

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 31 August 2026 17:32:30 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 31/08/2026 5:32 PM.

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: 5 Muntham Drive Barns Green West Sussex

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Design - Highway Access and Parking - Loss of General Amenity - Overdevelopment - Trees and Landscaping
Comments:	I object to the development of the field south of Muntham Drive on the following grounds: 1) Following lengthy consultation, in the referendum on the Itchingfield and Barns Green Neighbourhood Development Plan

held on 4th September 2025, less than a year ago, residents voted by an overwhelming majority (92.05%) for Horsham District Council to 'use the Neighbourhood Plan for Itchingfield Parish to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area'. This proposed site was expressly rejected through the Made Itchingfield and Barns Green Neighbourhood Development Plan which carries full statutory weight under NPPF30. It does propose other sites, such as at the previous Itchingfield School, now a vacant, brownfield site. Barns Green has already accommodated substantial growth in recent years (Ashmiles, Sumners Fields, and other smaller developments). Significantly, the Government's Planning and Infrastructure Bill guidance states what should be built and where 'should be shaped by local communities'.

2) The proposed area lies outside the current 'built up area boundary' (BUAB) and is defined as 'countryside'. To build on this would contravene Policy 26 of the HDC local plan. In the draft Local Plan (2025-2040), Horsham District Council has arbitrarily redrawn the BUAB of Barns Green to include this field without consultation with the local community and therefore in contravention of National Planning Policy Framework 15 which requires planning authorities to shape places 'in a way that reflects local needs and community preferences.' A 'built up area boundary' is defined as the line that separates the built up area from the countryside. Currently Chapel Lane provides an 'existing defensible boundary' to the village (as does the Sumners Ponds campsite for the new Sumners Ponds development). The fields west of that line, including this field, are countryside and there have been no applications approved to build on them. There would no longer be an 'existing defensible boundary' to the west of the village if this development were permitted.

3) There is no evidence of local demand for more of this type of housing in Barns Green. For the almost complete Sumners Fields site in the village, Sigma Homes' website is only showing that 20 of its 32 houses have been sold and even local housing associations were not able to afford to buy their 'affordable housing' which lies vacant. There is no agreed provider identified for the Shanly Homes 'affordable homes' therefore they are likely to have the same fate. Furthermore, the draft HDC Local plan only squeezes 25 homes onto the BRG2 site. Shanly Homes' suggested 31 homes is an unjustified 24% increase. Of these 31 homes, 72% are proposed as one and two-bedroomed units although the housing register shows that 61% of listed demand is for three and four-bedroomed homes. Thus the 'need' determined by the Standard Method is resulting in destructive and unwanted development, out of character with its surroundings.

4) Flooding. Contrary to the GPA3 Assessment, the proposed site is not 'broadly flat' as stated. It is on a slope of clay based soil which does not drain easily. Already, in times of heavy rain, a great deal of surface water runs down the fields north of

Smugglers Lane onto Chapel Lane. The village shop was badly damaged by flood water a few years ago and the drains are not able to cope with the current surface run off during heavy rainfall (see attached photograph showing water gushing out of the field onto Chapel Road). Building on the proposed field would increase the likelihood of flooding on adjacent housing, including the local shop and the following listed buildings: Bennetts, Blacksmith's Cottage, The Queen's Head and Heron's Reach (at the village shop). The IAWPA flood risk assessment shows that on 9.2.26, Well 2 was full (water was at 0.00m i.e. ground level) so that all rainwater was running off the surface and onto Chapel Road. This already discharges into the existing, overwhelmed and inadequate foul sewage network. Covering the area with buildings and roads will obviously make this worse.

5) Inadequate Infrastructure Provision.

a) There are already issues with the management of waste water with sewage regularly leaking onto roadside verges in Barns Green in periods of high rainwater i.e. there is not sufficient capacity in the existing local infrastructure to meet the current requirements, never mind adding 31 further dwellings arising from the proposed new development in Barns Green and a further possible 1000 homes in Southwater. To add insult to injury, Southern Water is now proposing to close their Itchingfield Wastewater Treatment Works and to transfer additional sewage to the already overwhelmed Barns Green Wastewater Treatment Works. Southern Water has been unable to confirm capacity, even for current usage. This situation is untenable and should be fully assessed before any planning decision is reached so that management of wastewater at Barns Green can be increased to meet both current and future needs.

b) Inadequate Electrical Infrastructure. The nearby development under construction (Sumners Fields) has had to put a number of houses onto a backup diesel generator. This indicates that there is insufficient capacity to meet current demand, never mind an additional 31 houses.

c) Access to the site would increase congestion and the risk of accidents. From the only possible access on Chapel Road, the sight lines are poor and the road is narrow. For their businesses to be viable, it is vital that it is possible for customers to park cars on the road at the Queen's Head and Village Shop, opposite the proposed entrance to the development. At peak times (school drop off and pick up), there are many taxis taking the 120 pupils to and from Muntham House School as well as cars transporting some of the 130 pupils at the village school and the children at the local playgroup. This development would increase traffic levels further with the associated risks and congestion.

d) The Shanly Homes application relies on a significant shift away from private car use. Barns Green has almost non-existent public transport. The nearest train station (Christ's Hospital) is 3.7km away and there is a very minimal bus service e.g. only two buses on a Tuesday at 07.00 and at 16.57. This is inadequate and

unreliable transport provision for access to work, services such as GPs, hospitals, libraries and larger shops. There are no evening services at all and nothing at weekends. Thus, every house in the village requires access to at least one car, so both from the perspective of provision of parking spaces and access via local roads, this development would have detrimental, cumulative impacts on our already fragile road network

6) Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment.

a) We need to preserve and enhance our historic environment through positive management of development affecting designated heritage assets and their settings. Currently the following listed buildings: Bennetts, Blacksmith's Cottage, The Queen's Head and Heron's Reach, have rural outlooks. The proposed development would negatively affect that. Bennetts is surrounded by fields on two sides and long gardens and trees separate the housing on the Muntham Drive side. In addition, as it has no foundations, there is a high risk of serious structural damage to Bennetts (Grade 2, UID: 1286000) from heavy site traffic from the proposed Shanly Homes development. Building two-storey housing to the west of Bennetts would be very intrusive as it would be sited uphill from this historical building and would therefore dominate the skyline and ruin its rural outlook.

b) HDC's Planning Framework Policy 34 states that 'development should reinforce the special character' of the village. Any modern housing, urban in design, would be out of character with the listed buildings that surround the site and form the hub of the community i.e. the pub, the shop.

c) The southern boundary of the proposed site is Smugglers Way, a historic footpath used by smugglers hundreds of years ago and edged by ancient hedgerow. The National Planning Policy Framework states development causing loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats 'should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons'. There are sensitive species (dormice) present, drainage sensitivities (see Point 4 above) and increased recreational pressure is anticipated. (Natural England's Standing Advice). Site access construction indicates removal of ancient hedgerow, destroying the natural habitat.

This development would irretrievably damage this historic environment.

7) Barns Green is a 'medium village' with 'a moderate level of services, facilities and community networks.' Significantly increasing the population of the village would put strain on these. Conversely, increasing the level of services would change the nature of the village.

In conclusion, this application should be refused because:

1. The site is not included in the Made Itchingfield and Barns Green Neighbourhood Development Plan, which was supported by 92.05% of residents in September 2025.
 2. It would destroy the 'existing defensible boundary' on the west
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of the village.

3. There is no evidence of local demand for more housing.

4. The area is susceptible to flooding, impacting on adjacent buildings.

5. There is inadequate waste water, electricity, road safety and public transport infrastructure to support this development.

6. This development would cause irretrievable damage to heritage assets, listed buildings, particularly Bennetts, and ancient hedgerow.

7. The development would cause unacceptable change to the historical character of the village centre.

Kind regards

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