



PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

TO: Planning Committee

BY: Head of Development and Building Control

DATE: 20th January 2026

DEVELOPMENT: Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of two detached dwellings and associated garages

SITE: Crosswinds, Hampers Lane, Storrington, West Sussex, RH20 3HZ

WARD: Storrington and Washington

APPLICATION: DC/25/1356

APPLICANT: **Name:** Mr Steven Thomson **Address:** Highdown, 18 Links Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN14 9QY

REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA: More than eight persons in different households or bodies have made written representations within the consultation period raising material planning considerations that are inconsistent with the recommendation of the Head of Development and Building Control.

By request of Washington Parish Council

RECOMMENDATION: To approve planning permission subject to appropriate conditions.

1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the planning application.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

- 1.2 The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing bungalow on the site and the erection of two detached two-storey dwellings, each providing four bedrooms, together with detached garages, associated access, parking, landscaping and ancillary works. The proposed dwellings are arranged within the site to respond to its sloping topography, existing tree cover and neighbouring residential properties. A central shared driveway is proposed, extending from the existing unmade access track and serving both dwellings and their respective garages.
- 1.3 The layout has been designed to minimise the impact on retained trees and landscape features, with the majority of mature boundary vegetation proposed to be retained. Separation distances between the proposed dwellings and neighbouring properties have been incorporated to safeguard residential amenity and reduce the potential for overlooking or dominance. The proposal represents a net increase of one dwelling compared to the

existing situation and seeks to replace a long-vacant, dilapidated building with two new family homes of a traditional form and appearance, intended to reflect the established character of the Heath Common area. The application is supported by a range of technical documentation, including arboricultural, ecological and biodiversity net gain assessments, and follows an earlier outline planning permission for two dwellings on the site, granted on appeal under reference DC/16/1664.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

- 1.5 The application site comprises Crosswinds, a detached three-bedroom chalet bungalow set within a generous plot of approximately 0.33 hectares, located at the end of a narrow-unmade track accessed from Hampers Lane, Storrington. The access track is shared with a small number of neighbouring residential properties, which lie on lower ground to the south and west of the site. The applicant has legal rights of access over the track. The site lies within the Heath Common residential area and is characterised by a semi-rural setting with large plots, mature landscaping and dispersed built form. The plot is irregular and broadly 'L-shaped', with the land sloping downwards to the south, affording longer-range views towards the South Downs.
- 1.6 The existing dwelling, constructed approximately 55 years ago, is in a derelict condition and is accompanied by a number of small ancillary outbuildings and a disused swimming pool. The site has remained largely unused for a prolonged period and is heavily overgrown, with dense vegetation across much of the plot. The boundaries of the site are well-defined by a mix of mature trees and hedgerows, which make a positive contribution to the verdant character of the area and provide a high degree of enclosure and screening. These landscape features are an important characteristic of the Heath Common area and form a key constraint in the consideration of development on the site. The site is located within the built-up area boundary of Storrington, close to local services, schools and public transport links, and lies on the edge of the South Downs National Park.

2. INTRODUCTION

STATUTORY BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2.2 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The following Policies are considered to be relevant to the assessment of this application:

2.3 **National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2024)**

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

Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
Policy 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
Policy 41 - Parking

2.5 **Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan (2018-2031)**

Policy 1: A Spatial Plan for the Parishes
Policy 14: Design

2.6 **Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):**

Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development
 Strategic Policy 2: Development Hierarchy
 Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change
 Strategic Policy 7: Appropriate Energy Use
 Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction
 Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
 Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
 Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality
 Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles
 Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
 Policy 25: Parking

2.7 **Parish Design Statement:** Heath Common Design Statement SPD– Adopted July 2018

2.8 **Supplementary Planning Guidance:**
 Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (2017)
 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (2017)

2.9 **Planning Advice Notes:**
 Shaping Development in Horsham (SDPAN – Sept 2025)
 Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

PLANNING HISTORY AND RELEVANT APPLICATIONS

DC/16/1664	Outline application with all matters reserved for the demolition of existing dwelling and construction of two detached 5 bedroom dwellings and associated garaging	Application Refused on 18.01.2017 Appeal Allowed
DC/19/1496	Outline application for the demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 3.No detached dwellings and associated garaging with all matters reserved	Application Refused on 17.09.2019
DC/20/2401	Outline Application for the demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 3.No detached dwellings with associated garaging with all matters reserved.	Application Refused on 27.01.2021

Both applications **DC/19/1496** and **DC/20/2401** were refused for the same following reason:

‘The proposed development would represent an overdevelopment of the site which would cause harm to the special character and appearance of the Heath Common area. The proposal would be contrary to policies 25, 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), Policy 14 of the Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan (2019) and to the Heath Common Design Statement Supplementary Planning Document (2018).’

3. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS

3.1 Where consultation responses have been summarised, it should be noted that Officers have had consideration of the full comments received, which are available to view on the public file at www.horsham.gov.uk.

INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

3.2 **HDC Arboricultural Officer:** Comment
 The site contains a number of mature boundary trees that make a positive contribution to the landscape character, although wider visual amenity is limited due to the secluded position and surrounding residential plots. Subject to other planning considerations, the site may have

capacity for two replacement dwellings without causing significant harm to these trees, provided the layout is revised to reduce the development footprint and safeguard key rooting areas. Tree loss associated with the proposal is limited to low-value specimens within the site interior, while the A and B grade mature trees should be treated as significant constraints to ensure the sylvan character of the area is conserved. The proposed driveway and turning areas partially encroach on root protection zones, with no-dig construction and permeable surfacing proposed to maintain soil porosity and prevent compaction. Engineering works for the southern plot involve excavation close to mature trees, and ground protection measures are proposed on both sides of the site due to limited space for barriers. A revised layout with a smaller footprint and reduced hardstanding would improve the relationship between the development and retained trees.

If minded to approve the current submission or preferably a revision that gives improved working space in respect of existing trees, standard tree protection conditions recommended.

3.3 Ecology Consultant: No Objection

[summary] The Ecological Impact Assessment (August 2025) and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (May 2025) for the proposed development have been reviewed, which assess impacts on designated sites, protected and Priority species, and outline proportionate mitigation. Surveys confirm no bat roosts in buildings or tree T03, and no further bat surveys are required. The site lies within the wider conservation area for The Mens SAC but proposed measures, including retention of trees and planting of seed/fruit-bearing species, will maintain habitat connectivity and avoid adverse effects on SAC integrity. A Wildlife Friendly Lighting Strategy and Precautionary Method Statement for reptiles and mobile species should be secured by condition, alongside biodiversity enhancements to achieve net gain. With these measures implemented, impacts will be minimized, and the proposal is considered acceptable subject to conditions in line with BS42020:2013.

3.4 Southern Water: Comment

No objections subject to conditions and informatives

3.5 WSCC Highways: No Objection

'In summary, the LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 116), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.'

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

3.6 Representations:

9 letters of Objection have been received from 7 addresses, objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- Proposed dwellings are on elevated ground, resulting in direct overlooking of neighbouring homes and gardens (notably The Mandarin, The Maples, Chestnuts and Badgers Hill).
- First-floor windows, balconies and master bedrooms would significantly erode existing levels of privacy.
- Insufficient mitigation through layout, orientation or screening.
- Height, bulk and proximity of the proposed houses—particularly Plot 2—would dominate neighbouring properties.
- Elevated siting on sloping land would lead to a sense of enclosure, overshadowing and reduced natural light.
- Boundary treatments and potential fencing could exacerbate visual dominance and enclosure.

- Replacement of a single smaller dwelling with two large four-bedroom houses is considered excessive.
- Density and scale are out of keeping with the prevailing character of Heath Common.
- Proposal conflicts with the Heath Common Design Statement and the Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan.
- Harm to local character and design
- Design, scale and massing are not reflective of surrounding development, which is predominantly bungalows or modest dwellings.
- Development would urbanise a currently rural, verdant setting.
- Loss of mature trees and landscaping would further erode local character.
- Access is via a narrow, unmade track with tight turning angles and a blind junction onto Hampers Lane.
- Hampers Lane is a narrow single-track road and public bridleway, unsuitable for construction traffic.
- Increased construction and residential traffic would cause disruption, safety concerns and inconvenience to residents.
- Lack of public parking and bin storage capacity along the lane.
- Inadequate and unclear foul and surface water drainage strategy.
- Reliance on third-party land for sewer connections without permission.
- Concerns that soakaways and hard surfacing would increase surface water runoff and flood risk to neighbouring properties.
- Existing sewer infrastructure may lack capacity.
- Objectors dispute the accuracy of water neutrality calculations.
- Two four-bedroom houses are unlikely to be water-neutral compared with the existing or former single dwelling.
- Rainfall assumptions are questioned due to local topography and climate variation.
- Significant site clearance has already taken place, with further tree loss proposed.
- Remaining boundary trees are not protected and may be felled.
- Insufficient assessment of ecological impacts, including wildlife movement (e.g. deer).
- Increased activity, domestic noise and artificial lighting would harm the currently quiet and dark rural environment.
- Objectors state that concerns raised in earlier refused applications and appeals have not been adequately addressed.
- Some objectors report difficulty accessing application documents on the planning portal, limiting informed engagement.

3.7 Parish Comments:

Washington Parish Council: Objection

Washington Parish Council considered this application at its meeting on Monday 6th October, agreeing with HDC's comments on refusing the previous similar applications, namely: that they would "represent an overdevelopment of the site which would cause harm to the special character and appearance of the Heath Common area; that it is contrary to Policy 25, 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Local Plan (2015)" and "policy 14 of the Storrington & Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan, and to the Heath Common Design Statement supplementary planning document of 2018"

Members agreed that any infill development in the garden of this property would constitute a gross overdevelopment. They agreed it would also set a very dangerous precedent to similar proposals on the Heath Common 'Lanes' harming their special character, in particular those properties which surround the application site.

As stated in the Parish Council's original objections to develop this property, Members were also concerned with the following:

- The extremely narrow and restricted access to the site which is shared by other properties, and the safety implications of an additional 8 vehicles in an emergency.
- Loss of privacy to immediate neighbouring properties
- The application appears to show two identical properties which is contrary to the ethos of the Heath Common Design Statement where the vernacular is emphasised by individual properties.

For these reasons, the Council RESOLVED to make a STRONG OBJECTION. The Council requests that the application is 'called in.'

3.8 Member Comments:
None received

4. HOW THE PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION WILL PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS

- 4.1 The application has been considered having regard to Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998, which sets out a person's rights to the peaceful enjoyment of property and Article 8 of the same Act, which sets out their rights in respect to private and family life and for the home. Officers consider that the proposal would not be contrary to the provisions of the above Articles.
- 4.2 The application has also been considered in accordance with Horsham District Council's public sector equality duty, which seeks to prevent unlawful discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people in a diverse community, in accordance with Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In this case, the proposal is not anticipated to have any potential impact from an equality perspective.

5. HOW THE PROPOSAL WILL HELP TO REDUCE CRIME AND DISORDER

- 5.1 It is not considered that the development would be likely to have any significant impact on crime and disorder.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENTS

Principle of Development:

- 6.1 The application site is located within the defined built-up area boundary of Storrington, which is identified as a 'Small town and Larger Village' within the development hierarchy under HDPF Policy 3. In such locations, residential development is acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with other relevant policies of the development plan. The proposal seeks the demolition of an existing dwelling and its replacement with two detached dwellings, resulting in a net increase of one dwelling, which aligns with the objectives of HDPF Policy 15 in supporting housing delivery within sustainable settlements.
- 6.2 The proposal represents the redevelopment of an existing residential plot and therefore makes efficient use of previously developed land, consistent with HDPF Policy 33 and paragraphs 124 and 125 of the NPPF. The scale of development proposed—two dwellings within a large plot—does not introduce a level of intensification that would be inconsistent with the settlement strategy or represent unjustified encroachment into the countryside, thereby complying with HDPF Policy 25 in principle.
- 6.3 The acceptability of two dwellings on the site has previously been established through the granting of outline planning permission on appeal under reference DC/16/1664, which confirmed that the subdivision of the plot would not, in principle, result in harm to the character of the area or the operation of the highway network. While that permission has

since lapsed, it remains a material consideration that carries significant weight in assessing the principle of development.

- 6.4 The Heath Common area is characterised by low-density development within spacious plots and substantial landscaping. While the detailed design, layout and landscape impacts of the proposal are assessed elsewhere in this report, the principle of replacing a single dwelling with two dwellings is not inherently at odds with the spatial objectives of the Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan, including Policy 1, nor does it conflict in principle with Policy 14, which seeks to ensure that development responds positively to local character.
- 6.5 Having regard to HDPF Policy 1 and paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the proposal benefits from the presumption in favour of sustainable development given the absence of a five year housing land supply (current supply is just 1.7 years). The site's location within a sustainable settlement, the modest net increase in housing provision, and the reuse of a long-established residential plot collectively support the principle of development. Accordingly, it is concluded that the proposal is acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with policies relating to design quality, landscape character, residential amenity and other material planning considerations.

Design and Appearance:

- 6.6 The design and appearance of the proposed development has been assessed against HDPF Policies 32 and 33, Policy 14 of the Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan, the Heath Common Design Statement SPD (2018), and paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), all of which seek to ensure that new development is of high quality, responds positively to local character and landscape, and integrates successfully with its surroundings.
- 6.7 The Heath Common area is characterised by large plots, low building density, informal layouts and a strong dominance of landscaping over built form. Dwellings are typically detached, set well within their plots, and screened by mature trees and vegetation, creating a spacious and semi-rural character. Any new development must therefore avoid excessive scale, visual dominance or suburbanisation.
- 6.8 The current proposal has been designed to respond to this context and represents a materially different and improved scheme when compared to both the previously refused applications and the 2016 outline scheme that was allowed on appeal (DC/16/1664).
- 6.9 In comparison with the refused schemes for three dwellings (DC/19/1496 and DC/20/2401), which were found to constitute overdevelopment through excessive density, footprint and massing, the present proposal limits development to two dwellings, allowing for substantially greater spacing, reduced site coverage and a more landscape-led layout. This reduction in quantum has enabled the retention of a higher proportion of existing trees and vegetation and avoids the cramped and visually intrusive form of development previously identified as harmful to the character of Heath Common.
- 6.10 Whilst concerns have been raised in representations over the scale and identical appearance of the two dwellings, with particular note given to the varying character of dwellings in Heath Common and their more modest scale. The proposed dwellings are two storeys in height which is not uncommon and whilst of the same design, are set perpendicular to each other in a backland site with good tree coverage to the site boundaries. Consequently, it is not considered that the scale and identical design of the houses would be visually intrusive, or so out of keeping and visually jarring as to warrant the refusal of planning permission.
- 6.11 The scale and massing of the proposed dwellings have otherwise been controlled through articulated building forms, and varied elevations, which reduce their perceived bulk when

viewed from both within the site and from neighbouring properties. The siting of the dwellings follows the natural southward slope of the land, with finished floor levels designed to minimise visual prominence and avoid an elevated or overbearing appearance. This approach directly addresses concerns previously raised in relation to dominance and topography.

- 6.12 The separation distances between the dwellings and to site boundaries are generous and consistent with the spacious character of the area, ensuring that the development remains visually subordinate to its landscaped setting, in line with the guidance set out in the Heath Common Design Statement SPD.
- 6.13 Architecturally, the dwellings adopt a traditional and understated design approach, with pitched roofs, gable features and well-proportioned elevations that reflect established local forms without resorting to pastiche. The proposed use of high-quality materials, including facing brick, timber detailing and clay or concrete roof tiles, will further assist in assimilating the development into the local context. Final details of materials can be secured by condition to ensure a high-quality finish in accordance with HDPF Policy 32 and NPPF paragraph 135.
- 6.14 Detached garages are proposed, which help to break up built form across the site, reduce visual mass, and reflect the ancillary outbuilding character typical of large plots within Heath Common. This approach avoids the continuous or bulky building forms that contributed to the refusal of earlier schemes.
- 6.15 Overall, the proposal represents a clear refinement and reduction in scale when compared to both the refused three-dwelling schemes, while maintaining a form of development that has already been accepted in principle on the site. The design, scale and massing in this location are considered to respond appropriately to the character of Heath Common and preserve the spacious, landscaped quality of the area.
- 6.16 It is therefore concluded that the proposal accords with HDPF Policies 32 and 33, Neighbourhood Plan Policy 14, the Heath Common Design Statement SPD, and paragraph 135 of the NPPF, and that the design and appearance of the development are acceptable.

Landscape and Trees:

- 6.17 The landscape and tree impacts of the proposal have been assessed against HDPF Policy 25 (The Natural Environment and Landscape Character), HDPF Policies 32 and 33, Policy 14 of the Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan, the Heath Common Design Statement SPD (2018), and paragraphs 135 and 187 of the NPPF. These policies seek to ensure that development protects landscape character, retains important trees and vegetation, and responds positively to its setting.
- 6.18 The Heath Common area is defined by its sylvan, informal character, with mature trees and dense boundary vegetation playing a central role in shaping visual amenity and spatial quality. The application site reflects this character, with a substantial number of mature trees along its boundaries that provide effective screening and contribute positively to the verdant setting of the area.
- 6.19 An Arboricultural Survey and Impact Assessment has been submitted in support of the application, which identifies the majority of boundary trees as being of moderate to high arboricultural value. These trees are treated as key constraints and form the basis of the proposed layout. The scheme has been designed to retain the vast majority of these boundary trees, with tree removal largely limited to low-value specimens located within the interior of the site, which do not make a meaningful contribution to wider landscape character.
- 6.20 The Council's Arboricultural Officer has reviewed the proposal and raises no objection to the development in principle. The comments provided highlight certain technical matters relating to layout refinement, construction methods and the protection of root protection areas,

particularly in relation to the proposed access and areas of hardstanding. These comments are advisory in nature and are intended to guide how the development can be implemented in a manner that safeguards retained trees, rather than indicating fundamental concerns with the acceptability of the scheme.

- 6.21 Where potential encroachment into root protection areas has been identified, appropriate mitigation measures are proposed, including no-dig construction techniques, permeable surfacing and detailed ground protection measures. These measures are capable of being secured through planning conditions, alongside a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan, ensuring that tree health and soil structure are preserved during construction. The Arboricultural Officer has confirmed that, subject to such conditions, the development can proceed without resulting in unacceptable harm to retained trees or landscape character.
- 6.22 The spatial arrangement of the dwellings and the reduced scale of development compared to earlier refused schemes has allowed for a landscape-led approach, ensuring that built form remains visually subordinate to planting and that the established wooded character of the site is maintained. This approach is consistent with the guidance of the Heath Common Design Statement SPD, which emphasises the importance of retaining mature trees and avoiding excessive clearance or suburbanisation.
- 6.23 In addition to tree retention, the proposal includes opportunities for supplementary native planting, which will reinforce boundary screening and enhance biodiversity, further softening the visual impact of the development over time. Detailed landscaping proposals can be secured by condition to ensure that replacement and additional planting is appropriately specified and maintained.
- 6.24 Overall, while the Arboricultural Officer has identified areas where best practice construction and protection measures are required, and has suggested the footprint of the development could be reduced, these matters do not amount to an objection to the scheme. Subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, the proposal is considered to adequately safeguard existing trees, preserve the sylvan character of the site, and comply with the requirements of HDPF Policy 25, Policies 32 and 33, the Neighbourhood Plan, and the NPPF. The landscape and tree impacts of the development are therefore considered acceptable.

Residential Amenity:

- 6.25 The impact of the proposed development on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers has been assessed against HDPF Policies 32 and 33, Policy 14 of the Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan, the Heath Common Design Statement SPD (2018), and paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), all of which seek to ensure that development provides a high standard of amenity for existing and future residents and avoids undue harm through overlooking, overbearing impact, loss of privacy or loss of light.
- 6.26 The site is located within a spacious, low-density residential area characterised by generous plot sizes and a high degree of boundary landscaping. The proposal replaces an existing dwelling with two detached dwellings, which have been carefully sited to respect neighbouring properties and the sloping nature of the land.
- 6.27 Separation distances between the proposed dwellings and neighbouring properties exceed those typically found within more suburban contexts. At their closest points, the southernmost dwelling would be located some 30m from the rear elevation of The Mandarin and some 15m west of The Maples, whilst the northern dwelling would be located some 17m east of the property Badgers Hill.

- 6.28 The layout ensures that principal elevations are orientated to minimise direct overlooking, with first-floor windows positioned and spaced to avoid unacceptable intervisibility with neighbouring habitable rooms and private garden areas. Where necessary, boundary vegetation provides an additional layer of screening, and this landscape buffer will be retained and reinforced as part of the development. Whilst the southern property is on appreciably higher ground to The Mandarin, given the separation distance of some 30m with retained trees and vegetation along the southern site boundary, it is not considered that there will be an unduly overbearing impact or loss of privacy. Details of the final floor and ground levels, and landscaping, can be appropriately addressed through condition.
- 6.29 In terms of scale and massing, while the proposed dwellings are two storeys, their footprint, articulation and separation ensure that they do not appear overbearing or dominant when viewed from neighbouring properties. The reduced quantum of development compared to the previously refused three-dwelling schemes has allowed for a more spacious and balanced layout, which materially reduces amenity impacts.
- 6.30 The proposal is not considered to result in an unacceptable loss of daylight or sunlight to neighbouring properties, given the distances involved, the orientation of buildings, and the intervening landscaping. The replacement of a long-derelict dwelling with two occupied homes is also not considered to give rise to noise or disturbance over and above what would reasonably be expected within a residential area.
- 6.31 Overall, it is concluded that the proposal would not result in unacceptable harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers and accords with HDPF Policies 32 and 33, Neighbourhood Plan Policy 14, the Heath Common Design Statement SPD, and paragraph 135 of the NPPF.

Highways Impacts:

- 6.32 The transport and highway implications of the proposal have been assessed against HDPF Policy 41 (Parking), Strategic Policy 24 of the Horsham District Local Plan (2023–40), and paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which states that development should only be refused on transport grounds if there is an unacceptable highway safety impact or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe.
- 6.33 The application site is accessed via an existing narrow, privately maintained unmade track from Hampers Lane, which is shared with a small number of neighbouring dwellings. This access arrangement is long-established and has previously been assessed in connection with earlier applications on the site.
- 6.34 West Sussex County Council, in its role as Local Highway Authority (LHA), has provided consultation comments on the proposal. As Hampers Lane is a privately maintained road, the LHA's comments are offered as advice only. Notwithstanding this, the LHA has confirmed that the proposed development is not anticipated to give rise to a significant material intensification of vehicle movements to or from the site and raises no objection to the scheme.
- 6.35 The LHA notes that it was previously consulted on application DC/20/2401, an outline proposal for three dwellings, and at that time no highway safety or capacity concerns were raised, with the application ultimately refused on grounds unrelated to highways. In comparison, the current proposal for two dwellings represents a reduced level of development and traffic generation.
- 6.36 Vehicle access would continue to utilise the existing arrangements from Hampers Lane. Each dwelling would be provided with a double garage and additional on-site parking spaces, resulting in a total level of parking that is considered appropriate for a development of this size and location and compliant with adopted parking standards. On-site turning provision is

achievable, allowing vehicles to enter and exit the site in a forward gear, and the garages can also be utilised for the secure storage of bicycles.

- 6.37 The LHA concludes that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in “severe” cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network. As such, the proposal is not contrary to paragraph 116 of the NPPF, and there are no transport grounds on which to resist the development. Accordingly, the proposal is considered acceptable in highway terms and complies with relevant local and national planning policy.

Ecology:

- 6.38 The ecological implications of the proposed development have been assessed against HDPF Policy 25, Strategic Policy 17 of the Horsham District Local Plan (2023–40), the Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan, and paragraphs 187 and 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). These policies seek to protect and enhance biodiversity, ensure that development avoids harm to protected species and designated sites, and delivers measurable biodiversity enhancements where possible.
- 6.39 The application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, an Ecological Impact Assessment, and associated biodiversity reports. These documents assess the site’s ecological value, the presence or absence of protected species, and the potential impacts of the proposed development.
- 6.40 The site comprises a previously developed residential plot with areas of scrub, grassland and mature trees, which provide habitat value primarily at a local level. The submitted surveys confirm that the site does not support any irreplaceable habitats. No evidence of roosting bats was identified within the existing building or surveyed trees, and no further bat surveys are required. The surveys also confirm that, subject to appropriate mitigation and precautionary measures, the proposal would not result in unacceptable impacts on protected species.
- 6.41 The site lies within the wider catchment of the Mens Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The submitted ecological assessment confirms that the proposed development, with the retention of boundary vegetation and enhancement planting, would not adversely affect habitat connectivity or the integrity of the SAC. This conclusion is supported by the Council’s Ecology Consultant, who raises no objection to the proposal.
- 6.42 The Council’s Ecology Consultant has reviewed the submitted ecological information and confirms that the assessment is proportionate and appropriate. Recommendations are made for standard ecological safeguards, including a Precautionary Method Statement for reptiles and other mobile species, a Wildlife-Friendly Lighting Strategy, and the provision of ecological enhancements such as bat boxes, bird boxes and insect habitats. These measures are advisory in nature and can be secured through suitably worded planning conditions. Subject to the implementation of these mitigation and enhancement measures, it is concluded that the proposal would not result in significant harm to biodiversity and complies with the requirements of local and national planning policy.

Water Neutrality:

- 6.43 A 2021 Position Statement from Natural England identified that it could not be concluded with the required degree of certainty that new development in the Sussex North Water Supply Zone would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites. As a consequence, and to comply with the legal duties set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (known as the Habitat Regulations), all new development since has been required to demonstrate water neutrality.

- 6.44 On 31st October 2025 Natural England formally withdrew the 2021 Position Statement, citing a package of measures that they were satisfied would safeguard the Arun Valley sites. Principal amongst these measures is a reduction in the Southern Water abstraction licence 'by March 2026'. However, given the licence change has not yet taken place Horsham District Council, as competent authority under the Habitats Regulations, cannot yet be certain that new development will not result in adverse impacts on the Arun Valley sites.
- 6.45 To ensure development can come forward as water neutral in the meantime, the Council has agreed with Natural England to use the significant water savings made by Southern Water in 2024/25 through their programme of leakage reduction (amongst other measures). This has generated some 3,240,000 litres per day of water savings that can now be attributed to new development without increasing water abstraction in the Arun Valley beyond baseline. These savings were previously to be used to launch the Sussex North Water Certification Scheme (SNWCS), however following the withdrawal statement SNWCS will no longer be launching. Natural England standing advice dated 10 November 2025 raises no objection to using these savings to enable development to come forward. The standing advice clarifies that it functions as Natural England's formal response pursuant to Regulation 63(3) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 to all relevant planning applications which seek to achieve water neutrality using the above Southern Water savings.
- 6.46 Officers have undertaken an Appropriate Assessment which demonstrates that the anticipated increase in mains water consumption from this development, alongside all other development granted since the 31st October 2025, will not exceed 3,240,000 litres per day.
- 6.47 Accordingly, Officers consider that the proposed development will not have an Adverse Effect on the Integrity of the Arun Valley Site, either alone or in combination with other plan and projects, thereby complying with Regulations 63 and 70 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, HDPF Policy 31, and paragraph 193 of the NPPF.

Climate Change:

- 6.48 Policies 35, 36 and 37 require that development mitigates to the impacts of climate change through measures including improved energy efficiency, reducing flood risk, reducing water consumption, improving biodiversity and promoting sustainable transport modes. These policies reflect the requirements of Chapter 14 of the NPPF that local plans and decisions seek to reduce the impact of development on climate change. The proposed development includes the following measures to build resilience to climate change and reduce carbon emissions:
- Water consumption limited to 110 litres per person per day
 - Requirement to provide full fibre broadband site connectivity
 - Dedicated refuse and recycling storage capacity
 - Opportunities for biodiversity gain
 - Cycle parking facilities

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):

- 6.49 Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) mandates that every development must achieve at least a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), unless the development qualifies as exempt under the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, and that every planning permission granted for the development of land in England shall be deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that development may not be begun unless a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority and the planning authority has approved the Plan.
- 6.50 The Biodiversity Gain Plan must show how the development will achieve the required minimum 10% BNG using the statutory biodiversity metric tool and must demonstrate how

the habitats will be managed and maintained for 30 years, starting from the date the development is completed. Off-site gains (on unregistered sites) and significant on-site enhancements will be secured over this period by way of a Legal Agreement.

- 6.51 The Applicant has submitted a Biodiversity Metric which demonstrates that the required minimum 10% biodiversity net gain cannot be achieved on-site alone. Accordingly, the biodiversity net gain will be delivered through a combination of on-site biodiversity enhancements and the purchase of registered off-site biodiversity units. The delivery, management and monitoring of the biodiversity gains for the required 30-year period will be secured through the approval of a Biodiversity Gain Plan via the statutory BNG condition.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

- 6.52 Horsham District Council has adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule which took effect on 1st October 2017.

It is considered that this development constitutes CIL liable development.

Use Description	Proposed	Existing	Net Gain
	522	119	403
		Total Gain	522
		Total Demolition	119

Please note that the above figures will be reviewed by the CIL Team prior to issuing a CIL Liability Notice and may therefore change.

Exemptions and/or reliefs may be applied for up until the commencement of a chargeable development.

In the event that planning permission is granted, a CIL Liability Notice will be issued thereafter. CIL payments are payable on commencement of development.

Conclusions and Planning Balance:

- 6.53 The proposal seeks the redevelopment of an existing residential plot within the defined built-up area of Storrington for two detached dwellings. The site is located within a sustainable settlement where residential development is acceptable in principle, and the redevelopment of a previously developed site makes efficient use of land in accordance with the development plan strategy.
- 6.55 The scheme has evolved in response to the site's constraints and planning history. The reduced scale of development, when compared to earlier refused proposals for three dwellings on the site, has enabled a layout that respects the established character of Heath Common, retains key landscape features and avoids overdevelopment. The design approach, siting and scale are considered to be appropriate to the context of the area and do not result in undue harm to visual amenity.
- 6.56 The development would not give rise to unacceptable impacts on neighbouring residential amenity, with adequate separation distances, careful siting and retained landscaping ensuring that privacy, outlook and levels of daylight are preserved. Highway impacts have been assessed by the Local Highway Authority, which has advised that the proposal would not result in severe cumulative impacts or highway safety concerns.
- 6.57 While the development gives rise to some impacts, including the loss of lower-value habitats, these are mitigated through on-site ecological measures and the provision of registered off-

site biodiversity gains to achieve the statutory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain requirement. Matters relating to tree protection, construction methodology and biodiversity delivery can be appropriately controlled through planning conditions.

- 6.58 The proposal would deliver tangible benefits, including the replacement of a long-derelict dwelling, a modest net increase in housing supply within a sustainable location, and improvements to the overall appearance and functionality of the site. These benefits attract positive weight in the planning balance. Having regard to the development plan as a whole and all other material considerations, and applying the 'tilted balance' under Paragraph 11d of the NPPF, it is concluded that the proposal represents sustainable development. No adverse impacts have been identified that would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme. Planning permission is therefore recommended to be granted, subject to appropriate conditions.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To approve planning permission subject to conditions.

Conditions:

- 1 Plans list

- 2 **Standard Time Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 3 **Pre-Commencement Condition:** No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until the following construction site set-up details have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

- (a) the location for the loading and unloading of plant and materials, site offices, and storage of plant and materials (including any stripped topsoil)
- (b) the provision of wheel washing facilities (if necessary) and dust suppression facilities

The approved details shall be adhered to throughout the construction period.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental in order to consider the potential impacts on the amenity of nearby occupiers during construction and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 4 **Pre-commencement Condition:** No development shall commence until a drainage strategy detailing the proposed means of foul and surface water disposal has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to ensure that the development is properly drained and to comply with Policy 38 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 5 **Pre-commencement Condition:** No development shall commence until full details of all proposed and existing utility and service lines, together with precise details of the existing and proposed finished floor levels and external ground levels of the development in relation to nearby datum points adjoining the application site, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details shall be clearly shown on a plan. The development shall thereafter be carried out in strict accordance with the approved details.

Reason: This matter is fundamental to controlling the development in detail, ensuring that the layout and levels are appropriate in the interests of amenity, visual impact, and compliance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 6 **Pre-commencement Condition:** No development shall commence, including demolition pursuant to the permission granted, ground clearance, or bringing equipment, machinery or materials onto the site, until the following preliminaries have been completed in the sequence set out below:

- (a) All trees on the site shown for retention on approved drawing number Lizard Tree retention and protection plan drawing no. LLD3413-ARB-DWG-002 Revision 00 dated March 2025, as well as those off-site whose root protection areas ingress into the site, shall be fully protected throughout all construction works by tree protective fencing affixed to the ground in full accordance with section 6 of BS 5837 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations' (2012).
- (b) Once installed, the fencing shall be maintained during the course of the development works and until all machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site.
- (c) Areas so fenced off shall be treated as zones of prohibited access, and shall not be used for the storage of materials, equipment or machinery in any circumstances. No mixing of cement, concrete, or use of other materials or substances shall take place within any tree protective zone, or close enough to such a zone that seepage or displacement of those materials and substances could cause them to enter a zone.

Any trees or hedges on the site which die or become damaged during the construction process shall be replaced with trees or hedging plants of a type, size and in positions agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to ensure the successful and satisfactory protection of important trees and hedgerows on the site in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 7 **Pre-commencement Condition:** No development shall commence, including demolition pursuant to the permission granted, ground clearance, or bringing equipment, machinery, or materials onto the site, until an Arboricultural Method Statement, in accordance with Lizard Arboricultural Method Statement - LLD3413-ARB-REP-001 dated March 2025, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This statement shall detail all trees and hedgerows on and adjacent to the site to be retained during construction works, and the measures to ensure their protection throughout all construction activities.

The development shall be implemented in full and thereafter carried out strictly in accordance with the approved Arboricultural Method Statement (LLD3413-ARB-REP-001 dated March 2025).

Any trees or hedgerows on the site that die or become damaged during the construction process shall be replaced with trees or hedging plants of a type, size, and in positions agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: This requirement is fundamental to ensure the successful and satisfactory protection of important trees and hedgerows on the site, in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 8 **Pre-Commencement Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (the HMMP), prepared in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan and including:

- (a) a non-technical summary;
- (b) the planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan; and

(c) the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan from the completion of development.
has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

The created and/or enhanced habitat specified in the approved HMMP shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved HMMP. Any proposed or retained planting, which within a period of 5 years after the completion of development, dies, is removed, or becomes seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 9 **Pre-commencement (Slab Level) Condition:** No development above ground floor slab level shall commence until a Biodiversity Enhancement Layout for biodiversity enhancements listed in the Ecological Impact Assessment (Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology, August 2025) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Layout shall include the following:

- a) Detailed designs or product descriptions for biodiversity enhancements; and
- b) Locations, orientations and heights for biodiversity enhancements on appropriate drawings.

The enhancement measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation and all features shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To enhance protected and Priority species & habitats and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under paragraph 187d of the NPPF 2024 and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and Policy 31 of the Horsham Development Framework.

- 10 **Pre-occupation Condition:** Prior to the first occupation of any part of the development hereby permitted, full details of all hard and soft landscaping works shall have been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include plans and measures addressing the following:

- Details of all existing proposed trees and planting, including schedules specifying species, planting size, densities and plant numbers and tree pit details, and their proximity to any sewers, rising mains and the water mains on or adjacent to the site.
- Details of all hard surfacing materials and finishes
- Details of all boundary treatments
- Details of external lighting

The approved landscaping scheme shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details within the first planting season following the first occupation of any part of the development. Unless otherwise agreed as part of the approved landscaping, no trees or hedges on the site shall be wilfully damaged or uprooted, felled/removed, topped or lopped without the previous written consent of the Local Planning Authority until 5 years after completion of the development. Any proposed planting, which within a period of 5 years, dies, is removed, or becomes seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory development that is sympathetic to the landscape and townscape character and built form of the surroundings, and in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 11 **Pre-occupation Condition:** No dwelling shall be first occupied until cycle parking facilities serving that dwelling have been provided within the garage or side or rear garden for that dwelling. The facilities shall thereafter be retained for use at all times.

Reason: To provide alternative travel options to the use of the car in accordance with Policy 40 and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 12 **Pre-occupation Condition:** Prior to the first occupation of each dwelling, the necessary in-building physical infrastructure and external site-wide infrastructure to enable superfast broadband speeds of a minimum 30 megabytes per second through full fibre broadband connection shall be provided to the premises.

Reason: To ensure a sustainable development that meets the needs of future occupiers in accordance with Policy 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 13 **Pre-occupation Condition:** No dwelling hereby permitted shall be first occupied until provision for the storage of refuse and recycling has been provided within the garage or side or rear garden for that dwelling. The facilities shall thereafter be retained for use at all times.

Reason: To ensure the adequate provision of recycling facilities in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 14 **Regulatory Condition:** The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall strictly accord with those indicated on the application form and approved plans.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 15 **Regulatory Condition:** No external lighting or floodlighting shall be installed other than with the permission of the Local Planning Authority by way of formal application.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the locality and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 16 **Regulatory Condition:** The dwellings hereby permitted shall meet the optional requirement of Building Regulation G2 to limit the water usage of each dwelling to 110 litres per person per day. The subsequently approved water limiting measures shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: To limit water use in order to improve the sustainability of the development in accordance with Policy 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 17 **Regulatory Condition:** All mitigation measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the [Ecological Impact Assessment (Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology, August 2025) and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Revision 01 (Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology, May 2025), as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination. This includes the Precautionary Method Statement in Sections 4.4.2 and 4.7.2 of the Ecological Impact Assessment (Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology, August 2025), which avoids impacts on protected species.

This may include the appointment of an appropriately competent person e.g. an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) to provide on-site ecological expertise during construction. The appointed person shall undertake all activities, and works shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To conserve protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

- 18 **Regulatory Condition:** Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (and/or any Order revoking and/or re-enacting that Order) no development falling within Classes A, B or E of Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the order shall be erected, constructed or placed within the curtilage of the dwellings hereby permitted without express planning consent from the Local Planning Authority first being obtained.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of nearby residents in accordance with policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

Biodiversity Net Gain Condition

Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the “biodiversity gain condition” which means development granted by this notice must not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

This permission will require the submission and approval of a Biodiversity Gain Plan before development is begun.

For guidance on the contents of the Biodiversity Gain Plan that must be submitted and agreed by the Council prior to the commencement of the consented development please see the link: [Submit a biodiversity gain plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain)

Statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These can be found at Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 74-003-20240214 of the Planning Practice Guidance, which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>.

Irreplaceable habitat

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans.

Effect of Section 73(2D) of the 1990 Act

Under Section 73(2D) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) where -

- (a) a biodiversity gain plan was approved in relation to the previous planning permission (“the earlier biodiversity gain plan”), and
- (b) the conditions subject to which the planning permission is granted:
 - (i) do not affect the post-development value of the onsite habitat as specified in the earlier biodiversity gain plan, and
 - (ii) in the case of planning permission for a development where all or any part of the onsite habitat is irreplaceable habitat within the meaning of regulations made under paragraph 18 of Schedule 7A, do not change the effect of the development on the biodiversity of that onsite habitat (including any arrangements made to compensate for any such effect) as specified in the earlier biodiversity gain plan.

The earlier biodiversity gain plan is regarded as approved for the purposes of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) in relation to the planning permission.