

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 31 January 2026 12:23:52 UTC+00:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/25/2057
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 31/01/2026 12:23 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land North of Little Slaughterford Chapel Road Barns Green West Sussex
Proposal:	Proposed development of 68 dwellings with vehicular and pedestrian accesses, public open space, hard and soft landscaping and associated works including supporting foul and surface water drainage works, and works to existing culverted watercourse on site.
Case Officer:	Alice Johnson

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address: Hope Villa Two Mile Ash Road, Barns Green Horsham

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Member of the Public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Design - Highway Access and Parking - Other - Overdevelopment - Trees and Landscaping
Comments:	

Re:

Land South of Smugglers Lane and Chapel Road, Barns Green,
West Sussex.

Please accept this letter as a formal objection to the above
planning application for approximately 68 residential dwellings on
land south of Smugglers Lane and Chapel

Road, Barns Green.

I believe The proposal is contrary to the statutory Development
Plan, national planning policy, and binding environmental law. It
conflicts directly with the recently made Itchingfield and Barns
Green Neighbourhood Plan, introduces a severe and
demonstrable cumulative highways impact, fails to lawfully
address water neutrality within the Sussex North Water Resource
Zone, relies upon demonstrably inadequate wastewater
infrastructure, causes unacceptable harm to irreplaceable habitats
and countryside, and would materially undermine the integrity of
the plan-led system.

These are not matters of planning balance, judgement, or
mitigation. They are matters of policy compliance and legal
constraint. Taken individually and cumulatively, they render the
proposal unsound in principle and incapable of lawful approval.

There are several errors in the application and supporting
documents and these must be disregarded in the decision making
process.

The application site was expressly assessed and rejected through
the neighbourhood plan process, which was endorsed by
referendum in September 2025 and now attracts full statutory
weight, consistent with Gladman Developments Ltd v SSCLG
[2018] EWCA Civ 1610.

In the last completed Horsham District plan the site was
"Countryside" and not considered suitable for development. Of the
28 sites considered by the Neighbourhood plan after public
consultation and expert advice it was placed 28th on the list. The
Neighbourhood plan was 'made' late in 2025.

Although the requirement for "water neutrality" has been removed we must consider that the several wildlife habitats downstream must, by law, be protected and this development must scientifically prove that it will not harm these environments.

Note that the application carries a supporting document stating that the River Arun can handle the increase must be disregarded as the site is in the catchment area for the River Adur.

This requirement arises from the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. It is a legal obligation, not a matter of planning judgement or policy preference. The local planning authority, as competent authority, must be satisfied beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposal would not increase water abstraction. Speculation regarding potential future changes to water-neutrality policy is immaterial. Decisions must be taken in accordance with the legal framework in force at the time of determination. Strategic guidance cannot override statutory duties, nor can it retrospectively cure a failure to demonstrate project-level neutrality.

The Barns Green sewage treatment plant is already at capacity and frequently overflows. These overflows are well documented and another compelling reason that this application should be refused. As I write this village residents are once again clearing from their properties the unpleasant effects of an overflow.

Southern water claims the sewage plant has capacity but reality says otherwise

The application seeks to deliver approximately 68 dwellings on an 8.15-acre greenfield site located wholly outside the defined Built-Up Area Boundary of Barns Green. The land lies on the western side of Chapel Road and is bounded by rural paths, historic hedgerows, and open countryside. It lies in proximity to Muntham Wood ancient woodlands. While it might appear on a map to be on the outskirts of the village it impinges on what the residents consider to be the centre, having listed buildings on three sides and the fourth being on an ancient driveway. Opposite the site are the village post office and shop, the Queens Head public house and just a little further the village blacksmith.

The still uncompleted Sumners Fields development coupled with

this further development on land that was once the village green would constitute a considerable urbanisation which bears no relationship to the role, function, or infrastructure capacity of Barns Green as defined within the district settlement hierarchy.

Chapel Road functions as the principal route through Barns Green but is constrained by historic development patterns, extensive on-street parking, sub-standard carriageway widths, and intermittent pedestrian provision. In the critical section between the village shop, the primary school, and the Queen's Head public house, the effective carriageway width is routinely reduced to a single running lane. Traffic movement relies upon informal driver negotiation and low traffic volumes, an arrangement already operating at the limit of acceptability.

Adding more traffic and an access road to the site is asking for trouble as it's already quite dangerous at school times and is regularly used by horse riders and cyclists. In fact a child was knocked from her bicycle just yards from the site last year.

Based on established rural car-ownership data, the proposed development would introduce in excess of 100 additional private vehicles, generating approximately 39 vehicle movements in each peak hour and between 350 and 400 movements per day, all routed through a single access point onto Chapel Road. Add to this the fleet of parcel delivery vehicles and when assessed cumulatively with the consented Sumners Fields development, the impact is clear and unavoidable: increased queuing at pinch points, heightened pedestrian risk adjacent to the primary school, materially reduced network resilience, and impaired emergency access.

This will impact on the highway network would therefore be severe within the meaning of paragraph 111 of the NPPF, and the application must be refused on highways grounds.

Muntham Wood is ancient woodland and therefore an irreplaceable habitat afforded the highest level of protection under paragraph 180(c) of the NPPF. Development in close proximity requires wholly exceptional justification. No such justification exists in this case. Even where nominal buffers are proposed, indirect impacts arising from lighting, noise, air pollution, nitrogen

deposition, and recreational pressure remain significant and unavoidable. These impacts cannot be meaningfully mitigated. The proposal would also result in the loss of local biodiversity and wildlife connectivity. Off-site biodiversity net gain does not compensate for on-site ecological harm or loss of local natural capital. The buffer zones appear in the plan to be hard surfaced and not a suitable environment for the wildlife living in the woods and venturing into the field by night to feed. Home buyers would inevitably bring pets and a few cats hunting through the buffer zone and woodland would cause harm to the grazing animals therefore their natural predators.

The site contributes to the rural setting of Barns Green and contributes to the clear and deliberate distinction between settlement and countryside. Development of this scale would introduce suburban form beyond the Built-Up Area Boundary, in direct conflict with HDPF Policy 26

This application is unsound in principle. It conflicts with the Development Plan, fails mandatory national policy tests, and does not overcome binding environmental and infrastructure constraints. I'm not a planning expert but I know how to use a map. With the developer's supporting documents detailing the effects on the wrong river valley and referring to a sewage treatment plant at Stoke d'Abernon in Surrey I wonder what other misleading supporting information I've missed. The decision before the authority is not one of planning balance but of policy compliance and legal duty.

For the reasons set out above, planning permission for application DC/25/0395 must be refused.

In summary, in view of the errors in the supporting documentation and the following.....

This development application is not one of the identified sites in the Neighbourhood Plan and is not meeting proven local housing demand in an appropriate manner, and should be refused. Furthermore this is speculative housing development which is not essential to the location, and would urbanise and destroy a rural countryside green field which is in contradiction of the Countryside Policy.

The proposed road layout for the housing may also jeopardise the viability of the community pub, village shop and post office which

are essential to elderly residents due to the limited public transport.

Additionally the proposed development will also significantly damage the environment in a number of ways, including important habitat loss.

It will exacerbate the already serious issues regarding surface water flooding and the treatment of and pollution by sewage.

Already the current overflows from the Barns Green sewage treatment works are threatening the River Adur Restoration Project. These seriously damaging overflows will increase if the application is not refused.

For the following reasons I object to this Application.

- Discharge of Sewage into Stream from Sewage Works which is over the capacity limit stated by Southern Water
 - Flooding - Roadway Surface Water and Other Runoff which will increase the regular serious incidents of flooding in this area
 - The Removal of Ancient Hedges which are such an important wildlife habitat, and help retain surface water runoff
 - Harm to Ancient Woodland and Other Habitat Loss
 - Inadequate Infrastructure including Electricity Supply which is demonstrated by the facts that a generator is needed to supply Sumners Fields
 - Traffic Generation and Parking Impact adjacent to the village shop and the cumulative impact of additional traffic generation
 - Public Transport Limitations and Issues
 - Loss of Village Amenity with the field no longer available for community and charity events
 - Village Character, Listed Buildings and Heritage Impact on the area noted in the Neighbourhood Plan as important pastoral fields
 - Loss of Rural Amenity created by the field with animals grazing adjacent to historic buildings
 - Over Development, Inappropriate House Design and Density, the house designs are imposingly high and the density is urbanisation
 - Housing Mix and Deliverability Concerns, HDC Housing Officers stated these concerns
 - Conflicts with the Countryside Policy, the development site lies outside the Built-up Area Boundary (BUAB) and is defined as 'Countryside' where development should only be permitted if essential
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Kind regards

Telephone:

Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk



**Horsham
District
Council**



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