

Batcheller Monkhouse



PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Demolition of existing 2no. dwellings and erection of 3no
dwellings with associated parking

at

Threals Farm Cottages

Threals Lane

West Chiltington

West Sussex

RH20 2RF

ON BEHALF OF
Whiteoak Developments

PREPARED BY
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the following:

Demolition of existing 2no. dwellings and erection of 3no. dwellings with associated parking

1.2 This Statement sets out the relevant background to assist the planning authority in its determination of the planning application. The statement includes a description of the site and its surroundings, relevant planning history, details of the proposed development, a summary of the planning policy context, and an appraisal of the scheme against all relevant planning considerations.

1.3 The application is supported by the following documents:

Document Type	Plans
Planning, Design and Access Statement	Drg No. 01 Location and Block Plan
Water Neutrality Report	Drg No. 02 Existing Site and Roof Plan
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	Drg No. 03 Proposed Site and Roof Plan
BNG Baseline Report and Calculations	Drg No. 04 Existing Site Sections
Application and Ownership forms	Drg No. 05 Proposed Site Sections
CIL Forms	Drg No. 06 Proposed West and North Elevations
Materials Sheets	Drg No. 07 Proposed East and South Elevations
Joinery Details	Existing Cottages

2. SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDING AREA

The Site

- 2.1 The application site is located towards the southern end of Threals Lane, accessed through West Chiltonington but lying within the parish of Thakeham.

Figure 2.1 – Aerial photograph of the application site



- 2.2 The site extends to 0.19 hectares and comprises 2 semi-detached cottages known as No. 1 and No. 2 Threals Farm Cottages and their respective gardens.

Figure 2.2 - Photograph of No.s 1 and 2 Threals Farm Cottages



2.3 The site currently has one access point directly off Threals Lane as shown in the photographs above.

2.4 The site's boundaries are well screened with established trees and hedges.

Surrounding Area

2.5 To the north of the site are residential properties including a site with planning permission for eight houses which is under construction. To the east is open farmland. To the south of the site is the recently constructed Grange Park development of 5 detached and semj-detached houses. To the east is farmland associated with Upper Champions Farm.

2.6 The application site is situated within an established residential setting with several existing residential properties nearby as depicted below.

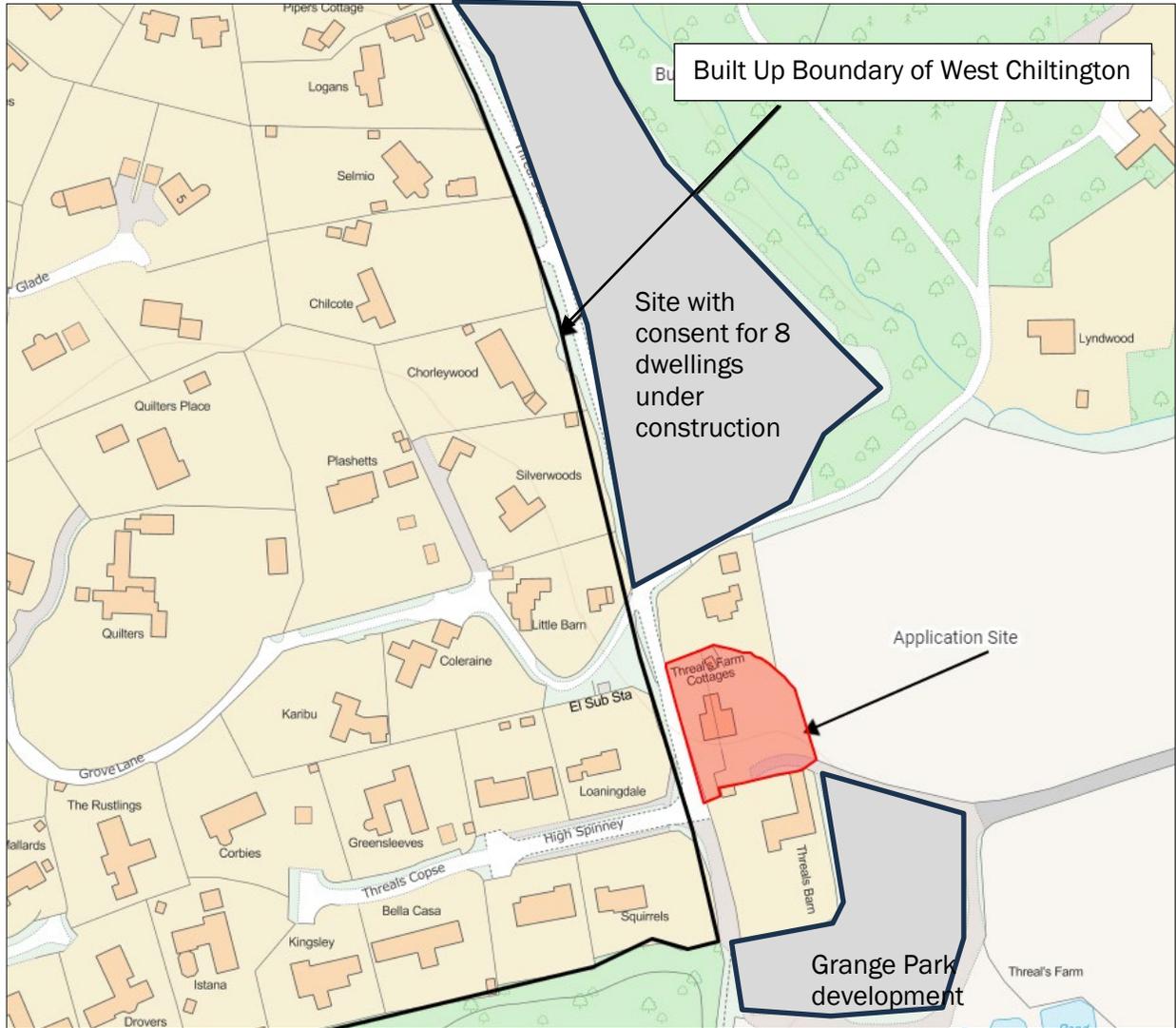
Figure 2.3 – Existing dwellings nearby



2.7 The application site is adjacent to the built-up boundary of West Chiltonington but lies within the

village of Thakeham. West Chiltoning is classed as a medium village with a moderate level of services, facilities and community networks and some access to public transport.

Figure 2.4 – Map showing application site in relation to the Built-up Area boundary of West Chiltoning.



3 DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

3.1 This document section explains the design principles and concepts that have informed the development, and how issues relating to access have been addressed.

Site Context and Constraints

3.2 The application site measures approximately 0.19 hectares and is located on the east side of Threals Lane, within the parish of Thakeham, though accessed via West Chiltington. It comprises two existing cottages with associated gardens. The site is bounded by mature hedgerows and trees, offering natural screening.

3.3 Surrounding land uses include residential developments to the north (site under construction for 8 dwellings) and south (Grange Park development of 5 dwellings), with open farmland to the east.

3.4 The site lies adjacent to but outside of the built-up area boundary (BUAB) of West Chiltington. It is not subject to any statutory designations but falls within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone, requiring water neutrality.

Use

3.5 The proposed use is residential (C3), which reflects both the current use and the character of the surrounding area. The redevelopment makes efficient use of previously developed land and contributes to local housing need.

Amount

3.6 The development proposes:

2 x 3-bedroom semi-detached dwellings (108 sqm each)

1 x 4-bedroom detached dwelling (146 sqm)

3.7 This modest intensification replaces two outdated properties with three modern homes, providing a total increase of one unit.

Layout

3.8 The three dwellings are arranged in a linear form facing Threals Lane, consistent with the established development pattern. Each property is set within its own plot with private rear gardens, on-plot parking, and turning space to allow vehicles to exit in a forward gear.

3.9 The layout allows for appropriate separation distances between dwellings, preserving privacy and amenity.

Scale and Appearance

3.10 The dwellings are designed to reflect the local vernacular architecture and rural character. Key features include:

- Gabled and hipped roofs
- Use of Sussex sandstone, Warnham stock bricks, clay tiles and slate roofs
- Traditional elements like chimneys, lean-tos, dentil courses, and deep porches

3.11 The scale is domestic and respectful of surrounding properties, avoiding the overdevelopment concerns raised at pre-application stage.

Landscaping & Biodiversity

3.12 The development retains all significant boundary trees and introduces soft landscaping including:

- Wildflower meadow (500 sqm)
- Six new trees
- Native hedgerow planting

3.13 These measures contribute to a Biodiversity Net Gain of 16.6% (habitat) and 11% (hedgerow units), in excess of policy requirements.

Access

3.14 Access is via the existing entrance from Threals Lane, which will be improved to accommodate turning and safe ingress/egress. No new access points are proposed and a turning area is proposed within the site

3.15 Foot access will be via individual driveways with potential for secure cycle storage within each plot. The site is 0.6 miles from the nearest bus stop and under 2 miles from local amenities.

4 PLANNING BACKGROUND

Planning History

- 4.1 The site has been the subject of three recent applications.
- 4.2 Planning application reference DC/22/1122 sought permission to convert the existing two cottages into one dwelling with associated alterations. Planning permission was granted 16th November 2022.
- 4.3 Planning application reference DC/21/0081 sought permission to replace the existing rear extensions to the existing cottages. Planning permission was granted 17th March 2021.
- 4.4 A Certificate of Lawful Development application reference DC/21/1187 sought confirmation as to whether planning permission would be required to convert the two cottages into a single dwellinghouse. A Certificate was granted on 28th October 2021 confirming permission would not be required.
- 4.5 Further north of the application located within Threals Lane is planning application DC/20/0250 dated September 2020 for the erection of 8 dwellings on a former pig farm. This has been the subject of a number of subsequent amendments.
- 4.6 To the south permission was granted under DC/22/1690 for the demolition of the former Threals Farm yard and the erection of 5 dwellings. This is the Grange Park development.

Planning Policy

- 4.7 Planning applications are required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance the development plan comprises the Horsham District Planning Framework and the Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan. Material considerations include the following:
- 4.8 Material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and the following documents:
- Facilitating Appropriate Development (endorsed 19th October 2022)
 - Natural England's Position Statement for Applications within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone (September 2021)
 - West Sussex County Council Parking Standards
 - West Chiltington Village Design Statement (2003)
 - Thakeham Parish Design Guide

Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015)

- 4.9 The accompanying Proposals Map identifies the site as lying within the countryside, adjacent to the West Chiltington built up area boundary albeit separate by Threals Lane. The emerging plan proposes to extend the boundary onto the east side of Threals Lane to include the application site and other existing houses that have been constructed in recent years.
- 4.10 The site is not directly affected by any statutory designations, although does lie within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone which is discussed further below.
- 4.11 All relevant policies are summarised below.
- 4.12 **Policy 1** states that when considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. Planning applications that accord with the Local Plan will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, taking into account whether:
- Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
 - Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.
- 4.13 **Policy 2** seeks to maintain the district's unique rural character whilst ensuring that the needs of the community are met through sustainable growth and suitable access to services and local employment. The policy seeks to focus development in and around Horsham and allow for growth in the rest of the district in accordance with the identified settlement hierarchy. The sustainable development of settlements is supported where it is appropriate in scale and retains the existing settlement pattern. Development around the edges of existing settlements will be managed to prevent the merging of settlements and to protect the rural character and landscape. The effective reuse of previously developed land will be encouraged provided that it is not of high environmental value.
- 4.14 **Policy 3** sets out the settlement hierarchy. West Chiltington, which site abuts, is a medium village defined as having a moderate level of services and facilities and some access to public transport.

- 4.15 **Policy 4** supports the growth of settlements in order to meet identified local housing, employment and community needs. Outside built-up area boundaries the expansion of settlements will be supported where the site is allocated and where it is appropriate in scale and location.
- 4.16 **Policy 15** states that provision is made for the development of at least 16,000 homes and associated infrastructure within the period 2011-2031. This figure is achieved by housing completions, homes already permitted, strategic sites, Neighbourhood Plan allocations and windfall sites.
- 4.17 **Policy 16** sets out requirements for meeting local housing needs. The threshold for affordable housing is 15 dwellings or more.
- 4.18 **Policy 25** seeks to protect the natural environment and landscape character of the district from inappropriate development.
- 4.19 **Policy 26** protects the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside outside of built-up area boundaries.
- 4.20 **Policy 27** seeks to resist developments which would result in settlement coalescence.
- 4.21 **Policy 28** relates to replacement dwellings and requires development to be accommodated within the curtilage of the existing dwellings. Replacement dwellings will only be supported on a one for one basis.
- 4.22 **Policy 32 and 33** seek to ensure that the development in the district promotes a high standard of design in order to enhance and protect locally distinctive characters such as landscaping (both with a scheme and having regard to the impact of the surrounding landscapes) and considerations on the local, social, and environment characteristics. It also seeks to ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of the development and layout (where relevant) relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the skyline and important views.

Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan 2017

- 4.23 **Policy 1** steers new development into the defined built-up area boundaries of Thakeham.
- 4.24 **Policy 6** requires the scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and material so all development proposals to reflect any architectural or historic characteristics of particular merit in, and the scale of the surrounding buildings and in the wider area. Development proposals will be expected to have had regard to the Thakeham Parish Design Statement. However, as the site is accessed through and reads as part of West Chiltington it is also relevant to consider the West Chiltington Design Statement.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 4.25 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11c confirms that for decision taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay. However, Paragraph 11d states that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies most relevant to the application are out of date, permission should be granted unless policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed, or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 4.26 Paragraph 77 of NPPF requires local planning authorities to maintain a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies. If they are unable to demonstrate such supply the Local Plan housing policies are deemed out of date, in the context of Paragraph 11d, and titled balance in favour of sustainable development is engaged.
- 4.27 Horsham District Council has most recently set out their five year housing land supply position in an Annual Monitoring Report which cites a 2.9 year supply as of 1st April 2023. This equates to a shortfall of some 1,888 dwellings, calculated against the 'old' standard method of calculating housing need. The 2024 NPPF introduced a 'new' standard method of calculating housing need which in Horsham District's case would have the effect of increasing its housing requirement from 917 to 1357 dwellings per annum. This increased requirement would however not take immediate effect as the emerging Local Plan was submitted for examination before 12th March 2025. If however the Council follows the Examiner's advice and withdraws the plan, the new requirement would take immediate effect.
- 4.28 On the basis of the Council's five year housing land supply shortfall the Local Plan's policies on housing supply are out of date and the titled balance in favour of sustainable development is engaged where water neutrality can be demonstrated.

Facilitating Appropriate Development

- 4.29 To help address the five year housing land supply shortfall, Council has produced a Facilitating Appropriate Development document which provides guidance to applicants on the criteria against which speculative applications will be assessed. Such criteria includes the following:-
- The site should adjoin the existing settlement edge as defined by the BUAB;
 - The level of expansion should be appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement the proposal relates to;
 - The proposal should demonstrate that it meets local housing needs or will assist the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services;

- The impact of the development individually or cumulatively should not prejudice comprehensive long-term development; and
- The development should be contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape character features are maintained and enhanced.

4.30 The Council's preference is for applications to be submitted in full to help with the Council's housing land supply.

4.31 The latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment should be used to establish the housing mix.

4.32 Other criteria applies relating to 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, transport, climate change and design.

Natural England's Position Statement for Applications within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone (September 2021)

4.33 Natural England issued a Position Statement to planning authorities with land sited within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone. The zone includes supplies from a groundwater abstraction location which Natural England states may have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley protected sites, which includes a Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area and Ramsar Site. In short, most forms of developments located within the zone are required to demonstrate water neutrality as a condition of planning permission.

4.34 In relation to the presumption in favour of development this only applies where impacts on the Arun Valley protected sites can be ruled out, ie where water neutrality can be demonstrated.

West Sussex County Council Parking Standards

4.35 A housing scheme is required to provide the following number of spaces:

Table 3.1 – West Sussex County Council Parking Standards

No. Of Bedrooms	No. Of Habitable Rooms	Residents Car Parking (Per Dwelling)	Visitor Car Parking	Cycle Parking (Per Dwelling)
1	1 to 3	1.5	0.2 spaces per dwelling where at least half of the parking provision is unallocated	1 space per house / or 0.5 space per flat
2	4	1.7		
3	5 to 6	2.2		
4+	7 or more	2.7		2 spaces per house / 0.5 space per flat

West Chiltington Village Design Statement 2003

4.36 The document describes the area most closely related to the application site, The Common, as being:

'...a more recent development from the turn of the 20th century, and this area, too has its historical buildings such as Gentle Harry's, Lilac Cottage and many interesting farmhouses.... Reginald Fairfax Wells began development in the 1920's and 30's with country cottages inspired by the Arts and Crafts Movement. The hallmakers were modern home of a rustic style, local materials, relatively large gardens set in a quiet, rural environment with unmade- up tracks often with difficult access; they were largely intended as weekend retreats for the wealthy, and artistes from London. Wells' Cottages are still much sought after. Later local developers including the Carter and Slater families continued to reflect many of these characteristics.'

- 4.37 The statement states in order to preserve the architectural heritage of the village, there are some cases where retention of an existing property on a redevelopment site will be desirable. Extensions, conversions, conservatories and garages should be modest and in sympathy with the character of the main building, should use sympathetic materials, and incorporate pitched roofs where possible.
- 4.38 Architectural detailing considered to be features of the village include use of traditional materials in modern housing such as Horsham Stone, thatch, chimneys and porches.

Thakeham Parish Design Guide

- 4.39 The Thakeham Parish Design Guide states that the open agricultural nature of the parish is essential to its character and is highly valued and should be maintained and that there should be no further development in greenfield areas other than the sympathetic conversion of existing traditional buildings.
- 4.40 The use of wild flower areas will be encouraged rather than ground cover shrubs and large areas of hard landscaping.
- 4.41 Hard boundaries around properties will be discouraged and Sussex post and rail or hazel hurdles or planted hedges will be encouraged in its place.
- 4.42 Every effort should be made to retain existing hedgerows or planting of new ones to disguise hard lines.
- 4.43 Existing mature trees should be retained and more introduced to break up rooflines with their leafy canopy.
- 4.44 Buildings should acknowledge their Sussex context and rural location by use of a variation of roof types and slopes, controlled mix of architectural styles and periods whilst maintaining a natural landscape.
- 4.45 New buildings and extensions to existing buildings should reflect local style by use of local materials and features.

Environmental Considerations

- 4.46 The site is The site is located within Flood Zone 1 with a low probability of flooding. The site is also at less-than-low risk of flooding from surface water or rivers.

steer housing proposals coming forward on sites outside of settlement boundaries. Applications which meet all of the guidance criteria will be positively considered. There are elements of the criteria which could be met by housing of the scale and siting proposed.

- The built-up area boundary of West Chilton is proposed to be amended as part of the emerging Local Plan and this would include the site. Whilst the plan has yet to be adopted and is of limited weight, it does provide an indication of future policy direction.
- Should an application be submitted, the Council's current 5 year housing land supply, the FAD and the draft Local Plan would be material considerations of weight in the planning balance.
- The proposal would provide limited spacing between the dwellings, with the quantum of development considered to result in overdevelopment of the site when considered against the grain and build pattern of the immediate and wider surroundings. Given the prominent location of the site, the proposal would likely appear as a dominant and intrusive addition within the street which would fail to reflect the build pattern and built characteristics of the locality. As such, there are some concerns that the proposed development would appear out of character with the characteristics and visual amenity of the surroundings.
- The two detached dwellings would be designed in a barn style, with the pair of semi-detached dwellings in a traditional style, similar to the existing cottages. The design and appearance will mimic the original cottages, with slate tile roofs and sandstone, as well as timber cladding. The use of similar materials would help blend the dwellings into the existing built environment.
- The proposed development would be located at a sufficient distance from existing dwellings so that no adverse harm to existing properties would likely occur. However, given the cramped nature of the proposed development, there are concerns that the proposal would result in a poor relationship between the dwellings. There would be minimal spacing between the proposed dwelling, where there would be a greater perception of overlooking, particularly between Plots 2/3 and Plot 4, and this would be further exaggerated by the land levels and varying heights of the development. A reduction in the number of dwellings would offer the opportunity to improve the layout of the development to reduce the potential for overlooking and loss of privacy.

Proposed Development

- 5.3 In order to address the Council's concerns regarding overdevelopment the scheme has been revisited since the pre-application stage. Consideration has been given to prevailing house styles and sizes, and plot sizes within the local area in order to inform a scheme which more appropriately reflects the local build pattern and characteristics of the site's surroundings.

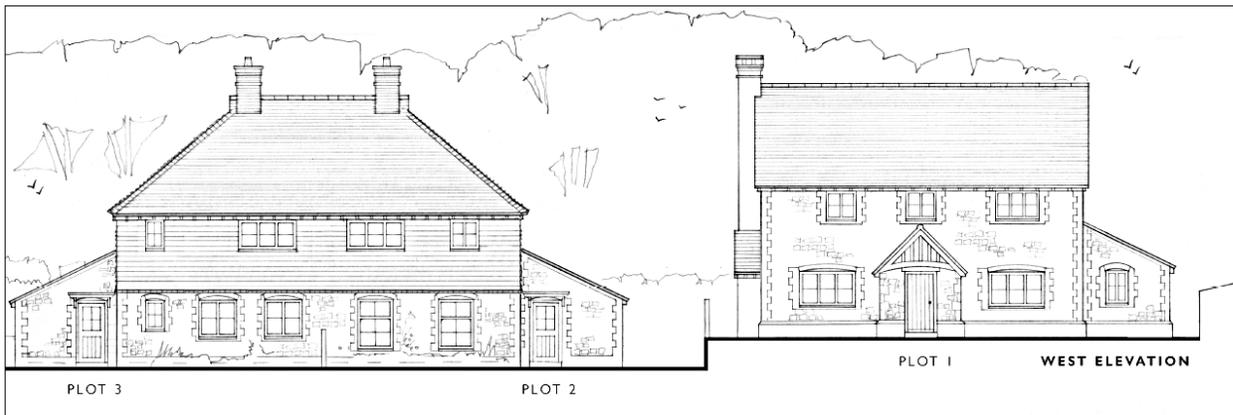
- 5.4 The application now proposes three dwellings, arranged as a pair of 3 bed semi-detached cottages and a detached 4 bed house. These would be orientated to face on to Threals Lane and arranged in a line as per the majority of other houses on Threals Lane. This would also address the overlooking concerns raised within the pre-application enquiry.
- 5.5 The three bed (5 person) cottages would each provide 108sqm of gross internal floor area and the four bed (7 person) dwelling would provide 146sqm. These are all well in excess of the national space standard for these sizes of dwelling.
- 5.6 The proposed housing mix largely reflects the housing need identified within the latest Northern West Sussex Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The SHMA identified the largest need being for 3 bed dwellings in terms of open market housing, with the need for 2 and 4 bed dwellings being the next highest. 2 bed dwellings in this location would however look out of place and therefore a 4 bed dwelling is proposed alongside two three-bed homes.

Figure 5.2 - Proposed Site Plan and Context Plan





Figure 5.3 – Proposed Street Scene



- 5.7 Features would include chimneys, lean-to side extensions and a deep porch.
- 5.8 The existing access on Threals Lane would be retained with turning space to enable vehicles to leave the site in a forward gear. The dwellings would each be provided with two parking spaces each with two visitor spaces across the development. There is space within each plot for the provision of secure cycle stores.
- 5.9 The development would not require any tree removal.

5.10 Biodiversity Net Gain will be achieved through the provision on-site of 500sqm of wildflower meadow and the planting of 6 trees and a hedgerow, all in an area that sits outside of the proposed gardens. This will achieve a 16.6% net gain for habitat units and 11% net gain for hedgerow units.

6 PLANNING APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues in the consideration of the application are considered to be:

- Principle
- Design and Appearance
- Impact on Amenity
- Ecology
- Trees
- Access and Parking
- Water Neutrality

6.2 These matters are discussed in more detail below.

Principle of Development

6.3 The site lies outside of the defined Built-Up Area Boundary (BUAB) and is therefore designated as countryside under the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF). Ordinarily, Policy 4 (Expansion of Settlements) and Policy 26 (Countryside Protection) would restrict such development. However, due to Horsham District Council's current housing land supply deficit—most recently reported as 2.9 years—housing policies are deemed out of date under paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF (2024). Consequently, the “tilted balance” in favour of sustainable development is engaged.

6.4 Furthermore, the site adjoins the BUAB and lies within a cluster of residential properties, with recent developments permitted to both the north and south. The proposal aligns with the Council's Facilitating Appropriate Development (FAD) guidance, and meets all criteria as follows:

The site adjoins the existing settlement edge as defined by the BUAB;

The site is adjacent to the existing BUAB, albeit separated by the width of Threals Lane. The BUAB is also proposed to be extended to include the site as part of the emerging Local Plan.

The level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement the proposal relates to;

The expansion would be very modest and would not actually extend the settlement boundary as it is perceived on the ground, being entirely within the residential curtilage of existing dwellings.

The proposal demonstrates that it meets local housing needs or will assist the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services;

The proposed housing mix is commensurate with housing need identified within the latest SHMA, that being for 3 and 4 (and 2) bed dwellings. Occupiers of the dwellings will support the local shop and services, helping to keep them viable.

The impact of the development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long-term development; and

The proposal would have no effect on long-term development plans which are not proposed in this area in any case.

The development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape character features are maintained and enhanced.

The development is located entirely within the natural boundary of the site. All notable trees will be retained. A small section of hedgerow will need to be removed to improve the site access, however this will have minimal effect on the landscape character of the area.

6.5 The site is also relatively sustainably located given the rural location. There is a grocery shop, primary school, doctor surgery, dentist and post office within 2 miles and bus stops are available on Common Road approximately 0.6 miles away.

6.6 Given the housing shortfall, emerging policy support for expanding the BUAB, and the site's established residential character, the principle of residential redevelopment is acceptable, subject to other material considerations.

Design and Appearance

6.7 The proposed dwellings have been carefully designed to reflect local vernacular architecture. Design cues include the use of traditional Sussex materials such as local sandstone, Warnham stock bricks, clay tiles, and slate roofs. Detailing such as chimneys, dentil courses, tile hanging, and deep porches contribute to the rural character and integrate the dwellings with their surroundings.

6.8 The revised scheme reduces the number of dwellings from four to three, thereby addressing concerns about overdevelopment raised at the pre-application stage. The linear form fronting Threals Lane respects the prevailing settlement pattern and visual rhythm of nearby properties, ensuring the scheme is in keeping with the existing grain of development.

- 6.9 The proposed layout provides sufficient plot sizes and spacing to avoid a cramped appearance, with each dwelling benefitting from a private garden and on-plot parking. The development therefore complies with HDPF Policies 32 and 33, as well as the Thakeham and West Chiltington Design Guides.

Impact on Amenity

- 6.10 The proposed dwellings have been sited and designed to minimise potential impacts on existing neighbouring properties and each other. The dwellings are located at a sufficient distance from neighbouring boundaries to avoid loss of privacy or overshadowing.
- 6.11 By orienting the dwellings to face the highway and increasing plot separation from earlier designs, the proposals mitigate concerns about mutual overlooking and internal amenity raised in the pre-application response. Each unit benefits from good levels of natural light, outlook, and amenity space, meeting national space standards.

Ecology

- 6.12 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been submitted with the application. The site has limited ecological value given its residential use and managed gardens. Nonetheless, enhancements are proposed in line with the requirement for 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), including native hedgerow planting, wildflower areas, and tree planting.
- 6.13 The development avoids harm to protected species and seeks to deliver measurable ecological improvements, consistent with Policy 25 of the HDPF and national biodiversity objectives.

Trees

- 6.14 The site is well enclosed by mature boundary vegetation, which will largely be retained. Where tree removal is required to facilitate access improvements, replacement planting and boundary enhancements are proposed.
- 6.15 The landscaping scheme has been designed to soften the development, enhance visual amenity, and maintain a rural feel. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in arboricultural and landscape terms.

Access and Parking

- 6.16 Vehicular access will be taken from Threals Lane with no modifications required to the existing access point.
- 6.17 The scheme complies with West Sussex County Council parking standards which require 2.2 spaces per 3 bedroom dwelling and 2.7spaces per 4 bedroom dwelling. The 3 bedroom dwellings have 5 spaces between them and the 4 bedroom dwelling has 3 spaces.

6.18 Each dwelling will have a secure cycle store. Adequate turning space is shown on the submitted site plan to allow vehicles to exit in a forward gear, minimising highway safety risks.

Water Neutrality

6.19 The site lies within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone and is therefore subject to the requirement to demonstrate water neutrality in line with Natural England's position statement.

6.20 A Water Neutrality Report accompanies the application, which confirms the three dwellings would use less water than the existing two dwellings. The proposed dwellings would have a maximum water usage of 110 litres of water per person per day. The existing dwellings have historically had high occupancy rates and their associated water usage was therefore higher than that now proposed.

6.21 Accordingly, the proposal satisfies the requirements of the Habitats Regulations and allows the presumption in favour of sustainable development to be applied.

7 SUMMARY

- 7.1 The planning statement supports an application for the demolition of two existing semi-detached dwellings at Threals Farm Cottages, Threals Lane, West Chiltington, and their replacement with three new dwellings. The proposal includes two three-bedroom semi-detached cottages and one four-bedroom detached house, along with associated parking and alterations to the site's vehicular access. The site, which extends to approximately 0.19 hectares, is located adjacent to the built-up area boundary (BUAB) of West Chiltington, within the parish of Thakeham. It sits within an established residential setting, surrounded by existing homes and recent residential developments to the north and south.
- 7.2 Although the site is technically designated as countryside under the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF), the Council's current inability to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply (currently at 2.9 years) means that housing policies are considered out of date. In accordance with Paragraph 11(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework the presumption in favour of sustainable development is therefore engaged. The proposal aligns with the Council's Facilitating Appropriate Development (FAD) guidance, which allows for housing outside BUABs in specific circumstances. The site adjoins the settlement boundary, sits within a defensible landscaped boundary, and reflects the scale and character of development in the immediate area. Moreover, the housing mix contributes to addressing identified local needs, particularly for three- and four-bedroom homes.
- 7.3 The design of the proposed dwellings draws on local vernacular architecture, incorporating materials such as Sussex sandstone, Warnham stock bricks, clay hanging tiles, and slate roofs. Architectural detailing—including chimneys, dentil courses, and porches—ensures the dwellings are sympathetic to both the site and surrounding development. The layout, which has been revised since an earlier pre-application for four dwellings, addresses previous concerns regarding overdevelopment and overlooking by reducing density and orienting the dwellings to face Threals Lane, in line with local development patterns.
- 7.4 Each property benefits from ample private amenity space, on-plot parking (in line with West Sussex County Council standards), and cycle storage. Access improvements include alterations to the existing access and the creation of a secondary point to improve vehicular safety and circulation. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal supports the application and outlines proposed enhancements to deliver a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain through native planting, bird and bat boxes, and wildflower areas. The proposal is also compliant with Natural England's requirements for water neutrality within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone. A supporting Water Neutrality Report demonstrates that the proposed dwellings would result in a net reduction in water consumption compared to the existing units, satisfying the relevant Habitats Regulations.

7.5 Overall, the proposed development represents a high-quality, sensitively designed scheme that responds to its context, addresses housing need, and meets national and local policy objectives. In light of the Council's housing shortfall, the emerging Local Plan's support for BUAB expansion, and the site's sustainable location, the application is considered to comply with the presumption in favour of sustainable development and is therefore recommended for approval.



Ms Caroline Stephens
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RH16 1HE

Our ref: PE/24/0166
Your ref:
Officer: Bethan Tinning
Email: bethan.tinning@horsham.gov.uk
Tel: 01403 215429
Date: 30th September 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

Location: Threals Cottage Birch Tree Lane West Chiltington Pulborough

Details: Erection of 4 new dwellings (INCLUDES SITE VISIT)

Your enquiry has been considered and I can advise as follows:

Thank you for your recent enquiry regarding the above. Following a site visit, I have now been able to review the submitted details and the planning history of the site and can advise the following: -

The pre-application enquiry site comprises an existing cottage, considered a non-designated heritage asset, which sits adjacent to the built-up area boundary of West Chiltington. The application site sits at a higher ground level than street level and has views over rolling fields to the east. There is sufficient hedgerows and vegetation that currently provide screening along the southern and northern boundary. Pre-application advice is sought for the erection of four new dwellings with associated landscaping.

Principle of Development

Policy 2 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) sets out the main growth strategy, focusing development in the main settlements. The HDPF outlines that the proposed settlement hierarchy is the most sustainable approach to delivering housing; where new development is focused in the larger settlements of Horsham, Southwater and Billingshurst; and limited new development is directed elsewhere, and only where it accords with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan. Specifically, Policy 3 of the Horsham District Planning Framework seeks to retain the existing settlement pattern and ensure that development takes place in the most sustainable locations as possible.

Policy 3 of the HDPF seeks to concentrate new development within existing settlement boundaries, with Policy 4 setting out a series of criteria which must all be met for the expansion of settlements. West Chiltington is classified by Policy 3 as a 'Medium Village', these are settlements with a moderate level of services and facilities, together with some access to public transport.

Policy 4 of the HDPF outlines that the expansion of settlements outside the built-up area are supported where the site is allocated in the Local Plan or in a Neighbourhood Plan and adjoins an existing settlement edge; the level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement type; the development is demonstrated to meet the identified local housing needs; the

impact of development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long term development; and the development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape and townscape character features are maintained and enhanced.

As the site is located outside of any defined built-up area boundary, Policies 3 and 4 of the HDPF are of significant weight in the determination of the application. As stated within Policy 3 of the HDPF, development will be permitted within towns and villages that have defined built-up areas; with development in the countryside more strictly controlled through the provisions of Policy 4. This policy states that development outside of built up areas will only be supported where the site is allocated in the Local Plan or in a Neighbourhood Plan and adjoins a settlement edge.

In addition, within this countryside location, the proposal is also considered against Policy 26 which seeks to protect the countryside against inappropriate development unless it is considered essential and appropriate in scale; whilst also meeting one of four criteria. This criterion includes: supporting the needs of agriculture or forestry; enabling the extraction of minerals or the disposal of waste; providing for quiet informal recreational use; or enabling the sustainable development of rural areas. The proposed development does not meet any of this criterion, nor is it considered to be essential to the countryside location, and does not therefore comply with Policy 26 of the HDPF.

The Council is however currently unable to demonstrate a five year housing land supply, with the latest Authority Monitoring Report (December 2023) detailing a supply of 2.9 years. In such instances the Paragraph 11(d)(ii) of the NPPF states that where there are no relevant development plan policies in place, or the policies that are considered most important for the determination of applications are out of date (such as when a five year housing land supply cannot be demonstrated), planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

In this case the most important policies contained within the HDPF, including Policies 2, 4 and 26 must be afforded reduce weight given the engagement of the 'tilted balance' within Paragraph 11d.

In recognition of this, the Council published interim guidance on Facilitating Appropriate Development (FAD). The FAD recognises that the Council is likely to receive applications outside of defined BUABs and on unallocated sites (such as this proposal) as it is unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. Given this position and the principles behind HDPF Policy 4, The FAD confirms that applications which meet all of the criteria will be positively considered:

- The site adjoins the existing settlement edge as defined by the BUAB;
- The level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement the proposal relates to;
- The proposal demonstrates that it meets local housing needs or will assist the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services;
- The impact of the development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long-term development; and
- The development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape character features are maintained and enhanced.

There are elements of the above FAD criteria which could be met by residential development of the scale and siting proposed.

It is also of note that the Local Plan for the Horsham District has been submitted for examination. The new Horsham District Local Plan ('the HDLP') will set out planning policies and proposals to guide development in the district up to 2040. As part of this, the built-up area boundary of West Chiltington has been reviewed, where the emerging policy framework has included the application site within the proposed built-up area boundary of West Chiltington. Therefore, under the new

Local Plan, the application site would be considered within the built-up area boundary. Whilst the plan has yet to be formally adopted, and is therefore of limited weight, it does provide an indication of future policy direction, with this being a material consideration of limited weight.

Should an application be submitted, the Council's current 5-year housing land supply, the FAD, and the draft Local Plan, would be material considerations of weight in the planning balance.

Character and Appearance

Policy 32 of the HDPF states that good design is a key element in sustainable development and seeks to ensure that development promotes a high standard of urban design, architecture, and landscape. Policy 33 of the HDPF states that development proposals should make efficient use of land, integrate effectively with the character of the surrounding area, use high quality and appropriate materials, retain landscaping where feasible (and mitigate loss if necessary) and ensure no conflict with the character of the surrounding town or landscape.

The site is located to the edge of the built-up area of West Chilton, and is sited on a relatively prominent corner. The wider surroundings are characterised by detached dwellings of varying size and design within relatively spacious plots, with the boundaries predominantly defined by trees and hedging. The north and east of the site is defined by agricultural fields and sporadic development comprising dwellings and agricultural buildings.

The proposed development would comprise 4 no. dwellings consisting of two detached dwellings and a pair of semi-detached dwellings. Areas of hardsurfacing would be provided for access and parking, with the plans indicating some soft landscaping. The proposal as shown would provide limited spacing between the dwellings, with the quantum of development considered to result in overdevelopment of the site when considered against the grain and build pattern of the immediate and wider surroundings. Given the prominent location of the site, the proposal would likely appear as a dominant and intrusive addition within the street which would fail to reflect the build pattern and built characteristics of the locality. As such, there are some concerns that the proposed development would appear out of character with the characteristics and visual amenity of the surroundings.

Notwithstanding the above, it is recognised that the two detached dwellings would be designed in a barn style, with the pair of semi-detached dwellings in a traditional style, similar to the existing cottage. The design and appearance will mimic the original cottages, with slate tile roofs and sandstone, as well as timber cladding. The use of similar materials would help blend the dwellings into the existing built environment. Whilst the design and appearance of the proposed dwellings would reflect the characteristics of similar built form in the area, there remains concerns that the proposal, due to its quantum and layout, would appear out of character with the area and would fail to reflect the built characteristics of the locality.

Amenity

Policy 33 of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.

The proposed development would be located at a sufficient distance from existing dwellings so that no adverse harm to existing properties would likely occur. However, given the cramped nature of the proposed development, there are concerns that the proposal would result in a poor relationship between the dwellings. There would be minimal spacing between the proposed dwelling, where there would be a greater perception of overlooking, particularly between Plots 2/3 and Plot 4, and this would be further exaggerated by the land levels and varying heights of the development. A reduction in the number of dwellings would offer the opportunity to improve the layout of the development to reduce the potential for overlooking and loss of privacy.

Should an application be submitted, the proposal would be subject of wider public consultation.

Heritage

Policy 34 of the Horsham Development Framework aims to sustain and enhance the historic environment through positive management of development affecting heritage assets. By reassuring development preserve and ensure clear legibility of, locally distinctive vernacular building forms and their settings, features, fabric, and materials.

The HDC Conservation Officer provided the following response in relation to the proposed dwellings:

"Threals Farm Cottages are a pair of semi-detached dwellings built in local sandstone. They appear on the early addition Ordnance Survey maps as a single building and may have been the nineteenth century farmhouse. In any case, the traditional construction and simple architectural detailing reflect a provincial vernacular and the building should be considered a non-designated heritage asset alongside the surviving Threals barn to the south. I have been unable to find any information about the historic farm but there may be more information available at the West Sussex Records Office. Any proposal to demolish the existing building should include an assessment of its historic significance and clear justification for its demolition including in relation to sustainability as it does not appear to be structurally unsound. Any new development should be designed to reflect the rural context of the site on this historic common."

Based on the above comments from the Conservation Officer, further justification is required in relation to the demolition of the non-designated heritage asset. An assessment of the historical significance and clear justification for the demolition of the existing building is required. Any new development should be designed to reflect the rural context of the site, but in the first instance, the existing historic building on site should be retained and reused to preserve the non-designated heritage asset.

Highways

Policy 40 of the HDPF deals with sustainable transport and seeks new developments to provide safe and suitable access for all vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, horses riders, public transport, and the delivery of goods. Policy 41 which relates to parking requires adequate parking and facilities to be provided within developments to meet the needs of anticipated users.

The proposal would incorporate the creation of at least 2 parking spaces per dwelling, with separate access off Threals Lane for each dwelling. According to the West Sussex Parking Guidance, the minimum number of parking spaces for a dwelling with 2 bedrooms in Zone 1 is 1.7 spaces, and for 3 bedrooms is 2.2 spaces. From the site plans provided, it appears that this is achievable with at least 2 spaces allocated to each dwelling which would meet the requirements. This would, however, be subject of consultation with WSCC Highways if an application is submitted.

The Local Highway Authority (LHA), West Sussex County Council (WSCC) offer a separate preapplication service. This may be useful to understand the impact the proposal may have on the highway network and safety, as well sustainable transport assessments, and any additional parking requirements, as HDC is not able to fully assess the impact that the development may have on highway and its use. The LHA operate their own pre-application advice service further details of which can be found through the following link:

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/information-for-developers/pre-application-advice-for-roads-and-transport/>

Ecology

Policy 31 of the HDPF states that development will be supported where it demonstrates that it maintains or enhances the existing network of green infrastructure. Development proposals will be required to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity and should create and manage new habitats where appropriate.

Should an application be submitted, it would need to demonstrate that the proposed development would have no adverse impact on protected species, such as bats, and its habitat and provide reasonable and necessary enhancements and mitigations where needed.

Water Neutrality

The application site falls within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone as defined by Natural England and which includes supplies from groundwater abstraction which cannot, with certainty, demonstrate no adverse impacts upon the defined Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites. A recently received advice note from Natural England advises that planning applications will be required to demonstrate, with sufficient certainty, that they will not contribute to an existing adverse effect. The advice note advises that one way of achieving this is through water neutrality, whereby new development does not result in a greater demand / usage of water than currently exists.

It is considered that offsetting 4 dwellings on site may not be possible, so offsite offsetting may be more likely. In order to demonstrate water neutrality, a strategy (in the form of a Water Neutrality Statement) would need to be prepared and submitted as part of any planning application. It would need to be assessed whether the water usage would be equal to or lower than the existing usage at the site. Further information on this matter can be found through the following link: -

<https://www.horsham.gov.uk/planning/water-neutrality-in-horsham-district/water-neutrality-and-planning-applications>

Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is an approach introduced under the Environment Act 2021, to ensure that developments and land management leave the natural environment in a better state than it was before. It contributes towards nature recovery by helping to deliver habitat creation and enhancements as part of the design of new development.

There is now a statutory requirement to provide a minimum of 10% BNG on development sites. Further information can be found at: -

<https://www.horsham.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications/biodiversity-net-gain>

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Development within Horsham District Council is now subject to a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The development would therefore be fully CIL liable. Full details of CIL in the Horsham District (including the Charging Schedule) can be found on the HDC website at:

<https://www.horsham.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/community-infrastructure-levy/what-is-cil>

It is recommended that you view these pages to help inform what the CIL payment would be for any residential development of this site. Any application will need to include completed CIL forms as part of the submission.

Conclusion

On the basis of the above, it is considered that further information is required to demonstrate the justification for the demolition of the existing cottage on site, as well as design and elevations. It is therefore considered that an application is submitted, for further consideration and public consultation.

<https://www.horsham.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications/apply-for-planning-permissio>

Should an application be submitted, the following information would be required: -

- Location Plan
- Block Plan
- Proposed Floor and Elevations Plan
- Site Section Plans
- Planning Statement
- Water Neutrality Statement
- Biodiversity Net Gain Statement
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (including Bat Scoping Report and Great Crested Newt Survey)

The above comments are given as the opinion of the Case Officer and do not prejudice any outcome of a subsequent application. Should you submit a formal planning application, please quote reference number PE/24/0166 in your submission.

Yours faithfully

Bethan Tinning
Graduate Planning Officer

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

Horsham District Council implemented a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule on 1st October 2017.

The Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge placed on new development. The funds raised will help to pay for a wide range of infrastructure to support development across Horsham District.

Most new development which creates net additional floorspace of 100m² or more, or creates a new dwelling, (including permitted development), is potentially liable for the levy.

How does it affect you?

Applications for CIL liable development which are determined on or after 1st October 2017 are required to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy (unless the development qualifies for relief or exemption).

Further information and the rates charged by Horsham District Council are set out in the CIL Charging Schedule which can be viewed online at www.horsham.gov.uk/planning/apply/cil

General Consent e.g. Permitted Development

Developments which are permitted by way of a general consent (such as permitted development) may still be liable to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy if they meet the above criteria.

In these circumstances, you must submit a Notice of Chargeable Development (CIL form 5), notify us of the person who will assume liability to pay the CIL and make any applications for relief or exemption, before the development is commenced.