

Dear Mr Cole

I write to raise objection on my behalf and that of my wife, Carol Raphael, to the proposal to build in excess of 200 houses on Land South of Barnham Station. We live at Fresh Fields, Church Lane, Barnham PO22 0DA. We have lived here for nearly 14 years.

We are more than aware of the supposed shortage of housing in this part of the country. I write 'supposed' because it is a manufactured shortage, made worse by developers and speculators who buy up land, obtain planning permissions and then hold back on building. It is my understanding that there are nationally about one million permissions (in terms of actual numbers of individual dwellings) that have not been acted upon. This is far in excess of the capacity of builders to erect houses during a 5 year period. No further permissions should be granted until this precious national resource has been harnessed.

We are further aware that there are considerable numbers of sites in Arun where building is in progress or about to begin, including 3 sites in between the top of Church Lane and Yapton as well as at least a further dozen sites to be encountered on a 10 minute drive from here.

When the South Downs National Park was approved it was vigorously denied by various authorities that one consequence would be that massive development would be forced into the corridor south of the A27 to the coast. Yet the drive to build in that corridor appears to be continuing mindlessly unabated. We believe there is a neighbourhood plan aimed at imposing some structure and - we believed - restraint upon endless concreting over green spaces wherever they were to be found. We are further led to believe that the proposal to build on the land south of Barnham Station was not in the approved plan - and should be denied on that ground alone.

There are however further substantive objections to this proposal. First is the proposed access. Making Marshall Close the access point for between 200 and 250 dwellings will wreak havoc at the junction of Church Lane and Yapton Road. This is already a hazardous junction because of uncontrolled parking as free space for people not willing to pay for Station Parking or the other very limited space in central Barnham. Building traffic will create significant hazard during the time of construction, to be overlapped with up to around 500 further vehicles daily from privately owned cars and an undefined number of delivery vehicles on a daily basis.

The land identified in the proposal provides open green space - accessible on foot - in an increasingly traffic strewn area. Some of it floods frequently in the winter, but is essential to the general health of the community - including its aesthetic, mental and psychological health. There is plenty of evidence that the area is already over-populated with a gathering amount of stress from too many humans being jammed up against each other much like rats all seeking to carve out their own little bit of dominance. The Covid 19 pandemic has generated a very visible and for many catastrophic increase in the wrong kind of community interaction - including in this immediate vicinity. Much of this is due to the fact that the housing in the area has outstripped the vitally necessary provision of amenity in terms of drainage, parking, and essential community facility including a medical practice able to cater for the needs of an endlessly growing population. All this will be made worse by the proposed development.

Perhaps of most concern to our neighbourhood is the impact upon the conservation area in which this part of Church Lane and Highground Lane stand. Its basic amenity as an open space will disappear - namely the feel of being in a very precious space of open countryside (even though that has been being eroded for years.)

We are not of a NIMBY disposition. The greatest housing need here and elsewhere in the South of England is for people who are starting families or trying to begin a foothold on the property ladder. If the proposal were to include

a guaranteed commitment to the right number of 'affordable' houses there might be a community based argument for some building there or elsewhere in the area around Barnham Station to meet real need. The present application is a barely disguised fudge on that particular point. The truth is that the proposed development is motivated largely by profiteering and speculation. It is a clear example of the worst kind of land use proposal whereby rich individuals seek to become richer by taking away from ordinary people the heritage that lies in the land.

In summary this proposal is

1. Not allocated in the BNEP emerging Neighbourhood Plan nor the mad BENP
2. Not required for the BENP housing targets which are in excess of the targets set by ADC
3. Inappropriate given the submitted application for conservation area
4. Outside the built up area boundary.

For these and other reasons stated above we would like our objections noted and reported to Committee and to the AD Council.

We all have a part to play in the stewardship of the environment and to guard it for our children and grand-children. This proposal rubbishes such stewardship and will make our areas and our lives meaner. We have no reservation or hesitation in declaring our fierce objection to the proposal.

Yours sincerely

Roger Pask