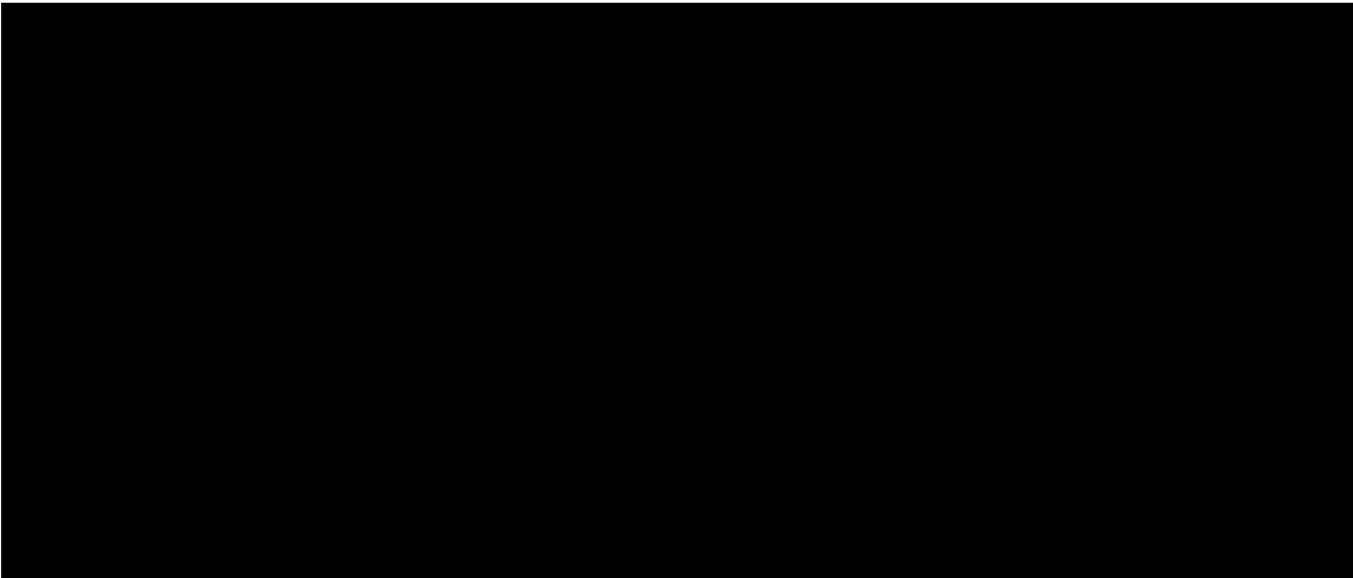




From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 August 2021 15:04
To: Planning <Planning@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: Comment on BN/93/21pl

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The above proposal raises multiple concerns.

Flooding: The proposal is sited on a greenfield site which is a long-established (centuries?) water meadow and significant part of the floodplain. The field floods regularly each year, not only in winter but whenever there is heavy rainfall, or moderate rainfall coupled with high tides. The field may well drain into the Rife which runs along its eastern boundary but the important point is ***that the Rife floods over the field***. This is what flood plains are for. The Rife collects water not just from adjacent land but a large area, including Barnham itself. Indeed, I believe it may go as far north as Walberton. The Rife is a narrow watercourse so floodplain is essential to its functioning. Without it, flooding occurs elsewhere. This has been witnessed further upstream, especially at times when the flooding Rife has met with high tides.

Because of the Rife's capacity and the small opening below the bridge, when floodwater in the field reaches road level, it floods over the road and into the field on the other side, leaving both fields under water and the road awash. I have photographic evidence of this flooding (and sewage pollution) from 1980 to present. Video from last year attached.

The field has experienced numerous pollution incidents over the years due to escape of sewage from the sewers which run under the field. One sewer serves the whole of Barnham village, the other definitely serves more than just the properties east of the bridge. Southern Water has also discharged foul sewage directly into the Rife, at a location in Barnham. I understand this is something they may be permitted to do under certain circumstances.

On the matter of sewers, I have lived here over 40 years and know of only these sewers in use in the field. All other sewage disposal is from sewers located on higher ground, east of the Rife, or past the western boundary of the field at the south-western end of Highground Lane. The latter discharges into a sewer in a field south of Highground Lane. The eastern sewer drains into the main sewer in the field of the proposed development, by passing underneath the Rife just north of the bridge. Plan

provided by Operation Watershed attached.

Design/Traffic/Parking: The proposed dwelling is designed to be built on stilts to avoid flooding of the property but it is not clear how access can be maintained. The road appears to be at field level (sea level), as is parking. The proposal for use of gravel on the road is worrying as this would easily be washed into the Rife raising the river bed at a point near the bridge where flow of water is already blocked by the size of the bridge.

I am also left to wonder where the inspection cover(s) for the domestic sewer system will be, as to be at ground level would require the covers to be sealed as are the main sewer lids. The main sewers have been so often at capacity that this was the only way to reduce sewage spillage into the field. If the domestic sewers link to the main sewers, this could recur.

Wildlife: The field is home to a range of wildlife. Many species of birds nest in and around the field. The buzzards use the field for hunting. The field and surrounding hedges are home to woodpeckers, goldfinches, pheasants, fieldfares, jays and other more common species. Egrets and herons are frequent visitors. I have seen the kingfisher fishing in the Rife this year, and swallows have returned to nest in the stable in the nearby field. The bats are now less common (probably due to flooding and the very significant increase in traffic over the bridge) but bats used to live under the bridge. Last year was the last sighting. The barn owls and screech owl still visit but nest elsewhere. Deer which have been displaced from Felpham also cross the field from time to time.

Conservation area : The field lies immediately adjacent to the conservation area on the eastern side of the rife. The design of the dwelling is out of keeping with the design of other nearby properties. Whilst stilts may seem essential to avoid flooding of the property, it places the dwelling high above ground and its futuristic design would be clearly visible, even if trees are planted.

Incompatible use : The use of high grade agricultural land for a house in the middle of the floodplain.

Noise: There is increased noise from any activity in a previously agricultural location, and this will add to it. The acoustics locally already mean sound travels over a wide area. Whilst there are numerous trees to absorb sound to the west of the field, even voices are audible. There is no provision for trees on the eastern boundary.

Privacy : Living immediately adjacent to the Rife, my property enjoys the privacy of having agricultural land immediately adjacent. This would, of course be compromised by building of a dwelling in the field. The house on stilts means the living accommodation is at the same level as my own, but a screen, even of trees, will be impossible to establish in the short term, or even long term, given the height to which trees would need to grow from ground level. (Please note that the site plans do not show the correct layout of my property which was extended in 1995 and has living accommodation facing the field).

Other: I should like to add that I have made numerous attempts to access the Flood Risk Assessment which is said to be part of the application. Only a front cover is accessible and my calls to Arun DC Planning have resulted in no change and no callback to explain. Your website appears to not be compatible with access by iPad users.

I have also had difficulty trying to understand how to comment by email without a signature. I do not expect my email address to be shared, but am willing to provide my name to Arun DC but not for its publication on the internet.

Attachments:

