

Yapton PC Comment

17/07/2025

Outline planning application with all matters reserved (except access proposed along Ford Lane) for development of up to 400 No dwellings, a 8-10 form entry secondary school with associated sports pitches and facilities, a community hub building of up to 600 sqm, new pedestrian and cycle routes, Public Open Space, sustainable urban drainage system, landscaping and associated infrastructure.

Planning Reference F/19/25/OUT

1. Introduction

Yapton Parish Council (YPC) has given much consideration to the above outline planning application. YPC has deep reservations regarding the approach of this sensitive application. YPC is strongly of the view that the application must be considered as two applications, one for the housing and a second for the secondary school.

The exact location for the siting of a secondary school has not been agreed or indeed put in place as a District Council policy. Discussion has been had at District level but no agreement on the final location. This application simply bypasses the policy making process along with its associated democratic due diligence. The implementation of a secondary school via a general planning application devoid of any due diligence that forms part of actual agreed planning policy should not be side stepped in such an undemocratic manner.

The Parish understand ADC's need to accommodate increasing housing numbers but firmly believe that YPC has contributed positively towards Arun District Council's housing supply on a District level and more than adequately allowed for the Parish's actual immediate local need.

YPC therefore fail to ascertain any genuine planning benefit from the above application as currently presented.

2. Location and Character of the Site

The site is situated in the north of Yapton village, divorced from the main body of Yapton village and significantly removed from the village's Built-Up Area Boundary (BUAB). It currently sits within a rural backdrop of agricultural land.

Whilst it is accepted that the site adjoins Strategic Site SD8 (The Landings) full detailed planning has not yet been granted with build and occupation of the site being purely aspirational.

The site can only be accessed from Ford Lane an unclassified public highway (less than 4m wide). Ford Lane has no footpath or indeed the capacity for accommodating one due to it being a 'sunken road'.

This proposal seems wholly linked and dependent on SD8 and its associated infrastructure being in place and operational. YPC fails to understand how this application can meet its sustainability criteria in terms of access, transport and services without the implementation of SD8.

Furthermore, the secondary school's justification is reliant on students from SD8/SD10 and SD5 none of which have gained detailed planning or have any confirmed build programmes for implementation and roll out.

3. Planning

YPC accepts that the ALP is out of date. However, both the Ford Neighbourhood Plan (FNP 2025) and Yapton Neighbourhood Plan (YNP2 2023) are in date with the YNP2 being used to full effect in a recent appeal (APP/C3810/W/24/3343785).

3.1 Yapton Neighbourhood Plan (YPN2)

The applicant refers to the YNP2 as being made in 2021, this is factually incorrect. The YNP2 was made in Autumn 2023.

The proposal is a clear departure from the YNP2 in terms of location, sitting outside the BUAB and resulting in the loss of grade 2 agricultural land.

Policy H1 also identifies that the housing requirement for Yapton over the plan period (2011 to 2031) will be met by a combination of dwellings outside the BUAB which have already been consented, windfalls within the BUAB, strategic allocations set out in the ALP, and two allocations previously identified in the 2014 YNP which have now been consented and occupied. As the site does not fall into any of these four categories it is not needed to meet the housing needs as set out in policy H1. This policy was both supported and strengthened when the YNP2 went to examination (May 2023) with the examiner stating:

the Parish has contributed significantly to the District's housing delivery and there should not be a need to allocate further land for development over and above those which have already been consented and where construction has commenced.

This planning argument was further strengthened at a recent appeal (APP/C3810/W/24/3343785) where the Inspector concluded:

In summary, I consider the YNP contains policies and allocations to meet its housing requirement. 26. The consequence of this is that there is therefore no conflict with paragraphs 67 and 68 of the Framework as an indicative housing requirement figure was provided and a neighbourhood plan policy adopted to meet that. As a result, both strands of paragraph 14 of the Framework are met

which require a neighbourhood plan to be less than five years old and to contain policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement.

27. In these circumstances and where paragraph 11d) applies, which both parties agree it does, paragraph 14 of the Framework says that the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. As set out above, the development would conflict with YNP policies BB1 and E1.

I therefore give considerable weight to this factor

It should also be noted that the YNP2 clearly states that no new housing can be considered until Yapton Primary School has been extended to overcome its current and ongoing oversubscription status. Whilst funds were put in place resulting from application Y/44/17/OUT nothing has been progressed to date. YPC note that WSCC Education team's capital programme document, **Planning School Places 2025**, may state that work has commenced on the required extension work to Yapton Primary School with completion being in September 2026 but is incorrect. No plans have been signed off or indeed works commenced. Until such works have been completed YPC strongly object to any further housing until all new primary school children can reasonably expect to gain a place in their village school.

4. Housing Need

YPC is of the view that whilst acknowledging Arun District Council's shortfall in a 5 year housing supply, YPC has met its current and future parish allocations. This is clearly echoed in both the examiner inspecting the YNP2 and the Inspector's conclusions in his report for APP/C3810/W/24/3343785 dated October 2024.

YPC has always taken a robust and positive approach to housing numbers with the view of maintaining the integrity of its NP and community's vision for the village. YPC strongly believe that any additional housing to that already granted and/or built out over the last 5 years would carry a significant social 'dis-benefit' to Yapton's community.

5. The Proposal

5.1 Layout

YPC acknowledge that in general master planning terms, the Illustrative Masterplan 401-UW-P-002, represents land parameters with the least impact on adjoining uses and synergy with potential future uses. Should any development take place in this location YPC would expect these land parameters to be maintained and only in this form moved forward in the planning process. YPC would insist that should this application be looked on favourably, the land parameters are conditioned to be maintained to reflect the current illustrative master plan.

YPC accept that the applicant has endeavoured to avoid coalescence between Ford PC and Yapton PC using upgraded footpaths and the introduction of a country park. However, YPC have grave concerns with the reality of the Country Park status.

YPC has experienced on most of its new residential estates with designated public open space/amenity space conflict arising with new residents and existing residents wishing to use these public open spaces. Conflict has resulted due to developers leaving ongoing residents responsible for the maintenance of all open space. This leads to residents assuming an implied ownership of such public space with signs erected stating 'private use only'.

YPC would therefore request that should the proposal be progressed, the country park area is transferred to YPC along with the funds to implement its 5 year maintenance programme. This would ensure that the last remaining rural area north of Yapton's BUAB would remain for the benefit of the whole community and not solely new residents.

YPC notes that there is a proposal for a Community Hub. YPC would question whether this is a genuine whole community benefit. Ford PC will eventually enjoy a new local centre with primary school, community space and village hall on SD8/The Landings. YPC can therefore only conclude that the community hub is intended to be for the social benefit of Yapton's community.

YPC believes that a more sustainable approach to ensuring a genuine social benefit for the whole community would be the upgrade of Yapton's existing village centre. Yapton's village centre public car park is frequently at full capacity. It is inadequate for its increased resident numbers that use the shops and pharmacy. An improvement to this parking area would be a genuine social benefit and within the YPC's control along with the full refurbishment and extension of the existing Yapton and Ford Village Hall. This would enable an essential existing community facility to accommodate its expanding community and ensure that it is fully future proofed. This would provide a significant social benefit to the whole community.

YPC has already stated its deep concern regarding the siting of a secondary school in this location along with its actual need. Need should be based on tangible projected student numbers rather than being reliant on 3 strategic Housing sites to gain detailed planning and eventually be built out. YPC believes the urgency for a secondary school is at a level that would allow for policy to decide on its location and not a private planning application.

YPC note that the transport assessment is very dependent upon the permeability of traffic through SD8 ie using the proposed 'N/S spine road' which accesses Yapton Road (B2233) and Ford Lane. It should be noted that this spine road is currently designed to prevent any direct through traffic from Ford Lane to Yapton Road and cannot be considered as a sound solution to the proposal's anticipated traffic congestion.

YPC strongly object to any school development until either the spine road is fully accessible in a north south direction, or a suitable alternative is agreed. YPC also insists that footpaths FOR-170, FOR-363-1, YAP360-1 and YAP363 are upgraded to 3m wide multi-user public footpaths/cycleways to encourage students to use alternative sustainable transport modes to access the school.

5.2 Access/Transport

The Parish has grave concerns regarding the transport solution/access to the proposed site.

The whole proposal is dependent upon access from Ford Lane, an unclassified road with no footpath. The applicant's transport assessment accepts that there will be an increase in traffic especially during peak times both generated by the housing and the secondary school. It notes that there will be a tangible increase in congestion at the junction of Maypole Lane and increased waiting times at Yapton level crossing. However, it is felt this will be mitigated via traffic permeability using alternative routes. All eventualities will lead to a dependence on the SD8 N/S spine road which is not a through route and an increase of traffic movements through Yapton village centre negatively impacting residents' safety and wellbeing.

YPC insists that as part of the transport assessment a more comprehensive solution is found to alleviate any adverse impact on the village centre in terms of increased traffic. Should this proposal move forward adequate traffic calming measures must be implemented along Main Road and within the village centre to ensure residents' safety and an improved quality of life.

YPC welcome the proposed lighted crossing on North End Road to ensure safe pedestrian access to Yapton Primary School but insist that the proposed zebra crossing on Burndell Road (B2233) is upgraded to a lighted crossing to ensure the safety of the secondary school students should this proposal be progressed.

The Parish is disappointed to see that cycle ways are not considered as part of the wider transport plan for the secondary school. YPC insists that cycle ways linking Yapton safely to Barnham Station must be implemented along with improved and widened footpath system linking to the proposed site. This would enable Yapton's younger residents' safer access to the rail network and wider area. This would align with the green connectivity plan within the YNP2.

5.3 Social

It must be recognised that this proposal will place unprecedented strain on the village Primary School which is at full capacity and similarly the village's surgery and other key limited facilities. As a Parish we fail to understand the genuine social benefit of this proposal. A satellite community hub provides little immediate community benefit and is not YPC's preferred sustainable solution to satisfying YPC's over-stretched community facilities.

YPC believes the applicant has failed to show any public or social benefits that outweigh the conflict with the YNP2. The Framework sets out the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental (para. 7). YPC accepts the benefits resulting from the provision of housing, particularly affordable housing, which meets both economic and social dimensions. However, recent planning permissions and developments more than meet YPC social housing need. Therefore, it can be argued that this deficit in social gains fails to meet the key criteria in satisfying a sustainable development.

6. Community Engagement

Whilst the applicant has engaged with YPC and its community it has failed to formalise any suggestions brought forward. Namely engaging with a more suitable approach to fulfilling the applicant's need to provide genuine community benefit within its social fabric and infrastructure.

Questions regarding increased traffic, access to the site's vehicular, pedestrian and other sustainable means have not been fully addressed. The applicant's proposed solutions fail to address the wider community's concerns in terms of congestion and increased traffic movement through the heart of the village and by Yapton Primary School.

The question of bypassing local policy making in deciding the final location for a secondary school for the District is questionable and remains unanswered.

7. Conclusion

Yapton Parish Council with support from its community considers the proposed development inappropriate for the reasons outlined above.

In short, the proposal ignores the YNP2 and impacts both the rural nature of the location and its rural setting, Paragraph 14 NPPF confirms a 'Presumption in Favour of Sustainable development' unless:

'any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the Framework as a whole;'

The proposal is contrary to the YNP2 and will have a significant and adverse impact on both the environmental and social fabric of Yapton's community.

Yapton Parish Council is of the view that the Parish has contributed positively towards Arun District Council's housing supply on a District level and more than adequately allowed for the Parish's actual immediate local need. Significant weight must be placed on the Social Benefits this scheme brings to the Parish as a whole rather than the narrow view of Housing supply alone. YPC is of the view that the social benefits and environmental benefits of this proposal are extremely weak.

YPC therefore seeks planning permission to be refused.

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From: Yapton Parish Council Clerk [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 July 2025 11:26
To: Planning.Responses <Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: YPC response to F/19/25/OUT

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Good Morning Daun,

Many thanks for letting me know. I tried to forward them from a previous message but apparently that does not always work.

I have reattached YPC's submission for F/19/25/OUT.

Thanks again.

Kind regards,
Lauren

Lauren Bailey
Clerk to Yapton Parish Council

My office hours are 10:00 - 13:00 on Monday and 10:00 - 15:00 on Thursday, or please contact me to make an appointment.

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From: Daun Johnson <Daun.Johnson@arun.gov.uk> on behalf of Planning.Responses

<Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>

Sent: 21 July 2025 11:07

To: Yapton Parish Council Clerk [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: YPC response to F/19/25/OUT

Good morning,

No comments were attached to this email.

Thank you

Daun Johnson
Technical Support Unit Assistant
Planning Services



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From: Susan Haley <Susan.Haley@arun.gov.uk> **On Behalf Of Planning**

Sent: 21 July 2025 10:49

To: Yapton Parish Council Clerk [REDACTED] Planning.Responses
<Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: YPC response to F/19/25/OUT

Thank you for your email.

It has been forwarded to the correct department to be processed.

Please accept this email as acknowledgement of receipt.

Kind regards

Susan Haley
Planner Degree Apprentice
Technical Support Unit

T: 01903 737694

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Please note: I am out of the office every Thursday.

Arun District Council, Civic Centre, Maltravers Rd

Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5LF

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Our priorities...



From: Yapton Parish Council Clerk [REDACTED]

Sent: 21 July 2025 10:33

To: Planning <Planning@arun.gov.uk>

Cc: Emma Sheppard <Emma.Sheppard@arun.gov.uk>

Subject: YPC response to F/19/25/OUT

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Good Morning,

Please see Yapton Parish Council's attached comments on the application F/19/25/OUT - Outline planning application with all matters reserved (except access proposed along Ford Lane) for development of up to 400 No dwellings, a 8-10 form entry secondary school with associated sports pitches and facilities, a community hub building of up to 600 sqm, new pedestrian and cycle routes, Public Open Space, sustainable urban drainage system, landscaping and associated infrastructure.

I would appreciate confirmation that these comments have been received. Many thanks.

Kind regards,
Lauren

Lauren Bailey
Clerk to Yapton Parish Council

[REDACTED]

My office hours are 10:00 - 13:00 on Monday and 10:00 - 15:00 on Thursday, or please contact me to make an appointment.

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