

# View Comment

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**Comment ID** /4333

**Respondent** [Campaign to Protect Rural Engl...](#)

**Response Date** 30 Mar 2020

**Current Status** Awaiting Processing

**Response Type** OBJECT

**What is the nature of this comment?**

Object

**Summary** The scheme is not sustainable.

**Comment** CPRE Sussex objects to the proposed scheme, on arable and pasture fields that are significant elements in a landscape that is rural in character, for the reasons explained below.

1. Billingshurst has and is experiencing a substantial increase in its built area and population. To enable the community to assimilate, all further allocation of new sites for development should be suspended.
2. The proposed scheme would, if permitted, extend in to countryside Billingshurst's built area, from the existing physical boundary, formed by the A29, to the edge of the flood plain of the River Arun.
3. "There would be significant changes on the settlement pattern and the wider rural character in this area but it is considered that the impact would be particularly high given the existing character and quality of the landscape. Were the northern section of this land to be allocated, the scheme - which is being promoted as separate land parcels - would lead to a disjointed settlement pattern" (Site appraisal, page 69).

4. The A29 would be a significant physical barrier in terms of accessing wider community facilities and the formation of a single larger community (Site appraisal, page 70)
5. HDC has given the scheme an Amber Rating: 'Unfavourable Impacts (where there is potential for mitigation), for 'Climate/renewables/energy efficiency' (Site appraisal, page 69).
6. We question the Yellow Rating: 'Neutral Impact' for Biodiversity.

6.1 Whilst "the site promoter of the northern half of the land west of Billingshurst has committed to providing biodiversity net gain", "this is not the case for all promoters of land" within the site (Site appraisal, page 69).

6.2 "It is noted that the river Arun is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and further information is required to understand how damage to the quality of this habitat would be prevented because of the increased level and proximity of any development. The proposed site is also located in known flight paths of the Barbastelle bat, a protected species that roosts at the nearby Mens Woodland. This is designated as a Special Area of Conservation and is of international importance" (Site appraisal, page 69).

6.3 Accordingly, there is potential for considerable harm, warranting a Red Rating: 'Very Negative Impacts (impacts unlikely/unable to be mitigated)'.

**Proposed Change**    Reject the scheme.

**Attachments**