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Our ref: PE/25/0027
Your ref:
Officer: Bethan Tinning
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Tel: 01403 215429
Date: 7th May 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

Location: 3 Station Road Billingshurst West Sussex RH14 9RF

Details: Demolition of 1no. house and replace with 4no. terraced houses

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

Principle of Development

Policy 2 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) sets out the main growth strategy, focusing development on the main settlements. The HDPF outlines that the proposed settlement hierarchy is the most sustainable approach to delivering housing; where new development is focused on 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.

The Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) sets out a spatial strategy which directs growth in the district in accordance with an identified settlement hierarchy, reflected in defined settlement boundaries. This is reflected by Policy 3 of the HDPF, which states that development will be permitted within towns and villages which have defined built-up areas, and that any infilling and redevelopment will be required to demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale to maintain characteristics and function of the settlement in accordance with the settlement hierarchy. The site would fall within the built-up area boundary of Billingshurst, which is classified as a larger settlement. Billingshurst benefits from a larger number of facilities and services. The proposal would involve the demolition of 1no. house and the replacement with 4no. terraced houses. The principle of development is considered acceptable.

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 pre-application proposes 4no. terraced dwellings, 2 with 2-bedrooms and 2 with 3-bedrooms. The 3-bed dwellings would be end-terrace and have a third bedroom located within loft space, with dormers and rooflights proposed for sufficient head height and natural light. The end of terrace dwellings would meet minimum space standards with 109.7 sqm, and the mid terrace dwellings would be 82 sqm. The dwellings would be 8.3m tall, sitting just below the height of the existing dwelling. It is however, considered that the proposal for four dwellinghouses on a site of this size would create a cramped form of development. There is a lack of sufficient parking provision and a lack of sufficient garden space for the mid terrace dwellings.

The location of the dwellings would be on a bend on Station Road. The frontages would face the road and would be visible from the approach to the bend. The design of the dwellings is simple, taking inspiration from the surrounding development. The materials of the existing house comprise brickwork and timber cladding, the proposed dwellings would have brickwork from the ground to first floor and timber cladding on the top half in light timber. The roof tiles would be concrete smooth grey. A porch canopy is proposed over each front door to provide some visual interest to the front elevation. The design is simple, but appears to be of good quality, with each dwelling stepped forward, with immediate access from the road. Bin storage would be located in the front garden for each resident. Each garden would be divided by 1800mm hit-and-miss fence. Solar panels would also be encouraged on the roof slopes where possible.

The proposed development would take design cues from the wider locality, utilising features, forms, and materials that would reinforce the character and visual amenity of the area. Whilst the density of development would be high, this is considered to reflect that of the adjacent development to the north. It is however considered that the site relates more strongly to developments along Station Road which is characterised by a less dense nature of development, with the built form more open and spacious. The density of development, and particularly given its prominent location on the bend of the road, would therefore be considered to be out of character with the immediate surroundings. The proposal would result in a prominent and dominant built form that would be considered to retract from the open and spacious character of the wider surroundings.

Should an application be submitted, it would be suggested that a reduced quantum of development be considered. This would better reflect the build pattern of the immediate surroundings and enable the retention of a greater degree of open space around the development.

Residential 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 dwellings would be located under 20m from the terraced dwellings to the rear. While these would be stepped forward from each other, there would still be a small distance between the rear elevations of the proposed dwellings and the neighbouring dwellings to the rear. The cumulative impact of the small distance is considered to result in an overbearing impact, where there would be an increased perception of overlooking at the rear.

For these reasons, it is considered that the quantum and siting of the development would result in adverse harm to the amenities of the neighbouring properties to the north. The proposed orientation of the development would also result in a level of overlooking, particularly from the rear bedroom windows, that would result in an unacceptable loss of privacy. It is unlikely that the development would be supported for this reason.

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.

There is an existing access off Station Road, providing access to and from the site. It is considered that the increase in dwelling number would result in an increase in vehicular movements using the access, entering, and exiting the site. This would be subject to consideration by the Local Highways Authority, if an application were submitted. It is however recognised that the development would be located within a sustainable location, with pedestrian pathways surrounding the site, providing access to the nearby train station and Billingshurst High Street. Therefore, it is considered that there would be other options, such as cycling, walking, or getting the bus, over utilising a private car to get around.

Regarding parking provision, two of the proposed dwellings would have 3 bedrooms and the other two would have 2 bedrooms. The site plan submitted shows five parking spaces provided for the occupants of the dwellings. The WSCC Parking Standards Guidance states that for 3-bedroom dwellings within Billingshurst, a minimum of 2.1 spaces would be required. For 2-bedroom dwellings, a minimum of 1.7 spaces are required. A total of 7.6 parking spaces would therefore be required for the development, and there would be a shortfall of 2.6 parking spaces. The development is therefore considered to provide an insufficient number of off-road parking spaces. Whilst it is recognised that the site would be located within a sustainable location, this would be subject of further consultation with the Local Highways Authority and interested parties, should an application be submitted.

Landscaping

The shared driveway would be surfaced with permeable paving to aid with sustainable drainage, and boundary treatment will include timber fencing to provide privacy. Each rear garden would be divided by 1800mm hit-and-miss fencing for privacy with bike storage. Soft landscaping is proposed at the front of each dwelling featuring native plants. Soft landscaping is encouraged at the front to soften the hard edges of the dwellings and provide some visual interest, as well as reduce the number of hard surfaces, as the dwellings are situated opposite a brick wall which curves round the bend of the road.

There are a number of TPOs near the site, with one TPO ash tree at the far west corner of the garden. The submitted planning statement states that the new buildings would be a distance of 4m away, this may not be sufficient protection, as the root protection area may be more than 4m. A tree protection plan and Arboricultural Impact and method statement would be required to demonstrate that the proposed dwelling would not have a significant impact on the protected trees in the locality. A planning application would also be subject to consultation with the Arboricultural Officers.

Water Neutrality

Horsham District is supplied with water by Southern Water from its Sussex North Water Resource Zone and is situated in an area of serious water stress as identified by the Environment Agency. This supply is sourced from abstraction points in the Arun Valley, which includes locations such as Amberley Wild Brooks Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Pulborough Brooks SSSI and Arun Valley Special Protection Area/Special Area of Conservation and Ramsar site.

Natural England has advised that it cannot be concluded that the existing abstraction within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone is not having an adverse impact on these Arun Valley sites. All new development within the Horsham District must not add to this impact, and one way of

ensuring this through water neutrality, whereby water consumption arising from new development can be demonstrated as being equal or less than the current situation on a site.

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

It is noted that the proposed development may be eligible for the Sussex North Offsetting Water Scheme (SNOWS), as the development would be within an existing settlement and therefore in accordance with the adopted development plan. Please note that a Water Neutrality Statement would still be required, with the existing and proposed baseline water consumption and the measures taken to reduce this as much as possible before SNOWS is an option. More information can be found at the link below.

<https://www.horsham.gov.uk/planning/water-neutrality-in-horsham-district/sussex-north-offsetting-water-scheme-snows>

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>

Conclusion

On the basis of the above, it is recommended that further design work be undertaken prior to any planning application being submitted. 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
- Arboricultural Impact and Method Statement
- Biodiversity Net Gain Statement

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/25/0027 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.