

Valewood
Valewood Lane
Barns Green
West Sussex
RH13 0QJ

24 January 2026

Alice Johnson, Planning Officer Horsham District Council, Parkside, Chart Way
Horsham RH12 1RL

By email to: planning@horsham.gov.uk Reference: DC/25/2057

Dear Ms Johnson,

**REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION – APPLICATION DC/25/2057 Land North of
Little Slaughterford, Chapel Road, Barns Green**

I am writing as a local resident who has submitted a detailed objection to the above application. Having reviewed the statutory consultee responses now available on the planning portal, I have several questions that I believe require clarification before this application can properly be determined.

I would be grateful if you could address the following matters.

1. HOUSING OFFICERS' CONCERNS

The consultation response from Housing Officers dated 15 January 2026 states:

"Housing Officers cannot support this site until reassurance can be provided that delivery is possible, and the affordable tenure is reconsidered."

Specific concerns raised include:

- The affordable housing mix is heavily weighted towards 2-bedroom units (76%) when 61% of identified need is for 3-4 bedroom homes
- Deliverability concerns due to the scheme's size and location
- Risk of the applicant seeking a commuted sum instead of on-site provision

My questions:

a) Will the applicant be required to address these concerns before the application is determined?

b) If the Housing Officers' concerns are not resolved, how will this be weighted in the planning balance?

c) Has the applicant engaged with any Registered Provider to confirm deliverability?

2. SOUTHERN WATER'S RESPONSE – DOWNSTREAM CAPACITY

Southern Water's response dated 22 January 2026 confirms capacity at the immediate connection point (manhole TQ12265901). However, the response does not address:

- The **43 sewage overflow events totalling 411 hours** recorded in Barns Green in 2022
- **Downstream network capacity** beyond the connection point
- **Cumulative impact** from Sumners Fields (32 homes) and Neighbourhood Plan allocations (50+ homes)

My questions:

a) Will the Council seek further clarification from Southern Water regarding downstream network capacity and the documented overflow events?

b) Is it the Council's position that capacity at the connection point is sufficient to demonstrate the network can accommodate this development without exacerbating overflow problems?

c) How will the cumulative impact of multiple developments in Barns Green be assessed?

3. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH – AIR QUALITY ERRORS

The Environmental Health response dated 21 January 2026 identifies significant errors in the Air Quality Assessment:

- Inconsistent traffic figures (341 vs 329)
- Inaccurate Emissions Factor Toolkit outputs
- Incorrect damage cost calculations

Environmental Health has requested corrected figures.

My questions:

a) Will determination be deferred until accurate air quality information is provided?

b) Will the corrected figures be subject to public consultation, or will they be accepted without further opportunity for comment?

4. ANCIENT WOODLAND – APPLICATION OF STANDING ADVICE

Natural England has confirmed to me in writing that they have not been consulted on this application, but that their Standing Advice on ancient woodland "is a material consideration in determining applications in the same way as any bespoke advice we provide."

The Standing Advice states that buffer zones should comprise "semi-natural habitats" and that LPAs "should not approve development proposals, including gardens, within a buffer zone." Yet the applicant proposes a permanent footpath through the 15-metre buffer.

My questions:

- a) How does the Council intend to apply Natural England's Standing Advice to this application?
- b) Does the Council accept that a maintained footpath is not a "semi-natural habitat" as required by the Standing Advice?
- c) Will the applicant be required to remove the footpath from the buffer zone or provide a larger buffer?

5. ELECTRICITY GRID CAPACITY

The application proposes all-electric heating (Air Source Heat Pumps) for 68 homes, yet no consultation with UK Power Networks has been undertaken.

I understand that the recent Sumners Fields development in Barns Green has required backup generation due to grid constraints.

My question:

- a) Will the Council consult UK Power Networks to confirm grid capacity before determination?

6. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN CONFLICT

The Barns Green and Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan was made on 8 October 2025 – less than four months ago. The Plan allocates specific sites for housing; this site was deliberately excluded.

NPPF paragraph 14 states that where a neighbourhood plan is less than five years old and allocates sites for housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

My question:

- a) How does the Council intend to apply NPPF paragraph 14 to this application, given the recently-made Neighbourhood Plan?

7. TIMING

Given the outstanding matters above, I am concerned that this application may be brought to committee before all necessary information is available.

My question:

a) Can you confirm that no committee date will be set until:

- Housing Officers' concerns are addressed
- Southern Water has clarified downstream capacity
- The Air Quality Assessment is corrected
- UK Power Networks has confirmed grid capacity

SUMMARY

I recognise that you will receive many representations on this application and that your time is limited. However, the matters I have raised are not minor technicalities – they go to the heart of whether this development can be accommodated without unacceptable harm.

The Council's own Housing Officers do not support this application. Southern Water has not addressed the documented sewage problems. The Air Quality Assessment contains acknowledged errors. The proposed footpath through the ancient woodland buffer contradicts Natural England's Standing Advice. These are significant deficiencies that must be resolved before a proper assessment can be made.

I would be grateful for a response at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]