

Our Ref: SDNP/25/04706/ADJAUT
Contact Officer: Samuel Bethwaite
Tel. No.: 01730 819271

11th December 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

Neighbouring Authority Consultation

Applicant:

Proposal: Adjoining Authority Consultation - Horsham District Council (DC/25/1831) - Outline Planning Application with all matters reserved apart from access for 1no. 4-bedroom dwelling with associated private garden space, car parking and landscaping.

Location: Abbots Leigh , Washington Road , Storrington , West Sussex,

Thank you for your correspondence received 20 November 2025, consulting us as a neighbouring authority on the above noted development proposals.

Although the application site is located outside of the National Park, the Council has a statutory duty to consider the Purposes of the National Park when making its determination.

The two statutory purposes of the SDNP designation are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage,
- To promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of their areas.

If there is a conflict between these two purposes, conservation takes precedence. There is also a duty to foster the economic and social wellbeing of the local community in pursuit of these purposes.

Section 245 of the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (S.245 duty) amends and strengthens the Section 11A (2) duty of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 upon relevant authorities, which includes the National Park Authority itself, to 'seek to further the specified purposes of Protected Landscapes'.

The National Park's comments on the development are as follows:

Thank you for consulting the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) on the above application. The SDNPA makes no comment on the principle of development. The site is approximately 5m from the boundary of the National Park, which runs along the south side of Washington Road. The proposed development for outline permission for a dwelling with all matters reserved other than access, would be located in an area where there is pre-existing residential development, and as such the development would likely result in minor impacts on the setting of the National Park.

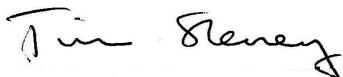
Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 strengthens the Section 11A (2) duty of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and requires all relevant authorities including neighbouring Local Planning Authorities to "seek to further the specified purposes of Protected Landscapes." The Government's 'Guidance for relevant authorities on seeking to further the purposes of Protected Landscapes', published 16 December 2024, sets out that this duty is active not passive and that, as far as is reasonably practicable, 'relevant authorities should seek to avoid harm and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty, special qualities, and key characteristics of Protected Landscapes.' It is therefore incumbent on the Local Planning Authority, to give significant weight to the S.245 duty when determining applications.

Development within the setting of a national park should be consistent with the section 245 duty, and Paragraph 189 of the NPPF, which includes specific reference to the setting of National Parks:

"Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, **while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.**"

It is therefore important to consider direct and indirect effects upon the National Park designated landscape and its setting as well as its special qualities. The LPA officers will therefore need to assess any impacts upon the National Park in order to address the above statutory duty.

Yours faithfully



TIM SLANEY
Director of Planning
South Downs National Park Authority

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