

MME PLANNING SERVICES

Permission in Principle (PIP) application for the erection
of up to 9no dwellings.

at

Storrington Sand Quarry, Hampers Lane, Storrington,
Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 3EX

Planning Statement

Ref: P-075

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Version 1

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Figure 1: Site Location

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 We are instructed to prepare and submit a Permission in Principle (PIP) application for the erection of up to 9no dwellings at Storrington Sand Quarry, Hampers Lane, Storrington, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 3EX.
- 1.2 While it is noted that the application is submitted as a PIP, where matters in relation to location of the site, the type of land use proposed and the amount of development are the only considerations, this statement sets out the proposed scheme with regard to the following aspects: the planning history of the site, the development proposals, the relevant planning policy, the planning merits of the scheme and how the proposals comply with the Council's policies.

2. Site, Surroundings and Background

- 2.1 The application site is located to the northern side of Washington Road, Storrington, outside any defined built-up area boundary. As such, the site is designated as countryside in policy terms. Notwithstanding the above, the site is located approximately 250m from the defined built-up area boundary at its closest point of Storrington and Sullington which is considered to be a Small Town / Larger Village, as per the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF).

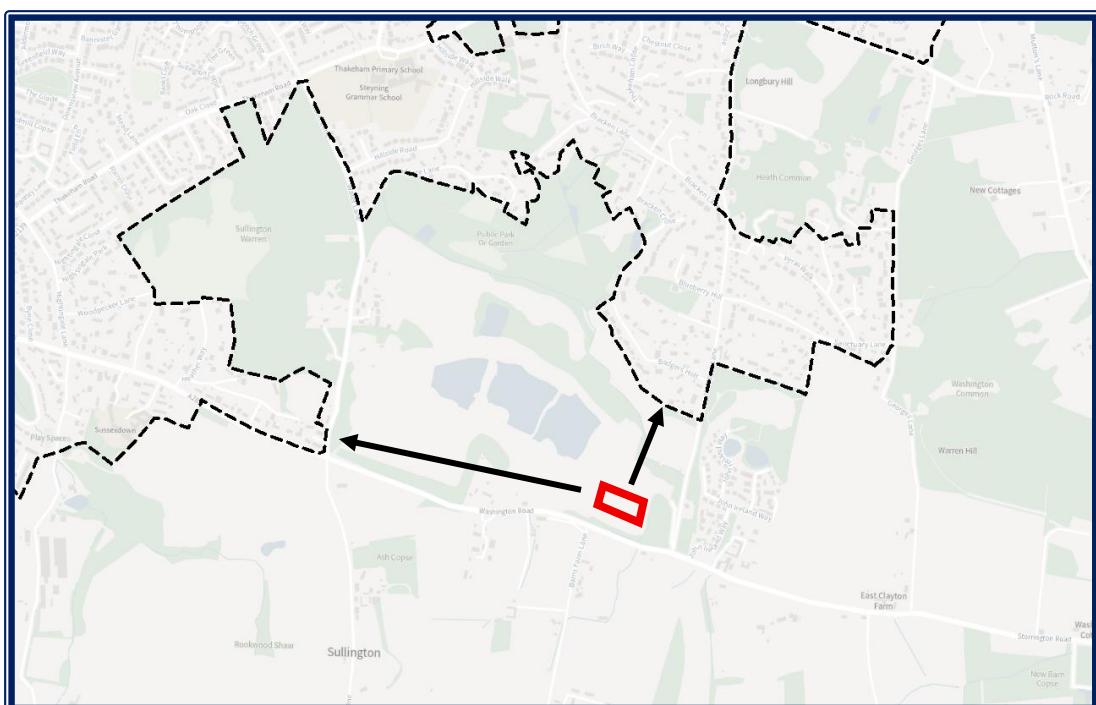


Figure 2: Plan showing relationship of the site with the Built-Up Area Boundary (dashed black line).

2.2 Settlements such as Storrington and Sullington have a good range of services and facilities, strong community networks and local employment provision, together with reasonable rail and / or bus services. This type of settlement acts as hubs for smaller villages to meet their daily needs, but also have some reliance on larger settlements / each other to meet some of their requirements.



Figure 3: Map showing relationship of the site (in red) with existing bus stops along Washington Road in close proximity (shown within yellow circles).

2.3 Although designated as a countryside location, the site is surrounded by residential development, with existing dwellings located to the north, east and west, as well as to the south on the opposite side of Washington Road. As such, the site is not considered to be in an isolated rural location. In addition, as detailed within Figure 3 above, there are a number of bus stops located along Washington Road which are in very close proximity to the site which provide direct links from the site to the centre of Storrington to the west and other settlements. These bus stops are accessible via existing footpaths along Washington Road.

- 2.4 Given the location of the site and its setting in relation to the built-up area, it is therefore considered that the site is in a sustainable location, with good access to services and facilities. It is noted that this has also been confirmed by the Planning Inspectorate in a recent appeal at a site at Abbots Leigh, Washington Road, Storrington, West Sussex, RH20 4AF, which is located only 200m away from the application site along Washington Road to the west (reference DC/24/1965 (Appeal Reference APP/Z3825/W/25/3363148)). The Inspector's consideration of the appeal site and its suitability for housing is considered to be very relevant to the site which is the subject of this application.
- 2.5 The application red line area, as indicated on the submitted plans, extends to approximately 0.49ha.

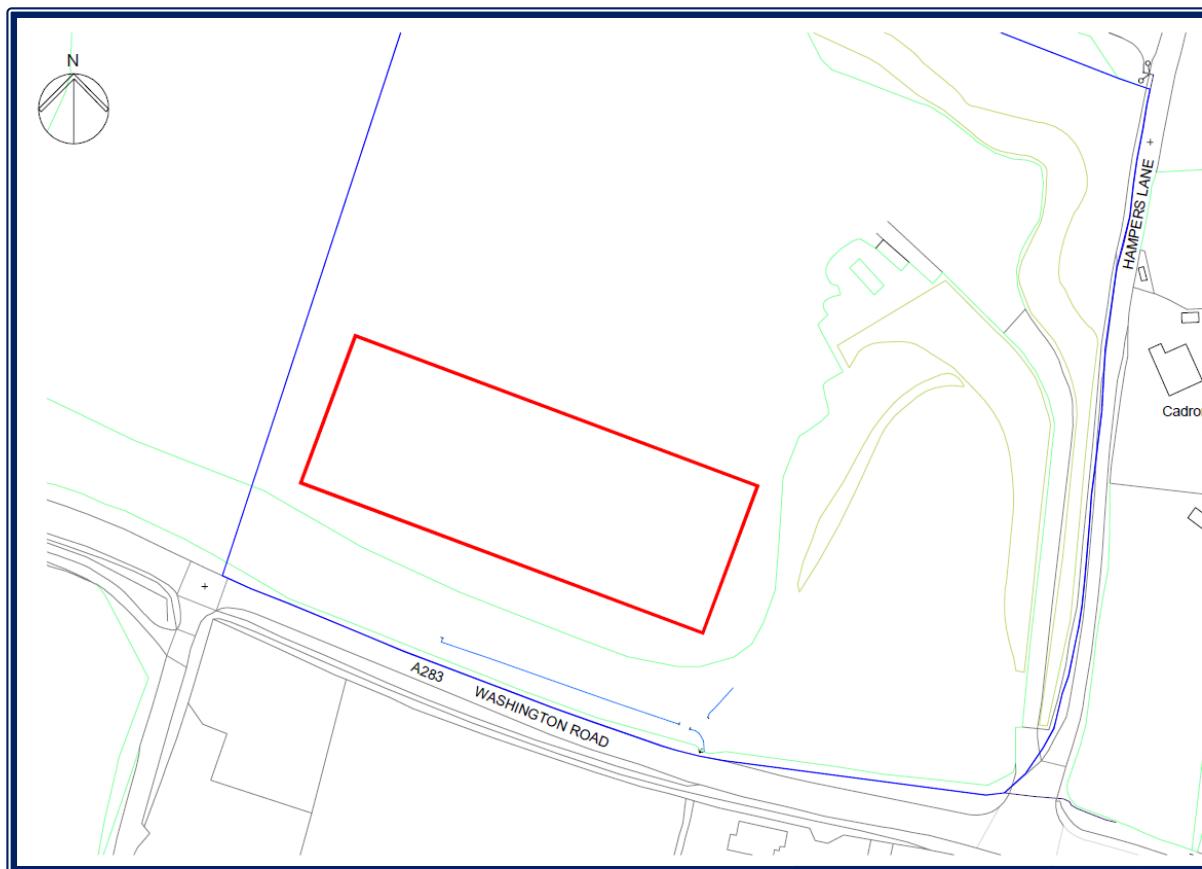


Figure 4: Site Location Plan

3. Planning History

3.1 N/A

4. Proposals

- 4.1 As detailed above, PIP is sought for the erection of up to 9no dwellings. The proposals, while full and final specifications would be reserved for the technical details stage, would consist of a mixture of 2-5-bed dwellings, which is considered to be in keeping with the character of the area and local housing needs.
- 4.2 As is evident from the submitted indicative plans, the proposed use of the site for residential purposes is considered to be acceptable given existing dwellings located to the north, east and west, as well as to the south on the opposite side of Washington Road. The location of the site is therefore considered to be appropriate for housing. The indicative site plans provided show how up to 9no dwellings would be comfortably accommodated on the site.

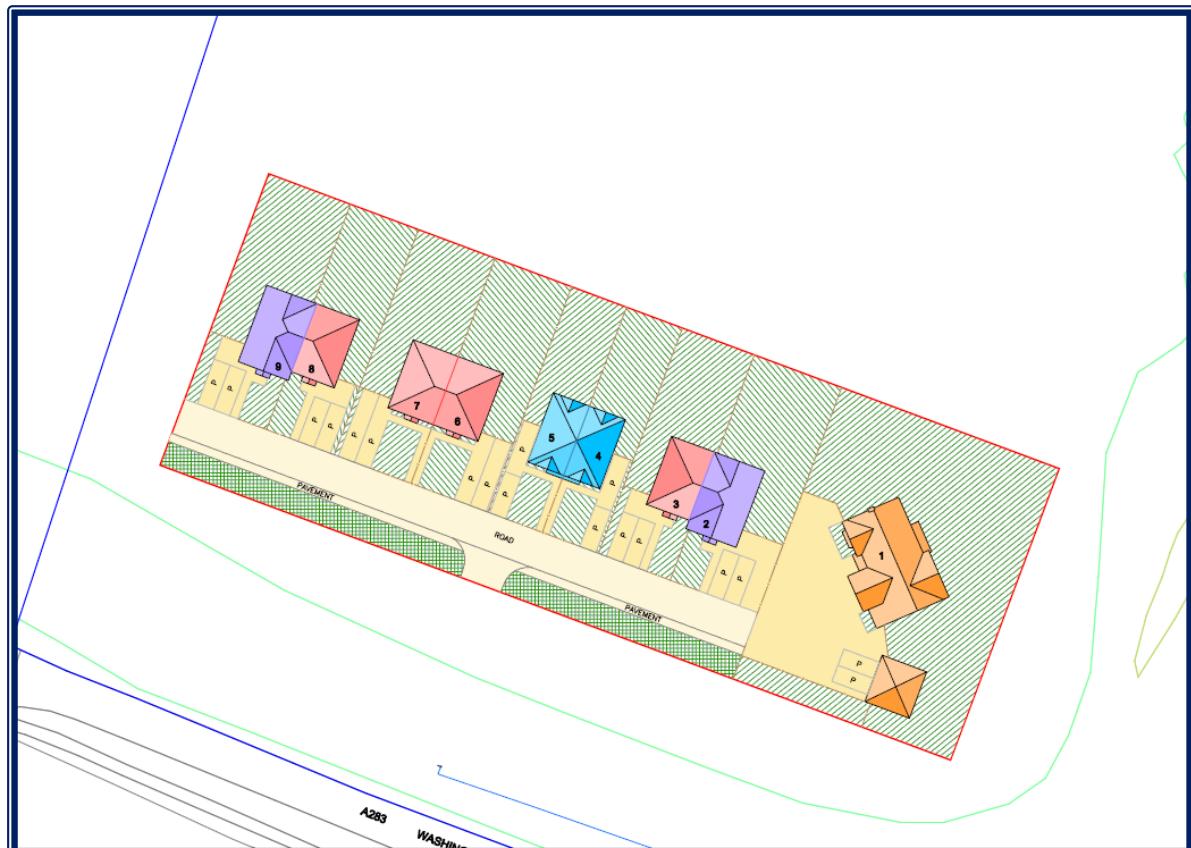


Figure 5: Indicative Site Plan

5. Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) and National Guidance

- 5.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework for the preparation of local plans for housing and other development. The NPPF should be read as a whole.
- 5.2 Running throughout the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Sustainable development is achieved through three main objectives which are – economic, social and environmental.
- 5.3 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that for decision-taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, planning permission should be granted unless the policies of the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed, or, any adverse impact of doing so would 'significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits' when assessed against the policies of the NPPF when taken as a whole (NPPF paragraph 11 (d)).

Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015)

- 5.4 Paragraph 34 of the NPPF requires that all development plans complete their reviews no later than 5 years from their adoption. Horsham District Council has submitted its new local plan for examination, however at this stage, the emerging policies carry only limited weight in decision making.
- 5.5 A Local Development Scheme (LDS) was published in February 2025 by the Council. The LDS sets out the production timetable for the New Local Plan anticipated to be adopted April 2026. Notwithstanding the above, as the HDPF is now over 5 years old, the most important policies for determining this application are now considered to be 'out of date'. This position is further highlighted given that the Horsham District Local Plan examination hearing meetings scheduled for January 2025 were cancelled by the appointed Inspector, and in April 2025 advised that the Plan be withdrawn due to concerns about its legal compliance.

5.6 The Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites. The presumption in favour of development within Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF therefore applies in the consideration of all applications for housing development within the District, with Policies 2, 4, 15 and 26 now carrying limited weight in decision making.

5.7 While considered to be out of date, the main HDPF policies relevant to this application are as follows:

- Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
- Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
- Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
- Policy 4 - Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion
- Policy 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
- Policy 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs
- Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
- Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
- Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
- Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
- Policy 33 - Development Principles
- Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
- Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
- Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
- Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
- Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
- Policy 41 - Parking

Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan (2019)

5.8 While also considered to be out of date, the Neighbourhood Plan policies relevant to this application are as follows:

- Policy 1: A Spatial Plan for the Parishes
- Policy 8: Countryside Protection
- Policy 14: Design
- Policy 17: Traffic & Transport

Planning Advice Note(s) (PAN)

5.9 Relevant PANs to this application are as follows:

- Shaping Development in Horsham District
- Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

6. Planning Considerations

Location of Site

- 6.1 The HDPF spatial development strategy as contained within policies 2, 3 & 4 directs development to sites within built-up area boundaries, encourage the effective use of brownfield land, and aim to manage development around the edges of existing settlements in order to protect the rural character and landscape.
- 6.2 The site is located outside of the built-up area and is not allocated within Horsham's adopted development plan (comprising in this case the HDPF and the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan), again noting that these are now out of date. As a result, residential development in this location would conflict with the requirements of Policies 2 and 4 (Settlement Expansion) of the HDPF. The site is also not in an isolated location, therefore the opportunities afforded by Paragraph 84 of the NPPF do not apply in this instance.
- 6.3 Notwithstanding the above, the Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, with the latest Authority Monitoring Report (April 2025) detailing a supply of only 1 year. Therefore, the tilted balance contained in paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged.
- 6.4 While the Council has submitted the New Horsham District Local Plan for examination, as detailed above, the appointed Inspector has advised that the new Local Plan be withdrawn (April 2025) and the process be re-started. As such, the weight given to the above policies and the New Local Plan is therefore limited to none at this stage.
- 6.5 In addition, the Council has failed its most recent Housing Delivery Test, with the December 2024 test results demonstrating that the Council has only delivered 62% of its housing target in the preceding three years. This in itself also triggers the presumption in favour of sustainable development under Paragraph 11(d). This is irrespective of a Council's five-year housing land supply position.

- 6.6 It is noted that limited weight should be attached to the conflict with Policy 26 in respect of development outside of built-up area boundaries given that the deficient housing supply position dictates that these boundaries are out of date. As such, the fact that a site may lie outside of the built-up area boundary does not, in and of itself, constitute a reason to refuse the application.
- 6.7 Further to the above, Paragraph 14 of the NPPF notes that “in situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11(d)) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided the following apply:
- a) the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan five years or less before the date on which the decision is made; and
 - b) the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement”.
- 6.8 The Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan is now more than five years old. Therefore, Paragraph 14 of the NPPF does not apply and the presumption in favour of sustainable development would not be affected in this instance.
- 6.9 As set out above, the site is located in close proximity to the built-up area of Storrington and Sullington, with convenient access to essential facilities and public transport links. The suitability of the site's location for housing has been confirmed by the Planning Inspector in their consideration of a recent appeal in very close proximity to the site to the west, at Abbots Leigh, Washington Road, Storrington, West Sussex, RH20 4AF, (reference DC/24/1965 (Appeal Reference APP/Z3825/W/25/3363148)). This is considered to be a significant material consideration.
- 6.10 It is therefore considered that there is opportunity for future residents of the indicative proposals to utilise the facilities in Storrington and Sullington and surrounding areas by alternative methods of transport and would not be unduly reliant on private vehicles for day-to-day needs. In terms of its location, the site is therefore considered to be sustainable.

- 6.11 It is noted that there are a number of other recent decisions that have granted residential developments outside of the defined built-up areas in other parts of the District. Examples include reference numbers DC/22/0495 and DC/22/2250 which each sought permission for 1no dwelling and were granted at appeal in August 2023 and March 2024 respectively, and DC/23/2278 which sought permission for 8no dwellings and was granted by the Council's planning committee in April 2024.
- 6.12 The Inspector within the appeal decision in relation to application reference DC/22/0495 states "I have attached limited weight to the conflict with HDPF Policy 26 in respect of development outside of built-up area boundaries. The housing shortfall dictates that those boundaries are out of date. I consider that some weight can still be given to the strategy set out within HDPF Policy 2, in terms of the general locations of new development, but the fact that a site may lie outside of the built-up area boundary does not, in and of itself, constitute a reason to refuse planning permission".
- 6.13 A very recent appeal decision issued in October 2025 under planning reference DC/24/1486, granted permission for a new build dwelling approximately 2 miles away from the closest built-up area boundary. Within the appeal decision the Inspector states that:
- "27. *The proposed dwelling would be in a location that is not considered suitable when assessed against the relevant HDPF and NP policies. The site lacks close proximity to a wide range of essential services and facilities. Although there are some opportunities for travel by means other than private car, reliance on car journeys is likely to be significant. In these respects, the proposal would conflict with key development plan policies.*
28. *Balanced against the harm are a number of benefits. The overall housing supply remains significantly deficient, and the provision of an additional dwelling would make a meaningful contribution to addressing this shortfall. The Framework recognises that small sites can make an important contribution to housing supply and are often built out quickly. There would also be modest economic benefits during construction and through local spending, as well as a small contribution to housing diversity. While the scale of these benefits is modest given that only one dwelling is proposed, in the context of current housing pressures, even a single additional home represents a valuable and positive contribution.*

29. *Taking all matters into account, the adverse impacts of granting permission would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole. Consequently, the proposal benefits from the presumption in favour of sustainable development as defined in paragraph 11d of the Framework.”*
- 6.14 In addition to the above, attention is drawn to a recent appeal decision at Horsham Golf Club, Denne Park, Horsham, RH13 0AX, which allowed a development for 800 units under planning reference DC/23/1178 (Appeal Ref: APP/Z3825/W/24/3355546) in July 2025. The inspector for this appeal described the Council’s current 1-year housing land supply position as “lamentable”.
- 6.15 It is evident that the current housing land supply position in Horsham is acute, and the uncertainty surrounding the progress of the new Local Plan means that this situation will continue.
- 6.16 As set out within paragraph 6.12 above, the inspector within the Horsham Golf Club appeal decision at paragraph 58 reaffirms this position, stating that the settlement boundaries in the HDPF are out of date, and that the use of Policy 26 to restrict housing development outside settlement boundaries is not consistent with the NPPF.
- 6.17 Furthermore, it is highlighted that the Horsham Golf Club site does not directly adjoin a defined or proposed Built Up Area Boundary, which is also the case with the application site which is the subject of this application. As such, this appeal decision clearly indicates that the housing supply position would outweigh non-compliance with the criteria set out within the Shaping Development in Horsham District guidance, and the fact the site does not adjoin the built-up area boundary should not in itself form the basis for refusal.
- 6.18 While it is acknowledged that every application and site context should be considered on its own merits, taking into account the current situation of the Council in terms of its 5-year housing supply and the above examples, there is an expectation that a consistent approach is applied to decision making.
- 6.19 The above examples clearly show that notwithstanding the distances to the respective settlement boundaries, given the lack of 5-year housing supply, the tilted balance is engaged and the principle of residential development in this location is acceptable.

- 6.20 Up to 9no additional dwellings would contribute significantly towards the much-needed supply of houses. Small sites can often be built out relatively quickly and there would be economic benefits arising from construction and spend in the local economy.
- 6.21 In summary, given the lack of a 5-year housing supply, the location of the site in close proximity to the built up area of Storrington and Sullington, and relevant recent examples of housing developments permitted outside of settlement boundaries, the location of the site is considered to be acceptable for housing. As such, it is contended in these circumstances that limited weight should be afforded to Policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the HDPF, and to the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.22 It is noted that the site is currently used for mineral related operations and has been identified as a potential site for a country park within the Neighbourhood Plan. However, the mineral operations are due to be concluded in 2028 and the Neighbourhood Plan is now out of date, and therefore holds minimal weight in the planning balance. Notwithstanding this position, the proposals would allow for ample space to be retained for the provision of for country park.

The type of land use proposed

- 6.23 As detailed above, the application proposes the use of the site for residential development. The proposed use of the site for residential purposes is considered to be acceptable, given existing residential properties to all sides of the site, with the indicative proposals essentially representing infill residential development.
- 6.24 Policy 3 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) states that development will be permitted within towns and villages which have defined built-up areas. Any infilling will be required to demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale to maintain characteristics and function of the settlement, in accordance with the settlement hierarchy.
- 6.25 The direct surroundings of the site to the north, south, east and west, and the wider locality is characterised primarily by residential development. The site is well contained with extensive foliage to the boundaries, particularly to the south and east, where the proposed dwellings would be screened from public views.

- 6.26 Given the spatial context of the site, which sits within close proximity to a number of residential dwellings, it is considered that a residential use would be an appropriate use of the site. In addition, given the location of the site in very close proximity to the built-up area of Storrington and Sullington, it is considered that the site is appropriate for residential development.
- 6.27 Furthermore, it is highlighted that the proposed use would be similar to the development at John Ireland Way to the east, which is a relatively recent housing development granted permission at appeal in 2012.
- 6.28 The application site lies in close proximity to a built-up area, and there are existing residential properties surrounding the site, with the application seeking to develop the site for residential purposes. Such development and use is considered to be commensurate with the character and uses within the immediate and wider vicinity, and would therefore represent an appropriate form of development.

The amount of development

- 6.29 Policy 25 of the HDPF seeks to protect the natural environment and landscape character of the District, including the landform, development pattern, together with protected landscapes and habitats. Development will be required to protect, conserve, and enhance landscape and townscape character, taking account of areas or features identified as being of landscape importance, individual settlement characteristics and settlement separation. In addition, development will be supported where it maintains and enhances the Green Infrastructure Network.
- 6.30 Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF require development to be of a high standard of design and layout. Development proposals must be locally distinctive in character and respect the character of their surroundings. Where relevant, the scale, massing and appearance of development will be required to relate sympathetically with its built-surroundings, landscape, open spaces and to consider any impact on the skyline and important views.
- 6.31 The application site measures an area of approximately 0.49 hectares. The wider surroundings are generally characterised by detached dwellings set within varying sized plots. While reserved for later consideration, the proposals provide a mixture of dwellings.

- 6.32 This is considered to reflect the mixture in built form character within the vicinity and limit any perceived landscape harm, with the extensive soft landscaping enclosing the site, ensuring that the indicative built form would not appear prominently from public vantage points.
- 6.33 The indicative plans clearly show that the quantum of development would be appropriate, with the proposed dwellings comfortably accommodated within the site area. The indicative plans also indicate that sufficient space would be available for an appropriate build pattern, access, and gardens, and that existing landscape features to the boundaries would be retained. The indicative proposals would also be acceptable in terms of impact on neighbouring amenity and demonstrate an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, ranging from 2no to 5no bedrooms.
- 6.34 It is considered that the application site could accommodate up to 9no dwellings comfortably, with the site capable of providing an appropriate layout and configuration. It is considered that the indicative proposals would not harm the landscape character or visual amenities of the locality.
- 6.35 Overall, the indicative proposals would represent appropriate development within this setting and would be in accordance with Policies 25, 32 and 33 of the HDPF.

7. Summary and Conclusion

- 7.1 Overall, given the position of the Council with regards to its 5-year housing land supply, the location of the site in close proximity to the built-up area and facilities, the uses within the immediate and wider vicinity, the appropriate quantum of development proposed and recent decisions relating to residential development outside of built-up areas, the proposal represents an appropriate form of development in this location.
- 7.2 It is considered that the application site could comfortably accommodate up to 9no dwellings. The indicative proposals would be acceptable in terms of design and impact on the setting, and would not appear prominently within this context given the residential nature of the surroundings, existing screening and the existing built form on site.
- 7.3 As such, while now considered to be out of date, the proposals would be in accordance with Policies 4, 25, 26, 31, 32 and 33 of the HDPF and therefore, the Local Planning Authority is respectfully asked to grant PIP accordingly.