vital local service.

The Queen's Head is another valued community asset whose viability depends on accessibility, setting and parking. Increased congestion and enclosure by housing would place additional strain on an already fragile rural business operating within an industry under significant pressure.

7. ELECTRICITY INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRAINTS

The nearby Sumners Fields (Sigma Homes) development of just 32 dwellings is currently unable to sell further homes due to insufficient electricity supply. This unresolved issue is a clear warning sign for a proposal more than twice the size, reliant on electrically powered heating systems, yet unsupported by firm evidence of network capacity.

Given the demonstrable difficulties in securing a timely mains electricity connection for nearby development, this assumption requires firm evidence rather than expectation.

CONCLUSION

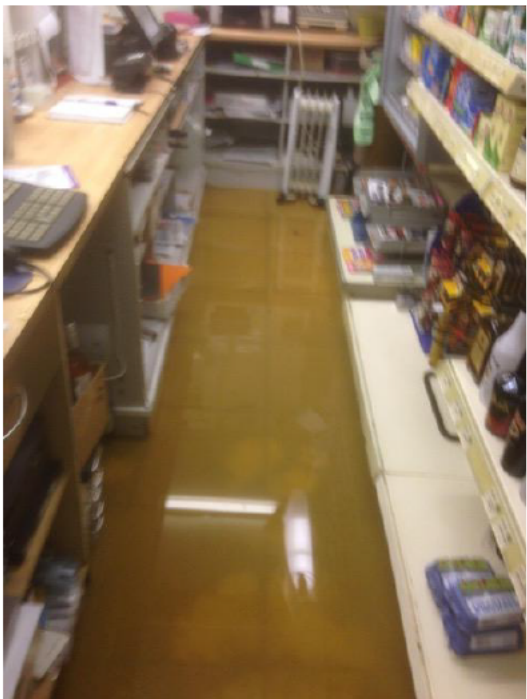
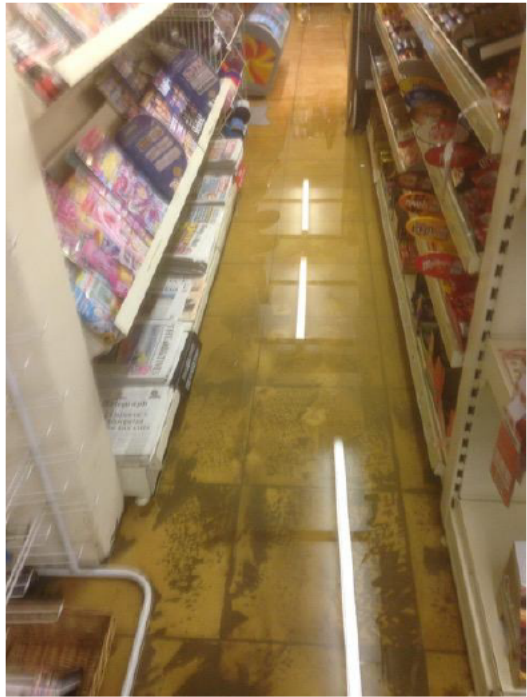
This application is undermined by fundamental errors in environmental understanding, particularly in relation to sewage capacity, surface water runoff and flood risk. When combined with harm to heritage assets, loss of habitat, damage to community facilities, infrastructure constraints and direct conflict with the recently adopted Neighbourhood Plan, it is clear that this proposal is inappropriate for this site.

For these reasons, planning permission should be refused.

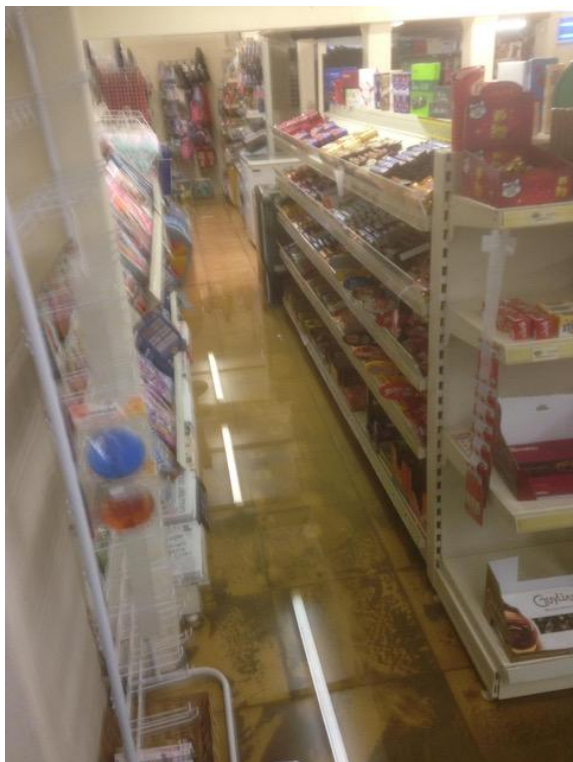
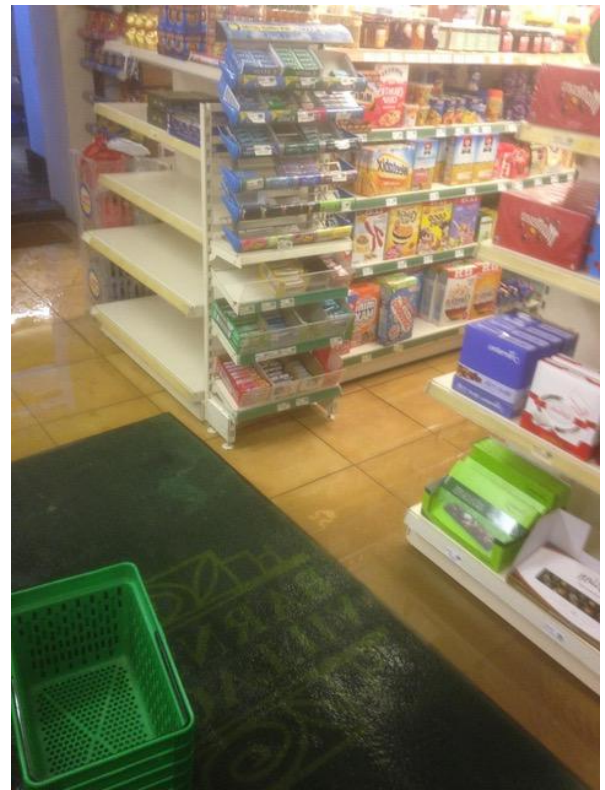
Yours faithfully,



Woodfield Lodge
Sumners Ponds, Chapel Road
Barns Green, Horsham
West Sussex
RH13 0PR











16 Nov 2022

Barns Green

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12-15 Nov 2022

27 Nov 2024

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24 Nov 2024