



Horsham
District
Council

HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

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| TO: | Horsham District Council – Planning Dept |
| LOCATION: | Delta Shoreham Road Small Dole Henfield |
| DESCRIPTION: | Permission in Principle for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of up to 9no. single storey dwellings. |
| REFERENCE: | DC/25/0849 |
| RECOMMENDATION: | Objection |

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:

The landscape concerns previously raised in relation to application DC/24/1933 remain unresolved and continue to be relevant to this application. Please see below for details.

While layout details are reserved for future consideration, it is important to recognise the site's existing constraints at this stage of the permission in principle process. This will help avoid the potential loss of key landscape features, which would give rise to adverse effects on both landscape character and visual amenity, as well as determine the capacity of the site for development. We remain of the view that, given the site's location and immediate context, some form of development could be accommodated. However, the scale currently proposed is not considered to sit comfortably within the site or its landscape and urban setting.

When anticipating the requirements for SuDS and easement zones, service runs, access, protection of landscape features and open space provision, we have concerns about the capacity to accommodate and integrate 9 dwellings sensitively and successfully within the receiving landscape without appearing out of place or dominant. Further, due to the constraints of the site, it is unlikely that a robust mitigation strategy and landscape framework could be effectively delivered or secured.

We continue to recommend that the number of dwellings is reduced to allow for a more sympathetic layout, one that is integrated within a landscape framework and provides a design transition to the countryside. Planting will also soften the appearance of the development and retain the verdant character of the area.

MAIN COMMENTS:

Assessment

1. Please review our previous comments under DC/24/1933 for a description of the local and wider landscape context, which apply for this permission in principle.

2. HDPF Policy 26 is a strategic policy that safeguards the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside. Development is only acceptable if it is essential to the countryside location and serves a clearly defined rural function. It must also avoid increasing activity levels in the countryside and protect, conserve or enhance key landscape features and characteristics, including its tranquility.
3. The proposals are contrary to Policy 26 as they are not essential to the countryside location, and do not meet the criteria for defined rural functions. Further, the proposed residential development is likely to lead to an increase of the overall level of activity in the countryside, thereby diminishing the tranquillity, sense of place and rural qualities experienced within the area. While we acknowledge the existing Class Q prior approval for a single dwelling, this is not directly comparable to the current proposals for nine dwellings. The scale of the proposed development would represent a significant increase in built form and associated activity.
4. The introduction of domestic and urbanising detractors including hard landscape and external lighting is likely to give rise to localised adverse effects on key features and characteristics of the landscape character area, including the SDNP and Dark Sky Zone located in close proximity.
5. HDPF Policy 25 is a strategic policy that seeks to safeguard the natural environment and landscape character, including landform, development pattern and designated habitats, from inappropriate development. Proposals must protect, conserve and enhance landscape and townscape character, maintain and improve green infrastructure network and safeguard biodiversity sites ensuring no net loss.
6. HDPF Policy 31 is a strategic policy that seeks to enhance biodiversity and the green infrastructure network, resisting proposals that are anticipated to have a direct or indirect adverse impact on biodiversity or result in the loss of green infrastructure.
7. HDPF Policy 33 is a strategic policy that seeks to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment, with part 6 pertaining to the retention of existing important landscape and natural features, such as trees, hedges, banks and watercourses, as well as development needing to relate sympathetically to the local landscape.
8. Key concern remains with the long-term retention of existing vegetation, which significantly contributes to the verdant character of the area. While layout is reserved for future consideration, some level of vegetation removal is anticipated to facilitate access to the development. However, insufficient information has been provided to assess the likely effects in full. In particular, the proposed removal of off-site trees T40, T41 & T42 is queried. As previously noted, '*Removal of this level of vegetation will give rise to adverse effects on the character of the landscape character and immediate landscape context, as well as have the potential to further expose the development to view from the wider footpath network.*'
9. In addition, multiple category A & B trees are situated on-site and within the site boundaries. There remains concern with the ability of the proposed layout to accommodate development without adversely impacting these mature landscape features. At present, insufficient information has been provided to allow a fair assessment of the potential impacts. It is therefore recommended that a detailed tree survey is submitted, indicating the RPAs and their relationship with the proposed development. Based on the current layout, the trees appear to be at considerable risk of future lopping or felling pressure in future, which would further erode the site's landscape character and amenity value. It is therefore recommended, that any future layout excludes the existing vegetation from plot ownership to secure their long-term retention.
10. Service runs and SuDS infrastructure must also be considered from the outset to ensure that the existing landscape features are not lost or deteriorated, and to support the delivery of a robust landscape mitigation strategy. Given that service runs cannot be planted upon and require easement zones, there is concern that the spatial constraints of the site will significantly limit the ability to accommodate both the 9 proposed dwellings and the necessary protection of landscape features as noted above, without resulting in adverse landscape effects.

11. As a result of points 8-10, permission in principle for up to 9 dwellings is unlikely to comply with Policies 25, 31 and 33 (6) as it is unlikely to protect, conserve or enhance landscape character considering the loss of T40, T41 & T42 and the likely loss of further trees and hedgerow, considerably weakening the green infrastructure network.

12. In the absence of an LVA to demonstrate otherwise, it is our professional judgement that the current proposal would have an eroding effect on the landscape character as result of the likely need for vegetation removal, alteration of the site's undeveloped open character, and the introduction of urbanising features and external lighting, all of which are inconsistent with the countryside setting and adjacent setting of the South Downs National Park and Dark Sky Zone.

13. We remain of the view that, given the site's location and immediate context, some form of development could be accommodated within the site. However, the scale currently proposed is not considered to sit comfortably within the site or the landscape setting.

14. Consideration must also be given to the existing urban fabric and settlement pattern, to ensure that any proposed development responds appropriately to its context and does not appear incongruous or out of character.

15. We continue to recommend that the number of dwellings is reduced and that the layout is modified in order to both retain existing trees and vegetation as well as allow for mitigation planting to soften the appearance of the development.

Open Space Strategy

16. We note the site meets the minimum threshold for open space provision as identified in Horsham District Council's *Open Space, Sports & Recreation Review 2021* (OSSR).

17. Future proposals must demonstrate compliance with the OSSR. As such, a detailed land budget plan must be submitted to demonstrate how the scheme will deliver an open space strategy that aligns with the requirements of the OSSR and complies with HDPF policy 43.

18. For a scheme of this size, it is acknowledged that not all typologies of open space can be delivered on site. There is however an expectation that the needs generated by the multi-functional greenspace typology will be met. The plan must demonstrate the open space strategy with sizes and any necessary buffer zones. Additionally, it must include a table quantifying the area allocated to each typology and confirm how the scheme meets the overall open space requirements.

19. Below is a table with the requirements generated by this size of development.

| number of units | Open space required per person: | | | Multi-functional greenspace proposed / potential split: | | | Children and young people proposed / potential split: | |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Allotments 1.8m ² per person | Multi-functional greenspace 43.9m ² per person | Children and young people 0.7m ² per person | Parks and Gardens 13.8m ² per person | Amenity Greenpace 5.8m ² per person | Natural and Semi-Natural 24.3m ² per person | Children 0.5m ² per person | Youth areas and facilities 0.2m ² per person |
| 0 | 1.8 | 43.9 | 0.7 | 13.8 | 5.8 | 24.3 | 0.5 | 0.2 |
| 1 bed flats | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 bed houses | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 bed flats | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 bed houses | 4 | 12.96 | 316.08 | 5.04 | 99.36 | 41.76 | 174.96 | 3.6 1.44 |
| 3 bed flats | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 bed houses | 4 | 15.84 | 386.32 | 6.16 | 121.44 | 51.04 | 213.84 | 4.4 1.76 |
| 4+ flats | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 bed houses | 1 | 4.86 | 118.53 | 1.89 | 37.26 | 15.66 | 65.61 | 1.35 0.54 |
| 5+ bed houses | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Area required for each typology (m ²) | | 33.66 | 820.93 | 13.09 | 258.06 | 108.46 | 454.41 | 9.35 3.74 |
| Area required for each typology (hectares) | | 0.003366 | 0.082093 | 0.001309 | 0.025806 | 0.010846 | 0.045441 | 0.000935 0.000374 |
| TOTAL OPEN SPACE REQUIREMENT - SQUARE METRES | | 867.68 | | | TOTAL OPEN REQUIREMENT - HECTARES | | 0.086768 | |

20. If the minimum on-site provision cannot be delivered, please note that an off-site contribution must be made as per OSSR requirements.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS: N/A

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| NAME: | Elly Hazael Trainee Landscape Architect (Planning) |
| DEPARTMENT: | Specialists Team - Strategic Planning |
| DATE: | 09/07/2025 |
| SIGNED OFF BY: | Inês Watson CMLI Specialists Team Leader (Landscape Architect) |
| DATE: | 11/07/2025 |