

Planning Objection Letter

Application Reference: BN/96/25/PL

Proposal: Demolition of existing barn to be replaced by a new barn within the existing footprint.

Location: Church Lane, Barnham

Date: 24.9.2025

To: Planning Department, Arun District Council

1. Introduction

I wish to object to planning application **BN/96/25/PL**. The site lies within the **Barnham Conservation Area** and a **floodplain**, where development must be strictly controlled in order to protect heritage and environmental assets. The current proposal raises concerns about scale, height, heritage harm, accuracy of submitted plans, and the undermining of ongoing enforcement action.

2. Approved Permission vs Current Proposal

- The only lawful development on this site is the **shed approved under BN/7/17/PL**, signed off by **Neil Crowther, Group Head of Planning**. That permission granted a modest **shed measuring 5.4m x 4m (21.6sqm)**.
- It is important to stress that **only the building granted planning permission under BN/7/17/PL is lawful**. Any subsequent additions — including extensions, toilets, showers, or track — were never approved.
- The current proposal seeks a **replacement building of 27sqm**, representing a **25% increase in footprint**, and also increases the **height** compared with the approved shed.
- There remains **no permission for a track**, yet one appears to be included in this application.

3. Misrepresentation of the Existing Building and Site Area

- The plans submitted by the applicant show an “existing building” that incorporates **unauthorised works**.
- By presenting an inflated footprint and altered form as the baseline, the application is **misleading** and cannot be properly assessed against planning policy.
- The correct starting point must be the **lawful 21.6 sqm shed** approved under BN/7/17/PL, not the enlarged, unauthorised version shown on the submitted drawings.
- The application has also said the site area is 243 square meters. This seems to give the impression the area under the current enforcement notice has been included in the planning application.

4. Enforcement Action and Risk of Circumvention

- An **enforcement notice is already in place** against unauthorised works at this site, including the raised standing area, and is currently under review by a Planning Inspector.
- The current proposal appears designed not only to enlarge the shed but also to **raise the finished level of the new barn to align with the unauthorised standing area**.
- It seems the site area (ground works) of 243 sq meters has be included in the proposal.
- If approved, this would in effect **legitimise the unlawful groundworks**, strengthening the applicant's case at appeal and undermining the enforcement process.
- Granting permission in these circumstances would set a **dangerous precedent**, enabling applicants to evade enforcement by incorporating breaches into subsequent applications.

5. Conservation Area and Floodplain Harm

- The Barnham Conservation Area derives its special character from its **historic, rural, and agricultural qualities**. Enlarging and raising the building, and domesticating it with showers, toilets, and a track, would **erode that character**.
- The **increase in height** would make the replacement building **visually more dominant**, altering the balance of Church Lane and causing **heritage harm**.
- The site is also within a **floodplain**. Enlarging and raising the building risks reducing floodwater capacity and undermines floodplain protections, contrary to both local and national policy.
- No **Heritage Statement** or **Flood Risk Assessment** has been provided, despite the clear need for both.

6. Applicant's Record of Non-Compliance

- The applicant has **not adhered to approved plans** on this site, adding unauthorised extensions and sanitary facilities.
- There is also a record of non-compliance where development departed from approvals.
- This consistent failure to keep within permission raises serious doubts about whether any new approval would be respected in practice.

7. Policy Conflicts

This application is contrary to:

- **Arun Local Plan** policies, including:

- *HER SP1 – The Historic Environment*
- *D DM1 – Design Principles*
- *W DM3 – Flood Risk*
- **The Barnham & Eastergate Neighbourhood Plan**, which seeks to protect the rural and historic character of the parish.
- **The NPPF**, particularly paragraphs 199–202 (heritage protection) and Section 14 (flood risk).

8. Conclusion

This proposal is not a like-for-like replacement. It:

- Exceeds the lawful permission (BN/7/17/PL) by **25 % in footprint** and increases the **height**.
- Misrepresents the “existing” building by including unauthorised extensions.
- Includes a track which has **no permission**.
- Includes the 243 sq meters of unlawful works, the raised area.
- Risks **undermining an active enforcement notice** by aligning the new building with unlawful works.
- Would cause harm to both the **Barnham Conservation Area** and the **floodplain**.
- Comes from an applicant with a record of **non-compliance**.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that Arun District Council **refuse application BN/96/25/PL**.

Yours faithfully,
Jonathan and Nicola Murphy

Minstrels Barn Church Lane PO22 0BX



REP



Arun District Council, Civic Centre, Maltravers Rd Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5LF www.arun.gov.uk

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-----Original Message-----

From: Jonathan Murphy 
Sent: 24 September 2025 20:53
To: Planning <Planning@arun.gov.uk>
Cc: Amber Willard <amber.willard@arun.co.uk>
Subject: Planning Objection BN/96/25/PL

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Jonathan and Nicola Murphy