

## **PLANNING COMMITTEE APPLICATIONS**

### **POST COMMITTEE REPORT**

#### **APPLICATION REFERENCE / ADDRESS:**

DC/25/2057

Proposed development of 68 dwellings with vehicular and pedestrian accesses, public open space, hard and soft landscaping and associated works including supporting foul and surface water drainage works, and works to existing culverted watercourse on site.

Land North of Little Slaughterford, Chapel Road, Barns Green, West Sussex

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#### **RESOLVED:**

At its meeting on **4th August 2026**, Planning Committee resolved to refuse full planning permission, contrary to the officer recommendation, for the following reason:

Given the recently made Barns Green and Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan (2025) the proposal would, by reason of its standardised suburban design and appearance, fail to positively respond to the character and appearance of the locality within the historic core of the village and, without proven foul sewerage capacity from Southern Water to service the development, fails to adequately manage foul drainage, contrary to Policy 32 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and the Barns Green and Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan (2025).

Since the committee resolution to refuse, and prior to the formal decision being issued, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been updated (17<sup>th</sup> August 2026).

Whilst the new NPPF significantly revises the structure and presentation of national planning policy, the overarching objectives of the planning system and the presumption in favour of sustainable development underpinning decision-making remains and it continues to be the case that the NPPF should be read as a whole (paragraph 7). Officers have reviewed the application against the updated NPPF:

#### ***Principal of Development***

NPPF 2026 Policies S3-S6 broadly replace paragraph 11 and the application of the tilted balance within the previous 2024 NPPF. Policy S3 establishes the presumption in favour of sustainable development, whilst Policy S5 identifies specific forms of development outside settlements that should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects. These forms of development include:

*“j. Development which would address an evidenced unmet need (including, but not limited to, development proposals involving the provision of housing where the local planning*

*authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites or scores below 75% in the most recent Housing Delivery Test, and where the development would:*

- i. Be physically well-related to an existing settlement (unless the nature of the development would make this inappropriate) and be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure; or*
- ii. Comprise major development for freight and logistics purposes which accords with policy E3.”*

As set out in the Officer's committee report, the Council has a housing land supply of 1.7 years. Horsham's 2025 HDT (published on 17 August 2026) is though now shown to be 44%. The Officer's report additionally sets out that the application site is *physically well-related, adjacent to the Barnes Green BUAB*, and that the quantum of development proposed, in combination with other approved schemes, would be appropriate to the scale and function of Barnes Green. The proposal therefore gains the principal support of NPPF 2026 Policy S5 and as such the assessment set out in the Committee report remains consistent with the NPPF 2026.

In regards to the Itchingfield Neighborhood Plan, the protections afford by NPPF 2024 Paragraph 14 are consistent / carried over with paragraph Policy S6 of the NPPF 2026. The assessment set out within the Committee report therefore remains accurate.

### *Design*

The principal concern raised in the Committee's resolution relates to the design of the proposed development. Policy DP3 of the new NPPF sets out a series of key principles for creating well-designed places. Importantly, Policy DP3(3) now requires that 'substantial weight' is given to compliance with relevant development plan policies when assessing design. This is arguably a greater weighting than set out in the 2024 NPPF. Further, Policy DP3(3) retains an express requirement to refuse development that is of a design that conflicts with this policy or development plan policies. This express reference to refuse forms one of the matters identified as being capable of 'substantially outweighing the benefits' as set out at Policy S5(2). Whilst it is noted that Paragraph 11d(ii) of the 2024 NPPF refers to the test being that the harms 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh the benefits, Officers consider the new test of the harms needing to 'substantially outweighing' the benefits to be a marginally higher bar, but not to a degree that would require the committee to reconsider the proposals, given their clear design concerns.

Following careful review Officers do not consider Policies S5 and DP3 to weaken previous local and national requirements for well-designed places, therefore the resolution of the committee to refuse permission is not materially impacted by the new NPPF.

### *Heritage*

The new NPPF at Policy HE6(4) replaces the previous paragraph 215 'less than substantial harm' test with a more straightforward test of harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset. It remains that any such harm is to be weighted against the public benefits of a proposal. Officers conclude that this change does not alter the conclusions on heritage already set out in the Committee report.

### *Relationship with Other Regulatory Regimes*

Policy DM7 of the new NPPF largely follows its predecessor paragraph 201 of the 2024 NPPF, however it now expressly states that 'Matters which are controlled by separate regulatory regimes may, in the context of a particular development proposal, be a material consideration where they have land-use implications.' As such, the committee resolution referral to foul sewage capacity concerns in the refusal reason is not weakened or over-ridden by the new NPPF.

*Other matters of planning policy consideration*

Other planning policy considerations as detailed in the August 2026 committee report (such as affordable housing, highway matters, ecology, surface water drainage and residential amenities) remain consistent with the NPPF 2026. This includes the following NPPF 2026 policies:

- Housing need / affordable provision (HO7, HO13)
- Meeting the challenge of climate change (CC2, CC3)
- Making Effective Use of Land (L3)
- Achieving Well-Designed Places (DP3, DP4)
- Promoting Sustainable Transport (TR3, TR4, TR6, TR8)
- Promoting Health Communities (HC3, HC4, HC6)
- Pollution, public protection and security (P2, P3, P4, P5)
- Managing flood risk and coastal change (F4, F5, F7, F8)
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (N2, N3, N6)

Officers have therefore given due regard to the new material consideration of the NPPF (Aug 2026) read as a whole and are satisfied that that the committee's resolution to refuse remains consistent with the changes set within the NPPF 2026.

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| <b>Case Officer:</b> J Hawkes            | <b>Date:</b> 26/08/2026 |
| <b>Authorising Officer:</b> Adrian Smith | <b>Date:</b> 26/08/2026 |