

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 08 September 2026 07:32:06 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
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 08/09/2026 7:32 AM.

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: CAMOMILE BARN EMMS LANE BROOKS GREEN

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Member of the Public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Design - Highway Access and Parking - Loss of General Amenity - Other - Overdevelopment - Privacy Light and Noise - Trees and Landscaping
Comments:	(1) Harm to Ancient Woodland and Other Habitat Loss The boundary of the site adjoins Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

recorded on the Ancient Woodland Inventory as reference ANCWO0122269. This is an irreplaceable habitat protected under NPPF paragraph 186(c), which states:

'Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists'.

There are no exceptional reasons in this case, in fact there are a number of respects why this development should not be approved from a habitat loss consideration alone, including:

The applicant proposes an inadequate buffer zone, the minimum recommended in the Standing Advice. However, the Standing Advice explicitly states:

'Where assessment shows other impacts are likely to extend beyond this distance, the proposal is likely to need a larger buffer zone'.

A larger buffer is warranted in this case because:

- Significant recreational pressure. 31 homes will generate approximately 70+ residents, plus visitors and pets, creating substantial pressure on the woodland edge
- The site is on Weald Clay with documented drainage issues; changes to surface water management could affect the woodland's hydrology.

The Standing Advice is clear on what buffer zones should comprise:

'A buffer zone should consist of semi-natural habitats such as: woodland; a mix of scrub, grassland, heathland and wetland'. And crucially 'You should not approve development proposals, including gardens, within a buffer zone'.

Also dog walkers, children, and residents will inevitably stray into the woodland itself causing damage to the habitat.

The Standing Advice identifies specific indirect effects that can cause deterioration of ancient woodland. The following will all occur if this development proceeds:

- Increasing disturbance to wildlife from additional people and traffic caused by 31 homes = 70+ residents + over 90 vehicle movements daily
 - Increasing damaging activities like domestic pets' caused by Cats preying wildlife; dogs disturbing ground-nesting birds and
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dormice

- Increasing light and air pollution caused by Street lighting, car emissions, changed drainage patterns

NPPF paragraph 186(c) protects ancient woodland from deterioration, not just direct loss. The cumulative indirect effects from 31 homes will cause deterioration of this irreplaceable habitat over time.

(2) The Removal of Important Hedges

The development is reliant on removal of the hedgerow which runs along the edge of the site area at the proposed access onto Chapel Road. Without the removal of this hedge it will not be possible provide safe traffic movement in and out of the proposed development.

This will destroy the flora and fauna and the established natural but diminishing habitat which is so important to wildlife.

This hedge is also an important contributor to drainage management and flood prevention because it acts as a buffer holding soil on the land which would otherwise enter the drains.

The hedge also contributes to the overall rural character of the village.

(3) Village Character, Listed Buildings and Heritage Impact

The Neighbourhood Plan's Landscape Character Assessment describes the fields north and west of the village as 'important small pastoral fields' that provide important green gaps that contribute to a settlement with rural character and provides a transition to the wider countryside.'

Which is precisely what this field does. It is the green buffer between the village centre and open countryside. Building here would:

- destroy this green gap entirely
- a development of this size in this location will seriously harm the setting of listed buildings in close proximity, including Little Slaughterford, Bennetts, Herons Reach and the Queen's Head which is a vital community asset.

(4) Loss of Rural Amenity

As stated above the Neighbourhood Plan's Landscape Character Assessment describes the fields north and west of the village as 'important small pastoral fields'.

The proposed housing development will destroy the current Rural Amenity which is created by the field with grazing animals adjacent to historic buildings.

(5) Protected Species will be Affected

Dormice are present in hedgerows connecting to the woodland. A Dormouse Survey Report (2025) confirms the presence of hazel dormice, a European Protected Species.

In addition the HDC Ecology Officer has concerns regarding the presence of Bats, which are another European Protected Species, and has requested that a survey be undertaken.

Furthermore there are believed to be rare insects including ants on the site, their presence should be thoroughly investigated, and due regard given to the general biodiversity duty to care for nature.

Destroying any wildlife habitat is a serious concern and the continuing loss of hedgerows, woodland and open grass areas is causing significant damage to our important ecology.

Kind regards

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