



## HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

<b>TO:</b>	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Storrington Sand Quarry Ltd Hampers Lane Storrington Pulborough
<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	Permission in Principle for the erection of up to 9no. dwellings.
<b>REFERENCE:</b>	DC/25/2025
<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	Objection

### **SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:**

The principle of 9no. dwellings directly contravenes proposals under approved DC/13/2460 and WSCC/001/20 and referred to under NC/20/0004, as well as Policy AL19 of the Horsham District Site Specific Allocations of Land (2007) to secure the wider sand quarry site for the formation of a Country Park.

Further, the introduction of domestic and urbanising features along with associated light pollution adjacent to the South Downs National Park (SDNP) is likely to detract from the setting of the SDNP, notwithstanding the existing industrial use which is to be restored as approved under WSCC/01/20. The proposals are contrary to policies 25, 26 and 30 of the HDPF.

### **MAIN COMMENTS:**

#### Context

1. The proposed site is located outside of the Built-Up Area Boundary (BUAB), in a countryside location. It falls adjacent to the South Downs National Park (SDNP), a protected national landscape.
2. It is set within the wider sand quarry site and the boundaries are undefined. Woodland and a mature treeline are situated to the immediate east and south, respectively. Sandgate Park is situated to the north.
3. Multiple public rights of way (PRoW) are located in the surrounds, however views into the site from the footpath network are not available on account of intervening vegetation.
4. At a county level, the proposed site falls within WG7, the Storrington Woods and Heaths Landscape Character Area, as defined by the West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment 2003. It is also adjacent to WG8, the Central Scarp Footslopes, to the south.
5. The site and the surrounding contextual landscape are deemed representative of WG7, exhibiting many of the key characteristics identified prior to its industrial use, including: low, wooded ridges; smaller broadleaved woods; smaller patches of heathland; sand quarries; and extensive rights of way network. Guidelines state to conserve the rich mosaic of woodland

and heathland habitats, encouraging heathland landscape restoration and woodland management.

6. At a local level, the proposed site falls within E1 - Parham and Storrington Wooded Farmlands and Heaths Landscape Character Area (LCA) as defined by the Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment (2003). The site is also adjacent to D1 – Amberley to Steyning Farmlands LCA to the south.
7. The site and the surrounding contextual landscape are deemed representative of both local landscape character areas, exhibiting many of the key characteristics identified prior to its industrial use, including in E1: rolling landform of sandy ridges; extensive pine and oak-birch woodland; small areas of heathland; and major areas of sand and gravel extraction at Sandgate Park and Rock Common. In D1: rolling landscape of the low ridges of the upper greensand; and overlooked by the chalk escarpment to the south.
8. Relevant key issues for E1 include urban development pressures, and for D1 include localised visual and noise intrusion from A283 and A24 truncated, and from small scale industrial sites near Storrington; and potential development pressures on the edge of Storrington and Steyning.
9. Overall sensitivity to change in E1 is high due to the area's many intrinsic landscape qualities and its general visibility from the chalk escarpment to the south. For D1, overall sensitivity to change is high due to the openness and prominence of the greensand ridge at the foot of the scarp, and due to the vulnerability of small scale historic field patterns in the gault clay vale.
10. Relevant Planning and Land Management Guidelines for E1 state to:
  - a) *Conserve the undeveloped, rural tranquil character.*
  - b) *Ensure any small scale housing development on the edge of Storrington responds to traditional settlement patterns and local design and materials.*
  - c) *Promote the restoration of sand extraction sites to heathland. Establish effective advance screen planting to any new sandworkings.*
  - d) *Take opportunities to recreate heathland.*
  - e) *Establish new small woodlands in the valley between West Storrington and West Chiltington Common, including the establishment of community woodlands near to urban edges.*
11. The Horsham District Landscape Capacity Assessment (2014) locates the proposed site within Local Landscape Character Area (LLCA) 61: Sandgate Park. The study concludes a moderate overall landscape capacity given the moderate visual sensitivity and moderate landscape value on account of the 'industrial' nature of this area. However, given the site's industrial nature is soon to cease, the landscape value should be afforded a higher value given the noted adjoining SDNP and contribution to its setting.
12. Further, the study concludes the potential for this area to be restored to heathland / grassland landscape.
13. We note that Policy AL19 of the Horsham District Site Specific Allocations of Land (2007) seeks to secure the wider sand quarry site for the formation of a Country Park as soon as it is practical to do so. Development proposals not directly associated with mineral extraction that could prejudice the formation of the Country Park will not be permitted.
14. This proposal contravenes relevant approved proposals under DC/13/2460 and WSCC/001/20 which secured an extension of the working life of the Washington Sand Pit quarry and retained the approved restoration plans. Phase 1 has been implemented and the scheme is subject to conditions to implement phase 2, 2 years after the permanent cessation of the extraction works. The restoration works form an extension to Sandgate Park for recreational purposes and also restore important landscape features. These demonstrate full regard to the SDNP management plans and Landscape Character Areas planning and land management guidelines. Therefore, there is no overriding justification to support the principle of urban form in such location from a landscape point of view.

**HDPF**

15. The proposals fail to comply with the following policies:

- a) HDPF 25; the erection of up to 9 dwellings does not protect, conserve or enhance landscape character given the introduction of domestic and urbanising features, and also does not enhance the setting of the SDNP.
- b) HDPF 26; the erection of up to 9 dwellings is not essential to the countryside location, and does not meet the criteria for defined rural functions. The introduction of urbanising detractors such as associated light pollution, is likely to give rise to localised adverse effects on key features and characteristics of the landscape character area.
- c) HDPF 30; the erection of up to 9 dwellings close to the SDNP does not conserve or enhance the natural beauty and public enjoyment of the SDNP, nor promote its special qualities, and is not in the public interest.

**RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS: N/A**

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<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	Specialists Team - Strategic Planning
<b>DATE:</b>	22/01/2026
<b>SIGNED OFF BY:</b>	Inês Watson CMLI Specialists Team Leader (Landscape Architect)
<b>DATE:</b>	23/01/2026