



PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

TO: Planning Committee

BY: Head of Development and Building Control

DATE: 20th January 2026

DEVELOPMENT: Erection of 4no. 3-bedroom dwellings with associated car parking, private amenity space and acoustic fencing. Creation of an ecological buffer zone.

SITE: Land North of 6 Montpelier Cottages, Old London Road, Washington, West Sussex

WARD: Storrington and Washington

APPLICATION: DC/25/1480

APPLICANT: **Name:** Mr James Williams **Address:** C/O Archevolve, 3 The Square, Storrington, West Sussex, RH20 4DJ

REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA: By request of Councillor Grech

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 erection of 4no. 3-bed dwellings that would be arranged in a terrace layout facing west. The proposed dwellings would be set back from the road frontage and would extend along a staggered build line, with private amenity space provided to the rear/east. An existing access track serving garages to the south of the site would be retained, with an area of land to the far rear/east of the site designated for Biodiversity Net Gain enhancements.

1.3 The proposed development would extend over two storeys and would incorporate a pitched roof. Each dwelling would incorporate a single storey porch projection to the front elevation, with full height glazing to the rear elevation. The proposed dwellings would be finished in traditional brick with tiled roof.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

1.4 The application site to the east of Old London Road, outside any built-up area boundary. The site is therefore located within a countryside location in policy terms.

1.5 The site comprises an area of unmaintained grassland with a belt of trees located along the eastern boundary. The site is bound by the A24 to the east, with residential dwellings located

immediately to the south and west of the application site. The wider surrounding comprises sporadic residential, commercial and agricultural development.

- 1.6 It is noted that Outline planning permission has been granted to the immediate north of the application site under planning reference DC/21/1689 for the erection of 9no. dwellings.

2. INTRODUCTION

STATUTORY BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

- 2.2 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 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
Policy 4 - Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion
Policy 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
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

2.5 Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan (2019)

Policy 1 – A Spatial Plan for the Parish
Policy 2 – Site Allocations for Development
Policy 8 – Countryside Protection
Policy 9 – Green Gap
Policy 14 – Design
Policy 15 – Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity
Policy 17 – Traffic & Transport

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

Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Strategic Policy 2: Development Hierarchy
Strategic Policy 3: Settlement Expansion
Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change
Strategic Policy 7: Appropriate Energy Use
Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction
Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality
Strategic Policy 10: Flooding

Strategic Policy 11: Environmental Protection
 Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
 Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection
 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
 Strategic Policy 37: Housing Provision
 Strategic Policy 38: Meeting Local Housing Needs
 Policy 40: Improving Housing Standards in the District

- 2.7 **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

Application site:

WS/32/01	Erection of 2 semi-detached dwellings & access (outline) Site: Land Adj 6 Montpelier Cottages Old London Road Washington	Application 18.10.2001	Refused	on
WS/28/02	Erection of 3 dwellings and access Site: Land Adj Montpelier Cottages Old London Road Washington	Application 24.12.2002	Refused	on
DC/14/1720	Construction of 3 x two bedroom terraced dwellings	Application 17.12.2014	Refused	on

Adjacent site to north:

DC/21/1689	Outline application (all matters reserved) for the erection of 2x2 bed semi-detached dwellings, 3x2 bed terraced dwellings and 4x3 bed semi detached dwellings (9 units in total), provision of parking for 24 vehicles.	Application 07.05.2024	Permitted	on
DC/25/0837	Removal of Conditions 8, 13 and 14 of previously approved application DC/21/1689 (Outline application (all matters reserved) for the erection of 2x2 bed semi-detached dwellings, 3x2 bed terraced dwellings and 4x3 bed semi detached dwellings (9 units in total), provision of parking for 24 vehicles) relating to water neutrality.	Application 24.11.2025	Permitted	on

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
 From site observations there are two ash trees (one twin stemmed) on the Northern boundary of the plot. They are both affected to some extent by Ash dieback disease and have a limited safe useful life expectancy of less than 10 years in any event. They would not be appropriate

for retention at such close proximity to new residential development either in terms of build process or longer-term tree/build relationship. The adjacent plot also has outline permission for similar density of new residential use with projected build footprint within circa 2m of these trees stems.

The adjacent plot has had an artificial soil bund constructed within relatively close proximity to the avenue of poplars planted alongside the adjacent A24 dual carriageway. These trees are not appropriate for longer term retention betwixt a main arterial road and in close proximity to new residential development due to their species, size and condition. The Southern end tree in the avenue, closest to the NE corner of the subject plot, is the largest at approx. 25m in height. It has a significant structural weakness (included stem union) that will require remedial action to be taken when it is next surveyed by the appropriate landowner.

Planting of trees in comparatively small terraced rear gardens is not a realistic way of achieving longer term soft landscape contribution. Recommend that a comprehensive approach to the future landscape setting of the site is taken at this juncture of the planning process. If vegetative screening from the A24 is a desired approach, a robust scheme of sustainable native species should be sought.

3.3 **HDC Environmental Health:** Comment

A particular concern is that the garden areas are to be located on the eastern side of the proposed dwellings adjacent to the A24 as opposed to the previous scheme that located amenity areas to the west where they were shielded from the road noise.

Further information should be provided to show how the development and amenity spaces will be shielded from the high levels of road traffic noise.

Occupiers will not be able to rely on openable windows for ventilation of the first floor bedrooms so an appropriate mechanical ventilation system will need to be provided. Reliance on trickle vents is unlikely to be sufficient to mitigate overheating risks and may not manage exposure to air pollution.

An Overheating Risk Assessment and Air Quality Assessment prepared by competent person should be provided so these risks can be properly considered.

3.4 **HDC Landscape Architect:** No Objection

Given the surrounding context, limited concerns regarding the principle of introducing residential development into this parcel of land. There will be very limited visual or landscape character concerns related to these proposals.

Acoustic fencing is proposed to the eastern boundary of the site, close to the A24. Further details will need to be submitted detailing the height and type of fencing proposed as the acoustic barrier.

Fencing and sheds are proposed close to the trunks of existing retained trees. Advise that measures are proposed that do not impact on the roots of these retained trees as they provide maturity to the scheme and further barriers to the A24.

The function of the grass strip of land to the south of Plot 1 needs clarifying. Access routes to the rear gardens of the adjoining land and the proposed Plots needs to be clear within submitted plans.

Overall, the development could be accommodated within this location however additional information needs to be submitted regarding landscaping, which can be conditioned.

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

3.5 Ecology Consultant: No Objection subject to conditions

Note from the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal V4 (Phlorum Limited, September 2025) that Building B1 (small wooden shed) and Building B2 (small wooden log shed) both have negligible bat roost potential. Also note that three trees have Potential Roost Features for Individual bats (PRFs-I), but that all three trees will be retained. Therefore agree that no further surveys for bats are required.

Support the implementation of a Precautionary Method Statement for reptiles with regard to site clearance as recommended in Section 5.10 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal V4 (Phlorum Limited, September 2025). This is because there are records for Grass Snake, Adder, Slow Worm and Common Lizard within 2km of the site and there is habitat suitable for reptiles, although none were recorded during the survey. This should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full.

Support the implementation of the Precautionary Method Statement for mobile protected and Priority species (including Hedgehog, which is a Priority and threatened species) in Section 5.16 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal V4 (Phlorum Limited, September 2025). This should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full.

Satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available for determination. This provides certainty for the LPA of the likely impacts on designated sites, protected and Priority species & habitats and, with appropriate mitigation measures secured, the development can be made acceptable. The mitigation and enhancement measures identified in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal V4 (Phlorum Limited, September 2025) should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full. This is necessary to conserve and enhance protected and Priority species, particularly reptiles and mobile protected and Priority species.

Also support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species, which have been recommended to secure net gains for biodiversity, as outlined under Paragraph 187d and 193d of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). The reasonable biodiversity enhancement measures should be outlined within a separate Biodiversity Enhancement Layout and should be secured by a condition of any consent. This will enable LPA to demonstrate its compliance with its statutory duties including its biodiversity duty under s40 NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and delivery of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain. Impacts will be minimised such that the proposal is acceptable, subject to the conditions below based on BS42020:2013.

3.6 Natural England (Standing Advice): No objection

3.7 Southern Water: Comment

The exact position of the public assets must be determined on site by the applicant in consultation with Southern Water before the layout of the proposed development is finalised. restrictions on the proposed tree planting adjacent to Southern Water sewers, rising mains or water mains. Reference should be made to Southern Water's publication "A Guide to Tree Planting near water Mains and Sewers" and the Sewerage Sector Guidance with regards to any landscaping proposals and our restrictions and maintenance of tree planting adjacent to sewers, rising mains and water mains.

3.8 WSCC Highways: No Objection

The site fronts onto Old London Road which forms part of the public highway network and is described as a 'D' classified road subject to 60mph speed limit. The site is located at the end of a no-through road, and the character of the road is quiet and lightly trafficked. The plans show driveways onto the street. Assuming the speeds here will be much lower the driveways onto the existing highway are unlikely to cause any safety issues.

Due to its linear alignment there appears to be no apparent visibility concerns. An inspection of collision data provided to WSCC by Sussex Police from a period of the last 5 years reveals no reported incidents of personal injury near to the access. Therefore, there is no evidence to suggest the existing road layout is operating unsafely or that the proposal would exacerbate an existing safety concern.

The site is situated in Parking Behaviour Zone (PBZ) 1. In accordance with the standards set out in WSCC's Guidance on Parking at New Developments (September 2020), there is a requirement of 2.2 spaces for a 3-bed dwelling. The scheme proposes 2 spaces per dwelling vehicle parking spaces which the Highway Authority consider as adequate.

The Highway Authority from experience with similar site context, consider that although there are additional trips associated with the proposal it is not to an extent that could cause capacity issues on the local highway network.

The Highway Authority do 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 (NPPF), paragraphs 114 -117, as revised December 2024.

3.9 **NatureSpace:** Comment

There is a low risk that great crested newts (GCN) may be present at the application site. However, the application site lies within a red impact zone as per the modelled district licence map, which indicates that there is highly suitable habitat for GCN within the area surrounding the application site. Therefore, informative recommended.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

3.10 Representations:

2 letters of objection were received from 2 separate addresses, and these can be summarised as follows:

- Impact on privacy
- Noise, dirt, dust pollution
- Impact on access to rear
- Increase in traffic
- Access track to rear is too narrow
- Impact on sewage drain
- Ash trees to the northern suffering from Ash Die-Back
- Poor state of repair of road
- Impact on parking

2 letter of support was received from 2 separate address, one of which raised the following points:

- Safety of access
- Safety of children from traffic
- Speed limit
- Impact on parking
- Poor quality of roadway

3.11 **Washington Parish Council:** Objection

- Located within the countryside
- Not previously developed
- Does not conform with the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan

3.12 Member Comments:

Note the concerns raised by Washington Parish Council and residents of three dwellings in the vicinity of the proposed development, including two dwellings north of the proposed development site at Montpellier Cottages, which include concerns regarding construction noise, pressure on parking availability on the Old London Road and concerns about road safety arising from traffic speed on the Old London Road.

Also note the concerns raised by HDC Environmental Health regarding road traffic noise, air pollution and the need for ventilation that does not rely on opening windows thereby exposing residents of the new development to traffic noise and air pollution, the HDC Arboriculture concerns regarding the lack of a tree survey or arboricultural impact assessment having been submitted and concerns regarding the health and size of trees around the proposed development site, and concerns raised by Southern Water regarding the need for the development to avoid damage to their sewer and mains water assets and requirements relating to the proposed SUDS for dealing with surface run-off.

Also note that the developer has submitted a Water Neutrality Statement which proposes the purchase of SNWCS credits or an alternative offsetting scheme, but given the recent withdrawal of the Natural England Water Neutrality Position Statement this is no longer required and should be replaced with a commitment by the developer to comply with the building regulation G2 to limit water usage in each proposed dwelling to no more than 110 litres per person per day.

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 outside of any defined built-up area boundary and is therefore within the countryside in policy terms. The site is not allocated within the Horsham District Planning Framework, nor with the made Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan. The proposed development would not therefore comply with Policies 1, 2, and 3 of the HDPF and would not ordinarily be considered acceptable in principle.
- 6.2 The application site has been subject of a previous planning application for the construction of 3no. 2-bed terraced dwellings under reference DC/14/1720, which was refused and subsequently dismissed at appeal. The Inspector considered that the site would not be

classified as being accessible to local services, and even with some local bus services and cycling potential, car usage would be necessary. The Inspector recognised that the Council did not have a five year housing land supply, but considered that the 3no. additional dwellings would make only a very slight difference to housing supply in the district context. On this basis, the Inspector did not consider the site to be sustainable.

- 6.3 It is however noted that subsequent to this appeal decision, the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted. Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan states that *“Development proposals outside the Built Up Area of Washington will be supported on any allocated site(s) and within the area within and around Montpelier Gardens/Luckings Yard...or if it results in the reuse of previously developed land on land outside the South Downs National Park provided the proposal accords with other policies in the Development Plan.”* [emphasis added]. This is considered to be a material consideration of significant weight in assessing the planning application.
- 6.4 The proposed site is immediately opposite the area identified under Policy 1 in the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan. As such, it can be considered as being ‘around Montpelier Gardens / Luckings Yard’. By virtue of the specific wording to Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan, the principle of development of this site is therefore considered acceptable.

Design and Appearance:

- 6.5 Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the HDPF promote development that protects, conserves and enhances the landscape and townscape character from inappropriate development. Proposals should take into account townscape characteristics, with development seeking to provide an attractive, functional and accessible environment that complements the locally distinctive character of the district. Buildings should contribute to a sense of place, and should be of a scale, massing, and appearance that is of a high standard or design and layout which relates sympathetically to the landscape and built surroundings.
- 6.6 Policy 14 of the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan states that the scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and materials of all development proposals will be required to reflect the architectural and historic character and scale of the surroundings buildings and landscape.
- 6.7 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting; establish a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit; optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development; and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible.
- 6.8 The previous appeal decision relating to DC/14/1720 considered the impact of the development on the countryside character of the locality. The Inspector noted that even though the application site lies alongside the busy A24 and to the side of a terraced dwelling, the site and wider area has a rural ambience. It was considered that the construction of new dwellings on the edge of a small sporadic rural cluster of development and markedly changing the site’s open landscape to houses with domestic paraphernalia, would harm the aesthetics and character of the countryside.
- 6.9 Since this appeal decision, it is acknowledged that the site context has changed. Specifically, planning permission reference DC/21/1689 has been approved to the north of the site, encompassing a total of 9no. dwellings. To this effect, the application site would be surrounded by residential development to the north, south and west, where the rural

character and ambience of the site and wider surroundings has been reduced by recent development. Given this context, it is not considered that the erection of 4no. dwellings on the site would appear out of character nor harm the character of the countryside location.

- 6.10 The proposed development would comprise a terrace of 4no. two storey dwellings set back from Old London Road and arranged from north to south. The proposal would follow a linear build line to reflect that of the adjacent development of 1-6 Montpelier Cottages to the south.
- 6.11 The proposal would be designed to reflect similar development within the immediate surroundings, with the roof form, projections, and materials, considered to reflect the built features of the adjacent residential dwellings. The proposed dwellings would be of a similar scale, massing, and bulk to the adjacent residential dwellings, where each would benefit from a similar plot size. For these reasons, it is considered that the proposal would reflect the character and appearance of similar development within the immediate locality and would relate sympathetically to the built surroundings.
- 6.12 The proposed development is considered to reflect the townscape character and appearance of the immediate surroundings, sitting comfortably within the context of existing residential development, and of a form and appearance that would relate sympathetically to the built development. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the above policies.

Residential Amenity:

- 6.13 Policy 32 of the HDPF states that development will be expected to provide an attractive, functional, accessible, safe, and adaptable environment that contribute a sense of place both in the buildings and spaces themselves. Policy 33 continues that development shall be required to ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land.
- 6.14 The proposed development would be arranged in a terraced layout, set away from the nearest residential property to the south, and built-up to the boundary to the north. The proposed dwellings would be built along a staggered build line with each dwelling benefiting from private amenity space set on lower ground level than the residential dwellings.
- 6.15 While the proposal would introduce additional residential receptors, it is considered that sufficient distance would be retained between the proposed development and the existing dwellings to the south. It is recognised that there a degree of mutual overlooking is established by way of the existing residential development in the area, where it is not considered that the proposal would result in any greater level of harm than the existing situation.
- 6.16 It is noted that Outline planning permission has been granted on land to the immediate north of the application site. This planning permission was however granted with all matters reserved, including that of access. No Reserved Matters application has yet been received, but indicative plans were submitted as part of the application which show the proposed 9no. dwellings to be located centrally within the site and arranged along a continuous build line. It is considered that sufficient spacing would be retained between the proposed development and the development to the north, so that the proposal would not result in harm.
- 6.17 For these reasons, the proposed development is considered to be of a layout, scale, and siting that would not result in harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties through overlooking, loss of light, or loss of privacy. The development is therefore considered to be in accordance with the above policies.

Highways Impacts:

- 6.18 Policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF promote development that provides safe and adequate access, suitable for all users.
- 6.19 The proposed development would be accessed directly from Old London Road, with each dwelling incorporating an area of parking to the frontage that would seek to accommodate 2no. vehicles.
- 6.20 Following consultation with WSCC Highways, no objections have been raised to the proposal. It is not considered that the proposal would result in safety concerns arising from the proposed driveways, where the level of activity from vehicle movements would not be considered to have a severe impact on the highway network. Sufficient parking has been provided to accommodate the anticipated needs of the development.
- 6.21 It is recognised that concerns have been raised regarding the speed of the road and the possibility of lowering this as part of the application. The Local Highways Authority have concluded that the level of activity from vehicle movement would not be considered to have a severe impact on the highway network, and it is not therefore considered reasonable to require a reduction in the speed limit to make the development acceptable.
- 6.22 For these reasons, the proposed development would provide safe and adequate access for users and would not result in harm to the function and safety of the highway network, in accordance with the above policies.

Ecology:

- 6.23 Policy 31 of the HDPF states that development will be supported where it demonstrates that it maintains or enhances the existing network of green infrastructure. Development proposals will be required to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity and should create and manage new habitats where appropriate.
- 6.24 Circular 06/2005 identifies that the presence of protected species is a material consideration when considering a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat. Therefore, it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed application, is established before planning permission is granted. Information on biodiversity impacts and opportunities should inform all stages of development, and an ecological survey is usually necessary where the type and location of development are such that the impact on biodiversity may be significant and existing information is lacking or inadequate.
- 6.25 The Applicant has submitted a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal reference 13601 by Phlorum dated 16 September 2025. The Report concludes that the habitats within the site are considered largely to be of ecological value within the immediate vicinity only. The site provides suitable habitat to support several protected species and groups, however these populations are unlikely to be locally significant. The Report makes recommendations with respect mitigation and enhancement measures.
- 6.26 Following consultation with the Council's Ecologist, there is sufficient ecological information available for determination. This provides certainty of the likely impacts on designated sites, protected and priority species and habitats, and this confirms that with appropriate mitigation measures secured, the development can be made acceptable. It is recommended that the mitigation and enhancement measures as contained within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal V4 (Phlorum Limited, September 2025) be secured by condition.
- 6.27 Subject to such condition, the proposed development is considered to accord with the above policies.

Water Neutrality:

- 6.28 A 2021 Position Statement from Natural England identified that it could not be concluded with the re-quired 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.
- 6.29 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 Habi-tats Regulations, cannot yet be certain that new development will not result in adverse impacts on the Arun Valley sites.
- 6.30 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.
- 6.31 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.
- 6.32 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.

Other Matters:

Climate Change:

- 6.33 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.
- 6.34 Should the proposed development be approved, the following measures to build resilience to climate change and reduce carbon emissions would be secured by condition:
- Water consumption limited to 110litres per person per day
 - Requirement to provide full fibre broadband site connectivity
 - Dedicated refuse and recycling storage capacity
 - Electric vehicle charging points
- 6.35 Subject to these conditions the application will suitably reduce the impact of the development on climate change in accordance with local and national policy.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):

- 6.36 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 must not be begun unless a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority and the planning authority has approved the Plan.
- 6.37 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.
- 6.38 The Applicant has submitted a Biodiversity Metric which demonstrates a 3.97% net gain is achievable by way of onsite biodiversity gains. Further correspondence with the Agent has confirmed that the remaining 0.68 biodiversity units would be purchased through a habitat bank. The proposed BNG strategy would be secured by the statutory condition.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

- 6.39 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
District Wide Zone 1	377.88	0	377.88
	Total Gain		377.88
	Total Demolition		0

- 6.40 Please note that the above figures will be reviewed by the CIL Team prior to issuing a CIL Liability Notice and may therefore change.
- 6.41 Exemptions and/or reliefs may be applied for up until the commencement of a chargeable development.
- 6.42 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:

- 6.43 The proposed development would be located on a site which falls within the area within and around Montpelier Gardens/Luckings Yard, and is therefore considered to accord with Policy 1 of the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.44 The development would contribute to the identified housing need, where the design and appearance of the development is considered to relate sympathetically to the character and visual amenity of the site and wider surroundings. The proposed development has been designed to appropriately consider the amenity of neighbouring properties and users of land, and would not result in harm to the function and safety of the public highway network.

- 6.45 For these reasons, the proposed development is considered acceptable in principle and would accord with the development plan when considered as a whole.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To approve planning permission subject to the following conditions:

Conditions:

1 **Approved Plans**

- 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:** 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).

- 5 **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 reference ARC/088/25/18, 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).

- 6 **Pre-Commencement (Slab Level) Condition:** No development above ground floor slab level of any part of the development hereby permitted shall take place until a schedule of materials and finishes and colours to be used for external walls, windows and roofs of the approved building(s) has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing and all materials used in the construction of the development hereby permitted shall conform to those approved.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of amenity by endeavouring to achieve a building of visual quality in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 7 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for Protected and Priority species has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy shall include the following:

- (a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;
- (b) Detailed designs to achieve stated objectives;
- (c) Locations of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans;
- (d) Persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures;
- (e) Details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).

The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: As these matters are fundamental to safeguard the ecology and biodiversity of the area in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), and to enhance Protected and Priority Species/habitats and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority Habitats & Species).

- 8 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be first occupied until 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:

- (a) Details of all existing trees and planting to be removed and retained
- (b) Details of all proposed trees and planting, including schedules specifying species, planting size, densities and plant numbers and tree pit details
- (c) Details of all hard surfacing materials and finishes
- (d) Details of all boundary treatments
- (e) Details of all external lighting
- (f) Details of the ecological buffer zone and its long term management.

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 (other than those within private gardens) shall be wilfully damaged or uprooted, felled/removed, topped or lopped without the previous written consent of the Local Planning Authority until 30 years after completion of the development. Any proposed or retained planting outside of private gardens, which 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).

- 9 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until the car parking spaces necessary to serve it have been constructed and made available for use in accordance with approved plan reference ARC/08//25/17 Rev_A. The car parking spaces permitted shall thereafter be retained as such for their designated use.

Reason: To provide car-parking space for the use in accordance with Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 10 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until the cycle parking facilities serving it have been provided within the rear garden for that dwelling. The facilities shall thereafter be retained for use at all times. The cycle parking facilities shall thereafter be retained as such for their designated use.

Reason: To ensure that there is adequate provision for the parking of cycles in accordance with Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 11 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until provision for the storage of refuse and recycling has been made for that dwelling in accordance with plan reference ARC/088/25/17 Rev_A. These 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).
- 12 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until the necessary in-building physical infrastructure and external site-wide infrastructure to enable superfast broadband speeds of a minimum 30 megabits per second through full fibre broadband connection has been 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 **Regulatory Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall be undertaken in strict accordance with the ecological mitigation and enhancement measures set out in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal reference 13601 V4 by Phlorum dated 16.09.2025.
- Reason: As these matters are fundamental to safeguard the ecology and biodiversity of the area in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), and to enhance Protected and Priority Species/habitats and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority Habitats & Species).
- 14 **Regulatory Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall be undertaken in strict accordance with the mitigation measures outlined within the Residential Noise Assessment Ver. 1-2 by Entran Limited dated 02.09.2025.
- Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the future occupiers and in accordance with Policy 32 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).
- 15 **Regulatory Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall be undertaken in strict accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy reference 1fowas/2411100 Final A by Motion dated 28.08.2025.
- Reason: To ensure that the development is properly drained and to comply with Policy 38 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).
- 16 **Regulatory Condition:** The dwelling(s) hereby permitted shall meet the optional requirement of building regulation G2 to limit the water usage of each dwelling to no more than 110 litres per person per day. The subsequently installed water limiting measures shall thereafter be retained.
- Reason: To limit water use in order to improve the sustainability of the development and to ensure the development is water neutral to avoid an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SACSPA and Ramsar sites in accordance with Policies 31 and 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority Habitats & Species).

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.