

Appeal 6013775

Interested party comments

Appeal type	Planning
Appeal procedure	Written
Appeal site	Land to north of Warnham Lodge Farm, Mayes Lane, Warnham, RH12 3SG
Agent contact details	Clare Bartlett [REDACTED]
Local planning authority	Horsham District Council
Application number	DC/25/2100

Interested party 1

Comments

Objection to Planning Application DC/25/2100

The Parish Council writes to formally object to planning application DC/25/2100 on the following substantive grounds:

1. Conflict with Local and National Planning Policy

The proposed development sets an inappropriate precedent for new build in the open countryside and directly conflicts with both the adopted Local Plan and the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The Local Plan clearly seeks to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside by strictly controlling isolated or unjustified development. This proposal fails to demonstrate any exceptional circumstances that would justify a departure from these policies. Allowing such development would undermine the integrity of the planning framework and weaken future decision-making.

2. Lack of Demonstrable Need

There is no identified or evidenced local need for this form of development within the parish. The application does not provide a compelling case—such as essential rural worker accommodation or community benefit—that would outweigh the harm caused. In the absence of such justification, the proposal appears speculative and opportunistic.

3. Harm to Rural Character and Visual Impact

The development would result in significant and unacceptable harm to the rural character of the area. This site is part of an established open landscape, currently used for grazing, and contributes to the wider countryside setting.

Introducing built form in this location would:

- Urbanise an otherwise undeveloped rural area
- Disrupt long-established landscape character
- Be visually intrusive within the open countryside

This harm would be exacerbated by the fact that the land is not level, contrary to claims made within the application, increasing the visual

prominence of the development.

4. Highways and Access Concerns

Mayes Lane is unsuitable for the level and type of traffic that would be generated by this development. The lane is constrained and lacks the capacity to safely accommodate additional vehicle movements. This raises serious concerns regarding:

- Highway safety for existing users
- Increased traffic conflict on a narrow rural route
- Unsustainable access arrangements

The proposal therefore fails to meet basic transport and safety expectations.

5. Ecological Impact

The site is environmentally sensitive and supports biodiversity, including the presence of a rare orchid species. This is a material consideration that appears to have been inadequately addressed in the application.

In addition:

- The land has been used for grazing for approximately 40 years, contributing to its ecological value
- Existing drainage ditches have not been reinstated, raising concerns about water management and habitat degradation

The proposal risks irreversible harm to local ecology and does not demonstrate sufficient mitigation.

6. Inaccuracies in the Application

The application contains misleading or incorrect statements, including the assertion that the land is level. Such inaccuracies call into question the reliability of the supporting information and the overall assessment of impacts.

7. Precedent and Cumulative Harm

Approving this application would set a dangerous precedent for similar developments in the countryside. It would:

- Encourage further speculative proposals
- Gradually erode the rural character of the parish
- Undermine the ability of the Local Planning Authority to resist inappropriate development in future

The cumulative impact of such decisions would be significant and long-lasting.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above—policy conflict, lack of need, landscape harm, highway safety concerns, ecological impact, and the risk of harmful precedent—this application is fundamentally unsound and should be refused.

Supporting documents

No documents

Interested party 2

Comments

Warnham Parish Council does not accept the appellant's response to the Parish Council's concerns and objections to this planning application. The Parish Council fully supports Horsham District Council's refusal of the application and considers that the appeal should be dismissed.

The proposal is not supported by the parish development plan and is

contrary to the aims and principles of the Warnham Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council does not accept the suggestion that the Neighbourhood Plan is out of date in any way that would justify new built development on greenfield land in this location. On the contrary, this case demonstrates the importance of upholding the Neighbourhood Plan and its role in guiding appropriate development within the parish.

The appeal documents are also inaccurate in describing a bridleway. There is no bridleway at this location; rather, there is a public footpath running beside the field. This path is well used by local residents and visitors, and the rural character and amenity of this route should be given appropriate weight in the planning balance.

The proposed building has not been demonstrated to be sufficiently eco-friendly, exceptional, or of such significance as to justify a substantial new building in the countryside. The site is in an unsustainable location, and the proposal would amount to inappropriate built development outside the settlement boundary.

The field has historically been used for livestock grazing and haymaking since the 1800s and has not previously contained a permanent building. The site includes a natural stream from the water table, is not flat as stated in the original application, and contains orchid species and other biodiversity interests. These features reinforce the rural and ecological value of the land and weigh against the proposed development.

If this substantial building in the countryside were allowed, it would risk setting an undesirable precedent for similar proposals on other fields in the parish. Such an outcome would undermine confidence in the planning process and weaken the purpose of local and neighbourhood planning policies, which exist to direct development to appropriate and sustainable locations.

Supporting documents

No documents
