

Batcheller Monkhouse



TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)

Planning Statement

re

**A proposal to erect 1 x detached and 2 x semi
detached dwellings**

on

**Land adjoining Denhams
Andrews Hill
Billingshurst
West Sussex RH14 9JT**

**On behalf of
Mr and Mrs C Williamson**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Batcheller Monkhouse on behalf of Mr and Mrs Christopher Williamson to support a planning application to erect 3 dwellings on land adjoining their home at Denhams.
- 1.2 The statement describes the site and the proposal in the context of the relevant local planning policies and the NPPF and sets out the reasons why the development should be supported by Horsham District Council as the Local Planning Authority.
- 1.3 The following accompany the application:
- The application form.
 - Completed CIL questions form.
 - Detailed plans and drawings.
 - Water Neutrality Statement.
 - Heritage Statement.
 - Preliminary Ecological Assessment.
 - BNG metric and recommendation.
 - Air Quality Statement.
 - This Planning Statement.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The 0.086 hectare site fronts, and is situated to the east of, the A29 road (Stane Street) and lies immediately to the south of the detached dwelling known as Denhams. It is outside the defined built-up area boundary of Billingshurst, which lies a mere 430m to the north. The area is characterised by a cluster of houses of various designs and ages in a rural area yet within easy reach of local shops and services. The site itself is not in an area of special landscape designation.

3 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 The Council's online planning records shows that an outline planning application was made in 2008 (DC/2008/0445) in respect of a single dwelling within the residential curtilage of Denhams. This was dismissed on appeal on 1 December 2008 (APP/Z3825/A/08/2079713).
- 3.2 Since then, as anticipated in the appeal Inspector's decision, planning policies and circumstances have changed. The applicants sought pre-application advice in 2020. The advice therein was largely dependent on HDDF policies at the time which are no longer consistent with the NPPF 2024, or the Government's policy objective to increase housebuilding targets. In terms of the NPPF, the pre-application advice notes that the site would not be considered isolated.

4 THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 This proposal seeks to develop an otherwise unproductive area of land to meet a proven local housing need. The objective is to provide a sustainable rural alternative to families wishing to live in the Billingshurst area as opposed to the urban environment of a new housing estate.
- 4.2 The submitted scheme on a site of comprises 1 x detached dwelling and 2 x semi-detached dwellings designed by a local firm of Architects.
- 4.3 The three dwellings are of brick and tile construction. Each has living room/kitchen dining room and WC on the ground floor with 3 bedrooms and a bathroom on the first floor. The two semi-detached properties have a GIA of 118 square metres with the detached dwelling a GIA of 120 square metres

5 PLANNING POLICY ANALYSIS

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework is a material planning consideration.

5.2 The Development Plan for the site comprises the Horsham District Planning Framework 2015 (HDPF) wherein the relevant planning policies have been identified as:

- Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
- Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
- Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
- Policy 4 - Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion
- Policy 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
- Policy 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs
- Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
- Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
- Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
- Policy 27 - Settlement Coalescence
- Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
- Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
- Policy 33 - Development Principles
- Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
- Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
- Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
- Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
- Policy 39 - Strategic Policy: Infrastructure Provision
- Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
- Policy 41 – Parking

5.3 The Council is now considering its response to the Inspector's findings in respect of its emerging new Local Plan. The current plan and the adopted Billingshurst

Neighbourhood Plan remain the relevant planning policies in a far as they are consistent with the NPPF.

- 5.4 **The NPPF.** Paragraph 33 of the NPPF requires that Councils complete their development plan reviews no later than 5 years from their adoption. Currently, the LPA's emerging policies carry only limited weight at a time when the Council is unable to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites. NPPF paragraph 11d, which carries the principle in favour of sustainable development, is therefore engaged in relation to new housing within the District. HDDF Policies referred to in the pre-application advice carry only moderate weight in the decision making process.
- 5.5 The NPPF was updated in December 2024 and is the overarching government policy for England in relation to the assessment and determination of planning applications.
- 5.6 **Paragraph 8** deals with sustainable development. It says that achieving sustainable development means pursuing three mutually supportive objectives: an **economic** objective, to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy; b) a **social** objective, to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, and c) an **environmental** objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently.
- 5.7 The **economic** role is satisfied through the contribution made to the local economy during the construction phase of the project and through the income subsequently generated through Council Tax and CIL once the dwellings had been completed.
- 5.8 The **social** role is satisfied through the provision of much needed housing at a time when the Council is unable to show a deliverable housing supply.
- 5.9 The **environmental** role is satisfied by the resultant biodiversity net gain, energy efficiency and water neutrality.
- 5.10 **Paragraph 11(d)(i)** states that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would

significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

- 5.11 Additional policies within the NPPF support this proposal. In relation to housing in rural areas, the development is not “isolated” and therefore not contrary to **Paragraph 84**. It accords with **Paragraph 125(d)** which addressed making the most effective use of land, “especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing”.
- 5.12 On housing, Aim 1 of the Billingshurst Neighbourhood Plan is “to undertake an early review of the Neighbourhood Plan to provide greater clarity about the amount of growth that Billingshurst will be expected to accommodate over the new HDPF plan period”. That again suggests that the NPPF is the policy that contains the principle in favour of sustainable developments that accord with key provisions with the current plan.
- 5.13 **The HDDF:** The key provisions within the HDDF in relation of residential development would appear to be: Design and Appearance; Residential Amenity; Highways Impacts; Ecology and Biodiversity; Water Neutrality; Climate Change; Air Quality; and Heritage.
- 5.14 **Design and Appearance.** The relevant policies within the HDDF are 32, 33 and 25 which (top summarise) require developments to be of good design, make efficient use of land, integrate effectively with the character of the surrounding area, and conserve/enhance landscape character. These are all compatible with the NPPF. There are no dwellings within the immediate area to be matched by this development as all, including Denhams, are of differing scale and design. However, these architect dwellings are proportionate, in keeping with their surroundings and of a similar design and appearance found on many new developments in and around Billingshurst.
- 5.15 **Residential Amenity.** Policy 33 requires that developments should respect the amenities of neighbouring properties whilst Policy 33(2) says that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties. In this instance, the nearest dwelling to the proposed development is Denhams itself. Others are located sufficiently distant from

the proposed development with no overlooking or loss of light, security or privacy. The dwellings meet nationally described space standards with adequate parking and amenity provision.

5.16 **Highways Impacts.** Policies 40 and 41 deal with matters associated with Highways. These have been addressed comprehensively in the submitted Transport Statement produced by GTA Civils which concludes at paragraph 8.9 that “there are no unacceptable highway or transport impacts as a result of the proposed development.”

5.17 **Ecology and biodiversity.** Policy 31 of the HDPF states that development proposals will be required to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity. This policy has since been complemented in April 2024 by a revision to Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) which obliges to deliver a BNG of at least 10%. The application is supported by two documents to satisfy these obligations:

- A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) produced by Arun Ecology Ltd which concludes that further assessments will be required to meet BNG requirements, together with recommendations as to how the PEA can be achieved; and
- The BNG metric and Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan produced by the same consultants which supplements the PEA and recommends how BNG can be achieved.

5.18 **Water Neutrality.** The application site falls within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone. As such, applicants are required to satisfy Natural England on the issue of water neutrality. The application is supported by a Water Neutrality Statement produced by Batcheller Monkhouse with a calculation of water consumption and how the offsetting can be achieved.

5.19 **Climate Change:** Policies 35, 36 and 37 require developments to mitigate impacts of climate change. These policies are in line with NPPF requirements that developments should reduce the impact of climate change. The proposed development includes significant biodiversity enhancement, cycle parking and materials recycling, all of

which will make a contribution to climate change. Heating and power will rely, at least in part, on the use of renewable energy although the exact system has yet to be decided.

5.20 **Air Quality.** The submitted report prepared by GEM Air Quality Ltd advises that “air quality exposure is not considered an issue as the proposed development is located adjacent to a road with vehicle movements below 10,000 AADT”. The report deals with air quality during the construction phase and recommends mitigation measures to be taken during the construction and operational phases of the development.

5.21 **Heritage.** The submitted document prepared by Heritage Advisory discusses the historic evolution of both the site, before addressing potential impact on the setting of heritage assets. The report concludes that “the principle of redevelopment is not considered to be at odds with the significance of the application site and/or its wider locale”.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to support a planning application for a development of 3 modest dwellings on land adjacent to Denhams.

6.2 For reasons set out in this statement, we are of the opinion that the proposal accords with relevant policies within the HDDF and the NPPF, particularly Paragraph.11(d).

6.3 This is an architect designed scheme to provide housing in a sustainable rural area with no adverse impact on residential amenity, highway safety, ecology, biodiversity, water consumption, climate change, air quality, or heritage.

6.4 The proposal is therefore commended to Horsham District Council for approval.