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From: [REDACTED]
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To: Planning
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Categories: Comments Received

[REDACTED]
The Pump House
Chapel Rd
Barns Grn
RH13 0PS

Objection to the Development Application by Shanly Homes

I wish to formally object to this development application for the following reasons.

The proposed development is **not one of the sites identified for development in the Neighbourhood Plan** and does not appear to address proven local housing need in an appropriate or sustainable manner.

Furthermore, this is a **speculative housing development** in a location where such development is not essential or appropriate. It would result in the urbanisation of a rural, greenfield site and the permanent loss of countryside, contrary to the principles and protections of the relevant **Countryside Policy**.

The proposed development would also have a significant impact on the character and functioning of the village. In particular, the proposed road layout and associated increase in traffic could jeopardise the viability and accessibility of the **community pub, village shop and post office**. These facilities are particularly important to elderly residents, given the limited public transport available in the area.

There are also substantial environmental concerns. The development would result in the loss of important habitats, including ancient hedgerows and potentially affect ancient woodland. These features are not only valuable for biodiversity and wildlife but also play an important role in retaining and slowing surface-water runoff.

Of particular concern is the **already serious problem of surface-water flooding and sewage infrastructure** in the area. The additional development would place further pressure on infrastructure that is already experiencing significant problems. Existing sewage overflows from the **Barns Green sewage treatment works** are already threatening the River Ardur Restoration Project. Increasing the number of properties connected to an already constrained system risks exacerbating these damaging discharges and associated pollution.

For these reasons, I strongly object to the application on the following grounds:

- **Sewage and water pollution:** Discharge of sewage into the stream from sewage works which are understood to be operating at or beyond the capacity limit stated by Southern Water. The additional development would place further pressure on this already inadequate system.

- **Flooding and surface-water runoff:** The development would increase roadway surface water and other runoff and is likely to exacerbate the existing, serious and recurring flooding problems in the area.
- **Loss of ancient hedgerows:** The proposed removal of ancient hedgerows would result in the loss of important wildlife habitat. These hedgerows also help to retain and slow surface-water runoff and therefore have an important environmental and drainage function.
- **Harm to ancient woodland and other habitats:** The development risks causing significant harm to ancient woodland and other established habitats, resulting in an unacceptable loss of biodiversity and ecological value.
- **Inadequate infrastructure:** There are serious concerns regarding the capacity of existing infrastructure, including electricity supply. The fact that a generator is required to supply Sumners Fields demonstrates the limitations of the existing infrastructure and raises questions about whether it can adequately support further development.
- **Traffic generation and parking:** The additional traffic generated by the development would have a significant impact on Chapel Road, which is already heavy. The cumulative impact of additional traffic, together with increased parking pressure, is a significant concern.
- **Limited public transport:** The village has limited public transport provision. This is particularly important for elderly and less mobile residents who rely on local facilities within the village. Additional development without adequate transport provision risks increasing car dependency and placing further pressure on existing village amenities.
- **Village character, heritage and listed buildings:** The development would adversely affect the character and setting of the village, including the setting of listed buildings and other heritage assets. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the pastoral fields in this area as important to the character and appearance of the village. Developing this site would fundamentally alter that established relationship between the village, its historic buildings and the surrounding countryside.
- **Loss of rural amenity:** This development would result in a permanent and harmful urbanisation of this setting.
- **Over-development, inappropriate design and excessive density:** The scale, height and density of the proposed housing are inappropriate for this rural village location. The imposing height of the proposed houses and the overall density would introduce an urban form of development that is fundamentally out of keeping with the existing character of the village.
- **Housing mix and deliverability:** There are concerns regarding whether the proposed housing mix is appropriate which it currently is not.
- **Conflict with Countryside Policy:** The site lies **outside the Built-up Area Boundary (BUAB)** and is defined as **Countryside**. Development in such locations should only be permitted where it is essential and appropriate to that countryside location. This speculative housing development does not meet that requirement and would instead result in the unnecessary loss and urbanisation of protected rural land.

Taken together, these issues demonstrate that the proposed development would cause significant and unacceptable harm to the village, its rural character, heritage, biodiversity, drainage and infrastructure.

The proposal is contrary to the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan and relevant Countryside Policy, would result in the unnecessary loss of an important greenfield site, and would place additional pressure on already inadequate sewage, drainage, transport and utility infrastructure.

For all of these reasons, I respectfully request that the Planning Authority refuse this application.

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