



Horsham District Council
Parkside
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 1RL

Our ref: 21657
Date: 08 September 2026

For the attention of: Alice Johnson

Application ref: DC/26/0933
Location: Land Between Muntham Drive and Smugglers' Lane Chapel Road Barns Green West Sussex
Proposal/Description: Erection of 31 dwellings with access from Chapel Road including roads, parking and open space

Thank you for consulting with Place Services on the above Full planning application. This letter sets out our consultation response on the landscape impact of the application and how the proposal relates and responds to the landscape setting and context of the site.

Summary

Not supportive on landscape grounds	☐
No landscape objection, subject to attached recommendations and/or conditions	☐
Further information required prior to determination	☒
No landscape comments / does not wish to comment	☐

1.0. Site Context

- 1.1. The Site is located to the north of Barns Green village, with Muntham Drive forming the north-eastern boundary and Chapel Road forming the south-eastern boundary. Barns Green village hall, the Sports and Social Club and the playing fields are located north of the Site. The Site itself comprises a singular grassland parcel, enclosed by surrounding trees and vegetation. Public right of way (PRoW) Bridleway ITC-1600 'Smugglers Lane' follows the south-western and north-western site boundaries.
- 1.2. A planning application under reference DC/25/2057 was refused in August 2026 and is located in the parcel to the south of the Site.



2.0. Planning Policy Context

Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015)

- 2.1. The Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) (HDPF) Proposals Maps identifies the site as being located outside the defined built-up area boundary and therefore designated as countryside. The following policies are considered relevant:
- Policy 26: Countryside Protection
 - Policy 25: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
 - Policy 31: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040 Regulation 19

- 2.2. As of January 2026, the Horsham District Local Plan (Regulation 19) is 'submitted' and is regarded as relevant. The site is subject to draft allocation BGR1 within Strategic Policy HA6: Barns Green Housing Allocations.
- 2.3. The following sites are allocated, as shown on the Policies Map, for the provision of at least 95 homes:
- BGR2: Land South of Muntham Drive, 1.85 hectares (25 homes)
- 2.4. In addition to meeting national and Local Plan requirements, development will be supported where proposals:
- Shall be carefully sited and include an appropriate buffer from adjacent ancient woodland; and;
 - Ensure that appropriate regard is had to the impact on the adjacent Grade II Listed Buildings (The Queens Head Public House, Blacksmiths Cottage and Bennetts).
- 2.5. Further Policies include:
- Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character.
 - Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection.
 - Strategic Policy 16: Protected Landscapes.
 - Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity.
 - Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles.

Barns Green and Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan (2014-2031)

- 2.6. The Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan was formally made on 08 October 2025 and covers Barns Green including the site. The following policies are considered relevant: Policy 1 - Green Infrastructure conservation; Policy 3 - Heritage Assets and Itchingfield Conservation Area; Policy 5 - Protection of Green Infrastructure; Policy 12 - Design parameters.

3.0. Review of the LVIA:

- 3.1. The application has been accompanied by the submission of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) undertaken by ACD Environmental in June 2026.
- 3.2. The LVIA has broadly being undertaken in accordance with the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (3rd edition) (GLVIA3) and are satisfied with the Methodology included within Appendix A.

Landscape Character

- 3.3. Itchingfield Landscape Character Assessment
- 3.4. Capacity Assessment
- 3.5. We are disappointed to note the omission of utilising TGN 02/21 to assess value outside of designation. Notwithstanding this, we note reference made to individual landscape features which contribute towards the value of the site including hedgerows, trees, and designated ancient woodland on the site boundaries.
- 3.6. An Overall Landscape Effects table should have been submitted alongside the assessment, similarly to Table 2 produced for Visual Effects. This would provide clarity on the assessed judgements for each of the landscape receptors assessed within the LVIA.
- 3.7. Effects are produced for The Site as a landscape receptor, however the LVIA omits relevant Landscape Character Areas (LCA) as separate receptors. LCAs are assessed as separate receptors because landscape effects relate to changes in the character of the wider landscape rather than solely the Site itself. This ensures that any effects on the defining characteristics and qualities of the surrounding landscape are appropriately identified and evaluated.
- 3.8. The assessment concludes a **moderate adverse** effect on The Site. Given the major alteration to the perceived character of this undeveloped site, we may consider that the overall landscape effects on the Site would be **major-moderate** adverse. However, where our judgements may differ these are not deemed substantial.

Visual Effects

- 3.9. The viewpoints included within Figure 4 are considered representative of potential viewpoints towards the development site.
- 3.10. Based on the visual effects included within Table 2, we largely agree with the judgements provided.
- 3.11. The submitted photography represents the importance of bolstering the existing site boundaries with additional planting, to improve the condition of these vegetated boundaries and provide further screening of the proposed development.

4.0. Review of Proposals:

- 4.1. Overall, we do not disagree with the principle of development within this site, given the draft allocation BGR2 and the physically and visually enclosed nature of the site adjacent to the settlement edge.
- 4.2. We consider the overall layout could be improved by fronting dwellings on to the outer boundaries of the site. This would enhance the natural surveillance of the PRowS and Muntham Drive, provide an attractive public space around the perimeter, improve the integration with the surrounding tree belts, reduce security concerns, allow for better wildlife connections and provide further opportunities for pedestrian connections to the perimeter PRowS.
- 4.3. However, based on the current layout; where rear gardens meet the perimeter boundaries where established vegetation is located, we advise that cleft post and rail fencing is proposed instead of close-board fencing to provide a more rustic appearance, provide stronger habitat permeability and also soften the appearance of a new development within the countryside.
- 4.4. The Ancient Woodland is located in the south-western corner of the Site. The Tree Constraints Plan should include the 15m buffer zone around the Ancient Woodland, to demonstrate that this has been considered within the proposals and the protection strategy.
- 4.5. Limited information has been provided on the planting of the SuDS basins, however, we advise that these are planted with a variety of species to provide biodiversity and an interest at the entrance to the scheme. Planting should be located around the headwalls of the basins.
- 4.6. Limited public open space (POS) is provided within the scheme. We therefore advise that some of the basins are multifunctional to allow public use of these spaces. The gradients of the basins should not exceed 1:3, and should be 1:4 or include steps in places for access.
- 4.7. Precast concrete headwalls with galvanised railings should not be used within the basins, in the interest of visual amenity. We advise an alternative headwall is used.
- 4.8. The chestnut rail fencing at the site entrance shown on Hard Landscaping Proposals (Dwg no. SH25014 12 Sheet 4) is proposed as 1.8m. We consider that 1.8m high fencing to be excessive in this location, and a 1.2m high fence would be adequate.
- 4.9. The scheme would benefit from a pedestrian access point on to one of the PRowS which follow two of the site boundaries, between Plots 6 and 7.

5.0. Summary

- 5.1. From a landscape perspective, we judge there is capacity for development within the site. We have an overall preference for the dwellings to front on to the outer perimeter of the site, for the reasons listed above. We advise that the above recommendations are considered.
- 5.2. Further soft landscaping and landscape management information is required, however this can be secured by condition.

6.0. Recommended Condition(s):

- 6.1. If minded for approval, we would recommend the following conditions for your consideration:

ACTION REQUIRED PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT: SOFT LANDSCAPING SCHEME.

No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of soft landscaping for the site, which shall include any proposed changes in ground levels and also accurately identify spread, girth and species of all existing trees, shrubs and hedgerows on the site and indicate any to be retained, together with measures for their protection which shall comply with the recommendations set out in the British Standards Institute publication BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction.

The soft landscaping plan should include plant species, number, density, location and sizes of the proposed planting. The planting specification should provide details of tree planting pits, green roofs, planting preparation and establishment operations. We would recommend an alternative to plastic guards, such as the use of perimeter protective fencing where appropriate, or guards manufactured from 100% biodegradable materials.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area. This condition is required to be agreed prior to the commencement of any development to ensure matters of tree and hedgerow protection are secured early to ensure avoidance of damage or loss due to the development and/or its construction. If agreement was sought at any later stage, there is an unacceptable risk of loss and damage to important trees and hedgerow that would result in harm to amenity.

ACTION REQUIRED PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT: LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN (LMP)

No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority a landscape management plan for a minimum of 5 years. This should include:

- a) Drawing/s showing the extent of the LMP i.e. only showing the areas to which the LMP applies, areas of private ownership should be excluded.
- b) Written Specification detailing:
 - All operation and procedures for soft landscape areas; inspection, watering, pruning, cutting, mowing, clearance and removal of arisings and litter, removal of temporary items (fencing, guards and stakes) and replacement of failed planting.
 - All operations and procedures for hard landscape areas; inspection, sweeping, clearing of accumulated vegetative material and litter, maintaining edges, and painted or finished surfaces.
 - Furniture (Bins, Benches and Signage) and Play Equipment.
 - All operations and procedures for soft landscaping to SuDS features; inspection of linear drains, basins and swales, removal of unwanted vegetative material and litter, including inlets and outlets.
- c) Maintenance task table which explains the maintenance duties across the site in both chronological and systematic order.
- d) Mechanism for monitoring and review of the management plan and operations.

Reason - To support plant establishment and ensure appropriate management is carried out and to maintain functionality and visual aesthetic.

Please contact us if you have any queries in relation to this advice.

Place Services – Landscape Team

Email: landscape@essex.gov.uk



This advice has been provided by Place Services on behalf of Horsham District Council.

Please note:

This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.

We are unable to respond directly to applicants/agents or other interested parties. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant/agent or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer at the relevant LPA, who will seek further advice from us where appropriate.



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