

Sarah Valentine

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 November 2025 19:22
To: planninginfo
Subject: Public Comment – Objection to DM/25/2661 (Land at Coombe Farm, Sayers Common)

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I wish to object to planning application DM/25/2661 – Land at Coombe Farm, Sayers Common, on the following material grounds.

1. Site position and flooding issues

This is land which is outside of the current village boundary, yet on a very popular public bridleway route with sheep grazing on the adjacent fields in question. This is good farming land which should be encouraged to be maintained as a well needed food source.

The land slopes significantly down to the B2118. In wet weather, surface water already pools at the bottom of the fields and on to the B2118.. The farmland and concreting over will produce less natural drainage and more water run-off heading down to the road. The most recent development of the Wintergreens which is nearly opposite to the proposed site has suffered flooding from inception and this can only be exacerbated with a large housing development opposite.

The site plans do include 5 attenuation ponds so it is clear that the developer is well aware of the flooding potential; surely this in itself make it an impractical site? The attenuation ponds would also be a serious hazard for families with young children. Who will be responsible for the maintenance of these ponds and indeed playgrounds and other grassy areas. The local Council says it does not have the funds to maintain the local village pond in Sayers Common to the extent that local volunteers have undertaken substantial work here. It is all very well authorising development, but what about the maintenance??

The proposal is to site 210 houses on this land, some of which are 3 storey houses. This is not a large site to develop that many houses, and putting three-storey houses on a hillside would be a blatant eyesore.

Hacking down hundreds of trees and shrubs in the surrounding woods as proposed would significantly exacerbate the flooding issues experienced locally. Their roots would soak up a lot more water than any houses / grassland. This is also very close to the B2118 London Road which already always floods in bad weather near the entrance to Sayers Common.

2. Biodiversity

There are areas of ancient woodland on the proposed site which is the habitat of much plant, animal and birdlife, and deer are frequently seen here. I understand that the developer plans to bulldoze all this down, an absolute crime, we need to preserve all of the woodland that we have and maintain plant and wildlife species that reside here.

3. Village amenities

Sayers Common is a small rural village. Work has only relatively recently concluded on the Goldcrest Drive Linden Homes development. This development (which suffered flooding issues during and after its construction) doubled the size of our rural village. We are not an urban area, and yet the Council wishes to allow more and more developers to suffocate our village. The nearest primary school is a mile away in Albourne, and I believe that is already at maximum capacity,. There is a very good and well supported village community shop, but for other shopping and post office, the nearest outlet is in Hurstpierpoint, 2 miles away. Hurstpierpoint is also where the nearest doctors surgery is situated which already caters for the current residents of Hurstpierpoint, Albourne and Sayers Common, without adding a few hundred more patients to their books.

4. Transport

Our transport links are already limited to what you expect for a RURAL village. There is one bus an hour going into Burgess Hill (which stops around 6pm), and one 2 hourly running north/south Crawley/Brighton. To drive to a railway station or to reach a large supermarket, you either drive through Hurstpierpoint which can be an extremely slow and congested route (even after their traffic calming measures) or via the A2300 to Burgess Hill. Either way, another 210 houses will create a lot more traffic especially in the rush hours. We are conscious that the volume of traffic has increased significantly in the last 2/3 years following establishment of other housing developments in the village.

The B2118 London Road is so busy at times that when going North from Berrylands Farm, I have to turn left and head South instead, and go around the roundabout with Reeds Lane and then head North up the London Road. Speeding cars come from Reeds Lane making this a dangerous manoeuvre. This will become even more dangerous.

A proper transport survey does not appear to have been carried out.

5. Lumping Villages Together

This proposal ignores that Albourne and Sayers Common are two separate villages with different identities. I understood it was contrary to Planning Regulations to merge two villages, particularly with absolutely no consultation taking place with the local villagers. The treatment of Sayers Common and its villagers has been especially poor.

6. Treating Planning Applications in Isolation

It is completely wrong to treat this application in isolation. The overall impact of 5 developments on flooding, traffic, water supply, sewage disposal, dangerous access to the A23, the local environment including threatened habitats, listed buildings, and the actual people who live here has been ignored. Until an overall proposal is prepared which properly takes these into account - with full community involvement - this application should be refused. A further 4 Applications are still to be prepared. The failure to involve the local community of Sayers Common is an appalling oversight. There have been no public meetings with developers - all has been carried out in secret behind closed doors. How can they possibly know what our wishes are? This is being imposed from above in an undemocratic fashion.

7. Victorian Sewage Systems

The existing sewage system dates from the Victorian era and was designed to meet the needs of no more than 200 houses. There have been continuing issues recently, especially in heavy rain when ponds and water ditches overflow. Periodically blockages occur, we have already had to call Dynorod out twice to unblock sewers while we've been living here, caused through no fault of our own. We know of instances where other residents have had to do the same. Since Victorian times the village has grown 4 or 5 fold, with the still very small diameter Victorian Sewage pipes in place. There is serious doubt in my mind that they will be able to cope with anything like say, 3,500 homes, so densely packed in as they are proposed to be. Will there be a Health & Safety crisis?

8. Conclusion

- There is a lack of a co-ordinated plan, particularly if applications are being considered piecemeal before we see the overall impact
- No consultation has taken place with the villagers, it seems as though the Council no longer operates along democratic lines. Sayers Common does not even have its own Parish Council but is lumped in with Hurstpierpoint, having very little representation in its own right.
- Wholesale vandalism of local ancient woodland with rare habitats is proposed.
- As proposed, the development would look awful, far too densely built, an eyesore, totally out of keeping in a rural location with urbanised three storey buildings at a high point. The attenuation ponds are on impermeable clay, would flood and are unsustainable.
- There is a lack of a proper transport survey.
- Can the Planning Department honestly say they are proud of this as their legacy?

I respectfully request that this application be rejected in its current form.

Thank you

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