

## PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Demolition of existing 2no. dwellings and erection of 4no  
dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and  
alterations to the existing access

at

Threals Farm Cottages  
Threals Lane  
West Chiltington  
West Sussex  
RH20 2RF

**ON BEHALF OF**  
Whiteoak Developments

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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 4no. dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and alterations to the existing access*

1.2 The application is submitted as an alternative to a similar scheme for three dwellings which was granted planning permission in December 2025. The principle of residential redevelopment of the site has therefore already been established.

1.3 This Statement sets out the relevant background to assist the Local Planning Authority in its determination of the application. It includes a description of the site and its surroundings, details of the proposed development, a review of relevant planning policy, and an appraisal of the proposal against all material planning considerations.

1.4 The application is supported by the following documents:

Document Type	Plans
Planning, Design and Access Statement	Drg No. A101-J1003 Location and Block Plan
Heritage Statement	Drg No. A102-J1003 Existing Site Plan
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	Drg No. AJ03-J1003 Existing Floor Plans
BNG Baseline Report, Condition Assessments and Calculations	Drg No. A104-J1003 Existing Elevation Plans
Bat Survey	Drg No. A105-J1003 Existing Site Sections
Application and Ownership forms	Drg No. A106-J1003 Proposed Site Plan
CIL Forms	Drg No. A107-J1003 Block Plan

	Drg No. A108-J1003 Plots 1 and 2 Proposed Floor Plans
	Drg No. A109-J1003 Plots 1 and 2 Proposed Elevation Plans
	Drg No. A110-J1003 Plots 1 and 2 Proposed Elevations Plans
	Drg No. A111-J1003 Plots 3 and 4 Proposed Floor Plans
	Drg No. A112-J1003 Plots 4 Proposed Elevation Plans
	Drg No. A113-J1003 Plots 4 Proposed Elevation Plans
	Drg No. A114-J1003 Proposed Site Sections
	Indicative Street Scene Image

## 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 Chiltonton but lying within the parish of Thakeham.

Figure 2.1 – Aerial photograph of the application site



- 2.2 The site extends to 0.18 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**



### **Surrounding Area**

- 2.3 The site currently has a single vehicular access directly onto Threals Lane.
- 2.4 The boundaries are well screened by established hedgerows and trees, providing a strong and defensible visual enclosure.
- 2.5 Surrounding land uses include residential development to the north, including a site with planning permission for eight dwellings currently under construction, and the recently completed Grange Park development of five dwellings to the south. Open farmland lies to the east.
- 2.6 The application site is situated within an established residential setting with several existing residential properties nearby as depicted below.

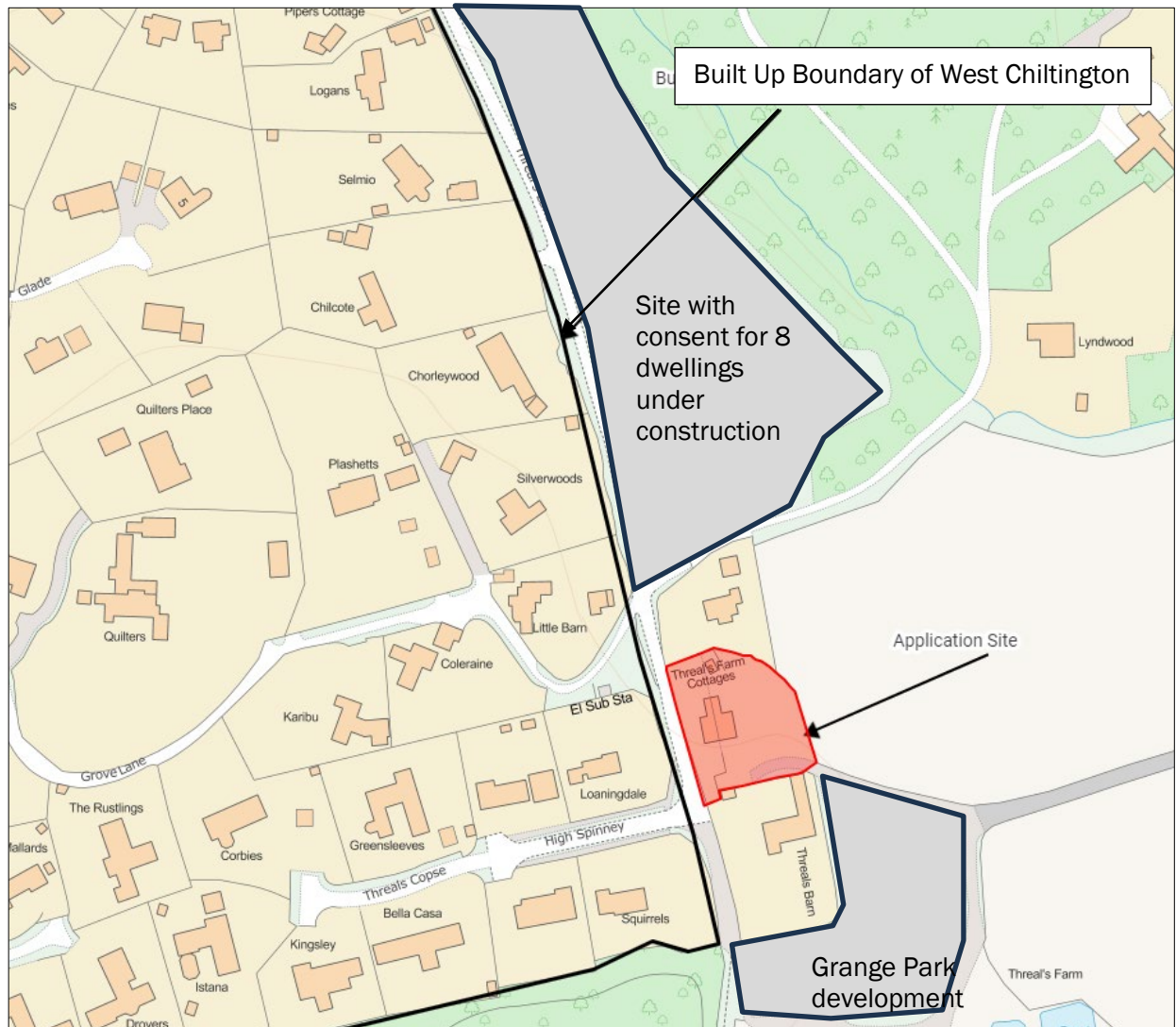
Figure 2.3 – Existing dwellings nearby



2.7 The application site is adjacent to the built-up boundary of West Chiltonington which is classed as a medium

village with a moderate level of services, facilities and community networks and some access to public transport. Although the site lies outside of the BUAB, it reads visually and functionally as part of the existing settlement.

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



### **3 DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

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

#### **Site Context and Constraints**

3.2 The application site measures approximately 0.18 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.

#### **Use**

3.5 The proposed use continues to be 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 site benefits from a recently granted planning permission for the demolition of the existing cottages and their replacement with two semi-detached three-bedroom dwellings and one four-bedroom detached dwelling. During the Planning Committee meeting at which the application was considered, a Councillor expressed a preference for the detached dwelling to be replaced with a second pair of semi-detached houses, in order to better reflect the identified need in West Chiltington for smaller homes. This view has since been supported by advice from local estate agents, who have confirmed that a scheme comprising four smaller dwellings would be in greater demand. Accordingly, the application is now being resubmitted as a proposal for four smaller houses, as follows:

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

2 x 3-bedroom semi-detached dwellings (104 sqm each)

## **Layout**

- 3.7 The four 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.
- 3.8 The layout allows for appropriate separation distances between dwellings, preserving privacy and amenity.

## **Scale and Appearance**

- 3.9 The dwellings are of a similar design to the approved scheme, albeit the detached dwelling is now designed as a pair of semi-detached dwellings with slight design variations to the original pair to add interest. 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
- 3.10 The scale is domestic and respectful of surrounding properties, avoiding the overdevelopment concerns raised at pre-application stage.

## **Landscaping & Biodiversity**

- 3.11 The development retains all significant boundary trees and introduces soft landscaping including wildflower meadow, new hedgerow and tree planting.
- 3.12 These measures contribute to a Biodiversity Net Gain of at least 10% in accordance with current policy requirements. It is however likely that the site will be exempt from BNG under the new small sites exemption expected to come into effect in May 2026.

## **Access**

- 3.13 Access continues to be 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
- 3.14 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 four recent applications.
- 4.2 Planning application reference DC/25/1232 sought permission for the demolition of the existing two cottages and the erection of three cottages with associated parking. This is the scheme referred to elsewhere in this report as the recently consented scheme, and is shown below in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 – Approved Scheme



- 4.3 In recommending the application for approval, the Planning Officer concluded that, despite the site being outside the defined built-up area boundary and therefore a departure from the development plan, the proposal to demolish two cottages and replace them with three new dwellings was acceptable when considered against the presumption in favour of sustainable development given Horsham District Council's significant shortfall in housing land supply. The officer found that the design and layout were appropriate and that there would be no unacceptable impacts on heritage assets, residential amenity, highways safety or ecology. On this basis, and with mitigation secured by conditions where necessary, the benefits of the housing proposed were judged to outweigh the identified policy conflicts, leading to planning permission being granted at Committee on 16th December 2025. This consent represents a highly material consideration, demonstrating that the principle, scale and form of residential redevelopment at the site are acceptable in planning terms.
- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 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.
- 4.6 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.
- 4.7 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.
- 4.8 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**

- 4.9 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:
- 4.10 Material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and the following documents:
- Shaping Development in Horsham District (endorsed 17th September 2025)
  - West Sussex County Council Parking Standards

- West Chiltington Village Design Statement (2003)
- Thakeham Parish Design Guide

4.11 The policy framework has not changed since the previous application was approved.

***Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015)***

4.12 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.

4.13 The site is not directly affected by any statutory designations.

4.14 All relevant policies are summarised below.

4.15 **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.

4.16 **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.

4.17 **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.

- 4.18 **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.
- 4.19 **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.
- 4.20 **Policy 16** sets out requirements for meeting local housing needs. The threshold for affordable housing is 15 dwellings or more.
- 4.21 **Policy 25** seeks to protect the natural environment and landscape character of the district from inappropriate development.
- 4.22 **Policy 26** protects the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside outside of built-up area boundaries.
- 4.23 **Policy 27** seeks to resist developments which would result in settlement coalescence.
- 4.24 **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.
- 4.25 **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*

- 4.26 **Policy 1** steers new development into the defined built-up area boundaries of Thakeham.
- 4.27 **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)*

- 4.28 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. Horsham District Council currently cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. As such, relevant housing supply policies are out of date and the tilted balance under paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF applies.
- 4.29 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.
- 4.30 Horsham District Council has most recently set out their five year housing land supply position in the 2023/24 Annual Monitoring Report which cites a 1 year supply. This equates to a shortfall of some 7268 dwellings.
- 4.31 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.

### *Shaping Development in Horsham District*

- 4.32 To help address the five year housing land supply shortfall, the Council has produced this 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 should be maintained and enhanced.

- 4.33 The Council's preference is for applications to be submitted in full to help with the Council's housing land supply.
- 4.34 The latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment should be used to establish the housing mix.
- 4.35 Other criteria applies relating to 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, transport, climate change and design.

**West Sussex County Council Parking Standards**

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

**Table 4.1 – 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***

- 4.37 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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.'*

- 4.38 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.
- 4.39 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*

- 4.40 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.
- 4.41 The use of wild flower areas will be encouraged rather than ground cover shrubs and large areas of hard landscaping.
- 4.42 Hard boundaries around properties will be discouraged and Sussex post and rail or hazel hurdles or planted hedges will be encouraged in its place.
- 4.43 Every effort should be made to retain existing hedgerows or planting of new ones to disguise hard lines.
- 4.44 Existing mature trees should be retained and more introduced to break up rooflines with their leafy canopy.
- 4.45 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.
- 4.46 New buildings and extensions to existing buildings should reflect local style by use of local materials and features.

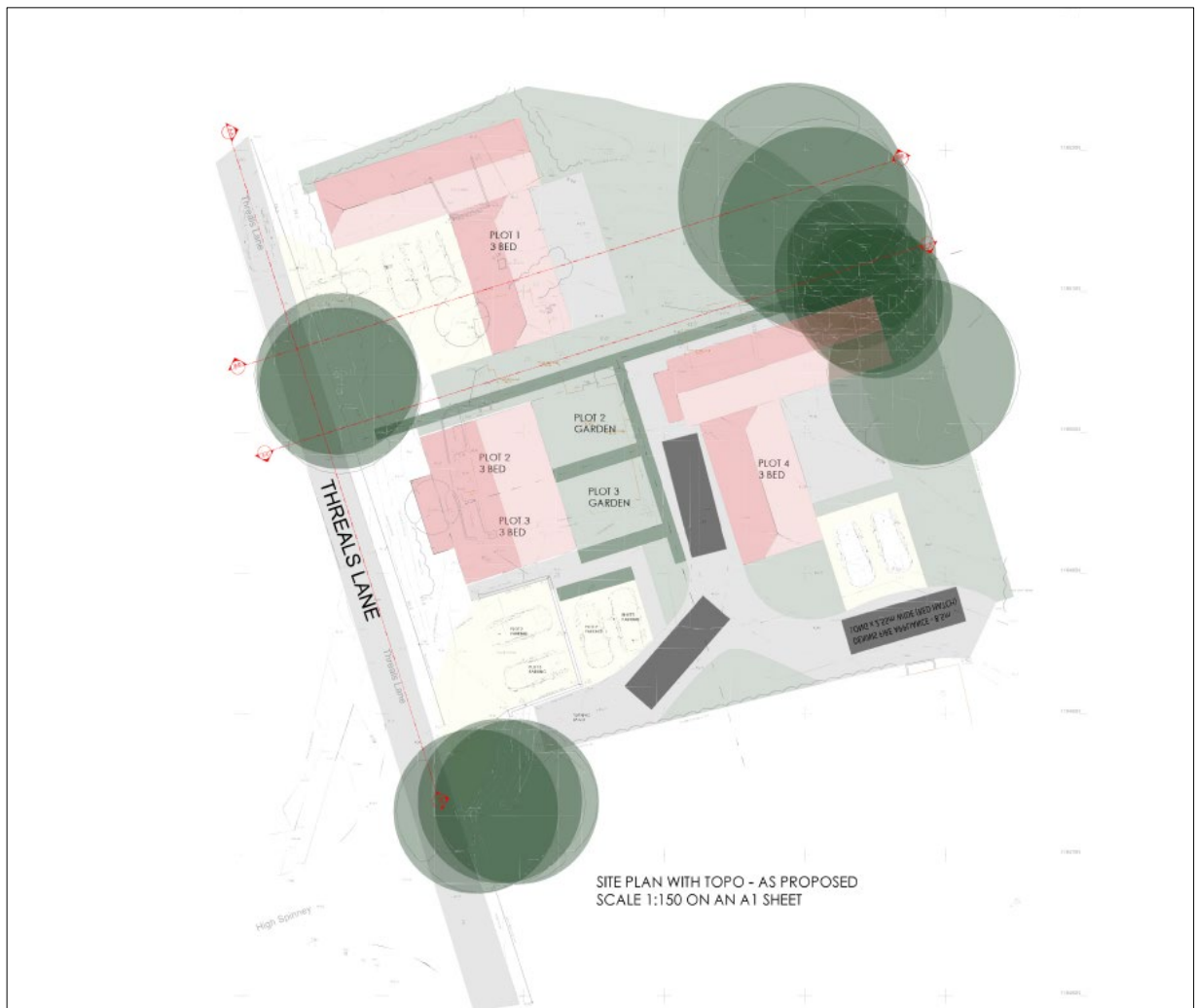
### **Environmental Considerations**

- 4.47 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.

## 5 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 The application proposes the demolition of the existing pair of cottages. These require substantial investment to bring them up to standard which would not be viable work to undertake.
- 5.2 Prior to the previous planning application, the site was the subject of a pre-application enquiry which sought the planning authority's advice about the proposed demolition of the cottages and erection of four dwellings. Two of the dwellings were sizeable detached barn-style properties which the other two were arranged as semi-detached cottages. Figure 4.1 below shows the proposed layout.

**Figure 5.1 – Pre-Application Proposal for 4no. Dwellings**



- 5.3 In relation to the number of dwellings proposed the Council commented:
- 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.

5.4 The concerns with the scheme therefore related to the arrangement of dwellings and the cramped nature of the development as a result of the larger plots hosting detached dwellings.

5.5 In relation to the consented scheme of three dwellings, the planning officer concluded that, despite the site being outside the defined built-up area boundary and therefore a departure from the development plan, the proposal to demolish two cottages and replace them with three new dwellings was acceptable when considered against the presumption in favour of sustainable development given Horsham's significant shortfall in housing land supply. The officer found that the design and layout were appropriate and that there would be no unacceptable impacts on heritage assets, residential amenity, highways safety or ecology. On this basis, and with mitigation secured by conditions where necessary, the benefits of the housing proposed were judged to outweigh the identified policy conflicts, leading to a recommendation to grant planning permission subject to conditions.

### **Proposed Development**

5.6 The application now proposes four dwellings, arranged as two pairs of 3 bed semi-detached cottages. 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.

5.7 The three bed cottages would each provide between 104-108sqm of gross internal floor area, in excess of national minimum space standards.

5.8 The proposed housing mix 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.

**Figure 5.2 - Proposed Site Plan and Context Plan**



5.9 Features would include chimneys, lean-to side extensions and deep porches.

**Figure 5.3 – Indicative Streetscene Image (front boundary vegetation and proposed parking not included)**



- 5.10 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 three visitor spaces across the development. There is additional visitor parking options on adjacent streets (High Spinney and Grove Lane). Secure cycle stores are provided to each plot.
- 5.11 The development would not require any tree removal.
- 5.12 Biodiversity Net Gain will be achieved through the provision on-site wildflower meadow and the planting of trees and a hedgerow, all in areas that sit outside of the proposed gardens.

## 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

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 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 Shaping Development in Horsham District document, 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 The site has also recently been granted permission for a residential redevelopment and there has been no change in either policy or material considerations which could lead to an alternative decision being taken. The issue in this instance is the addition of one further dwelling to the scheme which aligns more closely with the local housing need as expressed by a local Councillor and Estate Agents.
- 6.7 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**

- 6.8 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.
- 6.9 The revised scheme differs from the pre-application scheme which was also for four houses in that all dwellings are smaller 3 bedroom dwellings arranged as semi-detached cottages with no larger detached houses, thereby addressing concerns raised 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.

- 6.10 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**

- 6.11 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.
- 6.12 By orienting the dwellings to face the highway and by providing each plot with reasonable sized gardens, the proposals avoid overlooking and protect existing levels of amenity. Each unit benefits from good levels of natural light, outlook, and amenity space, meeting national space standards.

#### **Ecology**

- 6.13 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.
- 6.14 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**

- 6.15 The site is well enclosed by mature boundary vegetation, which will largely be retained. Tree removal is not required to facilitate the development and further tree planting and boundary enhancements are proposed.
- 6.16 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**

- 6.17 The existing access on Threals Lane will be altered to improve the ease and safety of access for vehicles approaching from, or travelling towards, the north.
- 6.18 The scheme complies with West Sussex County Council parking standards which require 2.2 spaces per 3 bedroom dwelling (total of 11.8 spaces). Each dwelling has 2 designated parking spaces and there are 3 visitor spaces across the development (total of 11 spaces). Should further visitor spaces be required the parking on neighbouring roads is possible.
- 6.19 Each dwelling will have a secure cycle store with space for two adult bicycles.

6.20 Adequate turning space is shown on the submitted site plan to allow vehicles to exit in a forward gear, minimising highway safety risks.

## 7 SUMMARY

- 7.1 The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing pair of semi-detached cottages and the erection of four 3 bedroom dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and alterations to the existing access.
- 7.2 The site lies outside the defined Built-Up Area Boundary and is therefore located within the countryside for planning policy purposes. However, Horsham District Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply and, in accordance with paragraph 11(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged. In these circumstances, planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal.
- 7.3 The principle of residential redevelopment at the site has already been established through the recent grant of planning permission for the demolition of the existing cottages and their replacement with three dwellings. The current proposal represents a modest intensification of that consented scheme and continues to make efficient use of previously developed residential land within an established cluster of housing adjacent to West Chiltington.
- 7.4 The proposed development has been carefully designed to reflect the prevailing character and appearance of Threals Lane and the wider locality. The scale, layout and architectural detailing draw upon local vernacular styles and materials, ensuring the development integrates successfully within its surroundings.
- 7.5 The development will not result in unacceptable impacts on neighbouring residential amenity, landscape character, ecology, or trees. The scheme retains existing boundary vegetation and incorporates new planting and biodiversity enhancements that will deliver measurable ecological benefits. Adequate parking, cycle storage and turning space are provided in accordance with relevant standards, and the development will utilise the existing access onto Threals Lane.
- 7.6 The proposal will contribute positively towards addressing the district's significant housing land supply shortfall and will deliver smaller family homes that align with identified local housing needs. The site is sustainably located with reasonable access to local services, facilities and public transport.
- 7.7 When assessed against the development plan as a whole, and having regard to all other material considerations, the proposal is considered to represent sustainable development. Any limited conflict with countryside policies is clearly outweighed by the benefits of delivering additional housing on a site that has already been accepted as suitable for residential redevelopment.
- 7.8 Planning permission should therefore be granted.