

Submitter:

[REDACTED]

South Cottage, Chapel Road, Barns Green, West Sussex, RH13 0PR

[REDACTED]

Concerning application:

DC/26/0933

Erection of 31 dwellings with access from Chapel Road including roads, parking and open space

Introduction

Itchingfield Parish is not against development in principle, as evinced by it's production of a Neighbourhood Plan, which showed a remarkable voting turnout, and a decisive referendum 'Yes' vote.

However, it cannot be ignored that the development proposed by Shanly in DC/26/0933 is contiguous with the site of, and shares a great many negative characteristics with, DC/25/2057, which was refused by HDC Planning Committee in August 2026.

It is therefore no surprise that I submit this representation to roundly **object** to the proposal put forward in DC/26/0933. Following below, I enumerate and detail my current points of objection specific to this proposal, and call on HDC to REFUSE the Application.

Please note that:

- the comments listed below are not in order of severity/importance
- I reserve the right to provide further, or updated comments in addition, in view of the fact that important information is lacking due to the absence or incompleteness of response from some statutory or customary and relevant consultees

Comments

#	Reason for comments	Comments
01	Planning Policy Design Overdevelopment	Housing density of proposed development, as seen in Site Layout (A1) is not commensurate with that of surrounding, abutting land. - To the WNW, no dwellings are present - To the WSW, no dwellings are present - To the ESE, housing is present but at lower density than proposed site layout - To the E, housing is present but at lower density than proposed site layout - the ENE, no dwellings are present For the layout proposal to comply with Policy as regards density of housing, it would need to substantially lower the number of dwellings in the site area to bring the design into conformance with surrounding housing.
02	Planning Policy Design Loss of General Amenity Overdevelopment	Housing style of the proposed development is more in keeping with urban developments than is fitting for a rural context. Barns Green is a beautiful Sussex village, counting among housing in the vicinity of the site several listed buildings which exemplify the heritage assets imparting character, and informing the structure of the village. It is vital that we protect the village from a lacklustre housing development which is both out of proportion with, and out of keeping with, the existing development in the vicinity. The housing designs proposed in the Application pay no mind to the local vernacular, and would degrade the overall local aesthetic, compounding the other damaging effects that a development on this site would have on the rural aspect. In this regard, they expressly conflict with the provisions of the Neighbourhood Plan as regard design criteria.

03	Planning Policy Design	In the Contextual Site Layout, the field to the WSW of DC/26/0933 is shown as occupied by the configuration proposed in application of DC/25/2057. The latter has been refused, therefore showing that site occupied as if it were already built does NOT provide an accurate view of context. This is therefore a misleading article of evidence, and should be disregarded and replaced with an accurate representation based on known / current site dispositions with the prospective layout for DC/26/0933 shown. To do otherwise does not accurately inform decision based on current facts.
04	Planning Policy Highway Access and Parking	In the Contextual Site Layout, the road design to the S of DC/26/0933 is shown as modified by the configuration proposed in application of DC/25/2057. The latter has been refused, therefore showing that road layout as if DC/25/2057 were already completed does NOT provide an accurate view of context. This is therefore a misleading article of evidence, and should be disregarded and replaced with an accurate representation based on known / current site dispositions with the prospective layout for DC/26/0933 shown. To do otherwise does not accurately inform decision based on current facts.
05	Planning Policy	Horsham District Council has, in it's as-yet-not made Local Plan redrawn the Built-Up-Area-Boundary to (conveniently for this Application) include the land running Westwards of Chapel Road and containing the sites of DC/25/2057 & DC/26/0933). These sites have not yet been developed so the Built Up Area Boundary, identified in this way, is incompatible with reality. The site does not have Planning permission, nor has development commenced. The site is not bounded to it's South or WNW by housing or other buildings. To it's East and SE lay tracts of the Built Up Area Boundary <i>de facto</i>. The site identified for DC/26/0933 is therefore irrefutably adjacent

		to and outwith the Built-Up Area Boundary, both by legal definition, and by the provision of the currently-in-force version of the Local Plan for Horsham District. The site is, by that measure 'countryside' and development there would contravene Policy 26 of the made HDC Local Plan. The revised version of the BUAB posited in the HDC Local Plan currently pending Inspection is firmly disputed for the same reasons as above.
06	Highway Access and Parking	The implied increase in vehicle movements - an estimated differential of 90 per day attributable to the addition of the proposed site is reasonable, perhaps even conservative - will create a disproportionate increase in traffic joining and leaving Chapel Road, a main thoroughfare of Barns Green, during the commute periods especially. The Application shows the access to the site rather simplistically. Viewing the Design & Access Statement, Part 1, p13 shows the proposed access onto / off the site as bounded by trees. In this part of Chapel Road, this will result in poor visibility of traffic running along Chapel Road, making for dangerous egress of vehicles from the site onto Chapel Road. It will complicate traffic flow, create traffic jams to the centre of the village, and overuse a road which was not designed for this additional entrance point, which sits also directly opposite the car park for the Queen's Head Public House, and the driveway for Blacksmith's Cottage. Vehicles are routinely parked along the edge of Chapel Road along this section, so an access from the proposed development will create a blind-spot and a pinch point, with the potential for serious road safety issues, in addition to congestion instead of a free-flowing road.
07	Infrastructure & Services	This proposed development is incompatible with the current infrastructure provisions for Barns Green. These are insufficient, strained or failing on several counts. The sewage works capacity serving the community is clearly not fit for purpose. Though Southern Water had previously asserted to the contrary, when asked recently about this, they were 'unable to confirm' sufficient capacity. SW has given numerous and conflicting statement, their performance as a service provider is very much in question, and we have seen recent legal proceedings which raise further

		questions as to the degree of confidence which can be accorded to any statements they make, and their fitness and competency as a service provider. Barns Green sewage treatment works routinely pollutes the Adur.
08	Infrastructure & Services	There is reason to believe that the extant electricity supply infrastructure is insufficient for this proposed development. The recently-built Sumner's Fields development, as yet far from fully-occupied, nevertheless had to supply early-occupied houses from temporary generators for many months, before the capacity of the electricity supply was augmented. I have not seen any evidence to suggest that this upgrade was anything but the minimum required to service the additional houses. Given the significant lead time before such a correction was made, what confidence should we (or prospective owners of housing on DC/26/0933) have, that such a new development would be adequately supplied (and not put the stability of supply of existing housing at risk)?
09	Highway Access and Parking Infrastructure & Services Climate, Sustainability & Natural Environment Privacy Light and Noise	The village is served by an infrequent, unreliable and not fit-for-purpose bus provision. It is in no way suitable for anyone wishing to commute to and from Horsham for work for the above reasons. Consequently, any new residents of the village can only think in terms of a car as a mode of transport for day to day activity. The increase in vehicle count will have a commensurate increasing impact on Highway maintenance (capacity vastly exceeded for years due to inadequate prioritisation of funding), traffic volume and emissions (fumes, noise pollution).
10	Design Highway Access and Parking Other	The proposed development will increase the risk, frequency and severity impact of flooding, as a result of run-off from the development. The additional building will deplete the surface area of permeable ground into which excessive rainwater may be absorbed, with roadways guiding water towards Chapel Road. This already has a tendency to flood during rains near the proposed location of the access to the site, drains often overwhelmed due to inadequate maintenance passes by WSCC, with water then shedding downhill, towards the Village Shop,

		which has suffered many instances of flooding as a consequence.
11	Planning Policy	Under the current (in-force) Local Plan and most recent SHELAA, and the recently-made Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan, the site is deemed undevelopable. The INP was endorsed by HDC, which acknowledged that the NP 'carries full weight as part of the development plan for this part of the district'. Policy elements in both of these documents are relevant to this Application, and consistent with it being refused. Public response to the proposal of the site during the Call for Sites phase of the Neighbourhood Plan process was emphatically negative. It is, by any reasonable measure, a patently unsuitable and unwelcome location for a development site.
12	Planning Policy Overdevelopment	The proposed development implies a dwellings count which is out of kilter with the (as-yet-not-made) Local Plan, which allocates 25 homes to this site. The Application shows 31 homes. This equates to a 24% increase vs the (incipient & subject to Inspection) LP allocation. Addition of this surge in housing to the historic core of the village and Parish would be a huge and sudden change, subsequent to the addition of the most recent 2 developments of a comparable size in the Parish. The Housing Register shows demand is for 61% of housing as 3-4 bedroom family homes. The proposed affordable housing is 72% 1 & 2 bedroom properties. These do not tally and would create an imbalance and not serve any (alleged) need. There is recent precedent locally of developers being unable to deliver on AH commitments made in the Application phase due to collapsing agreements. There is no indication of an agreed provider to broker/manage affordable homes on this Application plan. The above bring into question the validity of the currently-pitched AH element of the proposals shown in the Application - both in the question of suitability and deliverability. We are also witness to the most recent local development in Barns

		Green having the majority of properties unsold after months of being on the market. The 'need' determined by the Standard Method, combined with the tilted balance, is devolving to wasteful, destructive, pointless and unwanted development in rural communities. This is not a fate I want to see Barns Green fall victim to.
13	Planning Policy Design	The Grade II listed building (Bennetts) which is close to the boundary of the development proposed in this Application has no foundations, and could be severely damaged by the construction process proposed for this development. The developer proposes piling as part of the foundation solution. This will result in repeated vibration being transmitted through the ground, putting what footing to Bennetts may exist (in view of the age of the building, these would have been rudimentary) at risk of damage. Neighbouring households should not be exposed to risk to their property as a consequence of proposed development. The proposed development, which is not suited to a rural setting, is incompatible with the Listed Buildings nearby - Bennetts, Blacksmith's Cottage, the Queen's Head Public House, among others - and would degrade the historic aspect of the village.
14	Climate, Sustainability & Natural Environment Trees and Landscaping Planning Policy Design	The development relies on removal of a hedgerow to the West of Chapel Road. This destruction of the already-disappearing natural environment as it falls to developments on greenfield sites is widespread, will have long-lasting consequences, not confined just to the immediate location, but feeding in to a national pattern. The resulting loss of habitat, and the effect on local flora, fauna, both in number and diversity, would be a direct consequence of permitting this Application to proceed as a development. The site is also bounded by Wild Service trees. These are indicative of ancient woodland. This observation is at odds with the statement S2 on page 2 of the Arboriculture Implications Report. Furthermore, arboricultural impact does not limit itself to the extent that trees are removed, or not, and the character of those trees. The effect of such a high-density development, even complying with the Root Protection Areas prescribed, is not negligible as the the wording of the AIR implies.

		In regard to other habitat and natural environment aspects, I note that to the SE of the site area, visible from the Public Footpath which runs alongside the site, is an area which is occupied by a number of mounds. It is unclear what these are, but they have the potential to be of significance to the natural environment. I urge HDC to require a consultation to be commissioned at the expense of the developer, by a suitably-qualified specialist, to determine whether the mounds are indicative of activity by some protected species which may be material to the consideration of development.
15	Trees and Landscaping	I have my doubts about the validity of the Arboricultural Implications Report. p. 2 includes the following: 1.4.2. The site is on ground that rises by approximately 9m from its south-eastern end to its north-western end adjacent to Lewes Road to its eastern end and currently comprises an open field and small stables. This statement is unequivocally taken from observations about a completely different site. There is no 'Lewes Road' in Barns Green, nor is the NW end adjacent to a road (it is, in fact, adjacent to a public footpath). Was the Arboriculturist evaluating the correct site? How can we rely on any assertions made in this report? I request that the report is rejected, and a replacement, correcting this, and any other factual errors subsequently found, is provided before any Planning recommendation is made concerning DC/26/0933, and ideally, before public consultation is closed, so that all stakeholders can be well-informed on the entirety of evidence submitted to augment the Application.
16	Design	The 'Entrance Feature' shows a '3000 mm timber bar gate (fixed open)'. Fitting a pair of pseudo-gates as window dressing - the dimensions are not correct to even convey the notion that they could be closed to fully-span the width of the entranceway (they would leave a gap in the middle) - makes for a ghastly faux-rural appearance, a lame attempt to pay lip-service to compatibility of design with surrounding development.

		This lazy and superficial approach / attitude is echoed in the design and layout of the buildings of the proposed development itself, which could easily have been lifted from an affluent quarter of Crawley, and are not in any way sympathetic to the rural character of Barns Green.
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