Horsham District Council

# DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/25/1976
Land Parcel at 512008 115712, Park Lane, Ashington, West Sussex, RH20 3AN

DESCRIPTION:
Erection of a detached outbuilding for use as a sauna (in connection with glamping pods).

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| DC/20/0964 | Erection of an agricultural building partly used as a winery. Creation of a private way, hardstanding, fresh water connection and waste water connection (Certificate of Lawful Development - Proposed) | Application Permitted on 25.09.2020 |
| DC/20/0640 | Prior notification for the erection of an agricultural barn | Prior Approval Required and PERMITTED on 22.05.2020 |
| DC/21/1592 | Change of use of agricultural land for the siting of 3 No. glamping pod holiday lets. | Application Permitted on 03.09.2021 |
| DISC/21/0346 | Approval of details reserved by condition 3, 4 and 5 on application DC/21/1592. | Application Permitted on 08.03.2022 |
| DC/23/1611 | Variation of Condition 6 of previously approved application DC/21/1592 (Change of use of agricultural land for the siting of 3 No. glamping pod holiday lets) Variation sought for the retention of fairy lights installed beneath the main roof structure of the existing pod. | Application Permitted on 04.12.2023 |
| DC/24/0815 | Prior notification for the use of existing barn for the storage of equipment used for agriculture and for use as a winery. | Prior Approval Not Required on 24.06.2024 |

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site is located to the east of Park Lane and lies outside the defined built-up area boundary, within a countryside location for the purposes of planning policy. The site is situated within the Parish of Ashington and is not located within a Conservation Area, nor are there any statutory or locally listed buildings in the vicinity.

The land within the applicant's control at Heath Farm extends to approximately 5.14 hectares and is currently in agricultural use, with an approved holiday let accommodation use granted under planning permission DC/21/1592. Park Lane is a D-class highway and is unlit, with no footways present. Public Right of Way reference 2486 runs east to west opposite the site access, with further Public Rights of Way references 2612 and 2621 located to the south of the site. The nearest bus stop is approximately 2.7 kilometres from the application site.

There are currently three buildings within the site, comprising a glamping pod, an agricultural barn and a storage building, each separated from one another within the wider site area.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

This application seeks full permission for the erection of a detached outbuilding for use as a sauna, in connection with glamping pods. The holiday let accommodation use of the site was approved under application DC/21/1592 and whilst permission was granted for 3 pods, only 1 is currently present. The sauna will be located to the northeast of the site, immediately adjacent to the existing pod. The structure, a sign roomed sauna, will be A-framed in design constructed using materials to match the existing glamping pod.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

**The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

**Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)**:
Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development
Policy 11 - Tourism and Cultural Facilities
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 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking
Policy 42 - Strategic Policy: Inclusive Communities

**Ashington Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031**
Policy ASH1: Overall Spatial Strategy for Ashington
Policy ASH5: Landscaping and Countryside Access

**Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19)**:
Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change
Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction
Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality
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
Policy 25: Parking

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

**Planning Advice Notes**:
Facilitating Appropriate Development
Shaping Development in Horsham District

REPRESENTATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES

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

Consultations:

**HDC Arboricultural officer**: No Objection
There are no trees within close proximity to the area of proposed installation, as such no further comments.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Representations:
None received

Parish Comments:
**Ashington Parish Council**: No Objection

Member Comments:
None received

HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY:
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.

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.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

**Principle of Development**:

Policies 2, 3 and 4 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015), seek to promote development within defined built-up areas, further advocating a planned approach to settlement expansion to satisfy demand for housing growth. The policies seek to ensure that new development is supported by, and mutually supportive of, existing services and amenities while further preserving the existing rural character and settlement hierarchy of the district.

Policy 7 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) states that sustainable employment development in Horsham District will be achieved by promotion of the district as an attractive place to stay and visit to increase the value of the tourism economy. Policy 10 of the HDPF supports sustainable rural economic development and enterprise where it maintains the quality and character of the area and contributes to the wider rural economy or recreational use of the countryside. The policy encourages countryside-based enterprises to be accommodated within suitably located buildings where possible and supports the conversion of rural buildings to business and commercial uses in preference to residential use.

Policy 11 of the HDPF supports measures that promote tourism and enhance cultural and recreational facilities, including rural diversification, provided development is of a scale and type appropriate to its location and improves the quality or range of accommodation, attractions or visitor experiences. The policy particularly supports proposals that reinforce local distinctiveness, improve existing facilities, contribute to the rural economy, support farm diversification, and respect the relationship between settlements and the surrounding countryside.

Policy 1 of the ANP states that development outside the built-up area boundary will only be permitted where it represents an appropriate countryside use, such as tourism, is located on previously developed land, and supports the retention or provision of appropriate commercial businesses in accordance with local and national policy.

In this instance the application site, Heath Farm, falls outside of a Built-Up Area and lies within the Countryside. Policy 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) is relevant and requires

development outside the Built-Up Area boundaries to be essential to its countryside location to protect the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside against inappropriate development. In addition, it must meet one of the following criteria:

1. Support the needs of agriculture or forestry;
2. Enable the extraction of minerals or the disposal of waste;
3. Provide for quiet informal recreational use; or
4. Enable the sustainable development of rural areas.

Furthermore, this policy requires that development be of a scale that is appropriate to its countryside character and location and should not lead either individually or cumulatively to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside and protects and/or conserves, and/or enhances the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area.

Paragraph 88 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should enable: the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings; the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses; sustainable rural tourism and leisure development which respect the character of the countryside; and the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities.

The proposed development is ancillary to the holiday let accommodation use of the site, approved under planning permission DC/21/1592. The proposal would continue to promote tourism through an established and popular rural venue and would enhance the range and quality of visitor accommodation within this part of the district, contributing to the wider rural economy. Given that the sauna would be used solely in connection with the approved holiday let and that the site would remain in agricultural use, it is not considered that the proposal would result in a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside or conflict with the aims of Policy 26 of the HDPF. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with Policies 10, 11, 26 and 29 of the HDPF and is acceptable in principle, subject to the consideration of all other material planning considerations.

**Design and Appearance**:

Policy 25 of the HDPF seeks to protect the district's natural environment and landscape character from inappropriate development, supporting proposals that conserve and enhance landscape character, respect settlement identity, and maintain settlement separation. Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF require development to be of high quality and inclusive design, informed by an understanding of the local context, and to integrate successfully with its surroundings, make efficient use of land, protect amenity, use appropriate materials, and respect the character of the surrounding townscape or landscape.

Policy 5 of the ANP states that development within the open countryside must avoid creating a hard edge and must be sensitively designed and landscaped to minimise visual impact and respect the character and beauty of the countryside.

The proposed sauna would be designed to match the existing glamping pod on the site and would be sited immediately adjacent to it, utilising the existing access, parking area and pathway. The sauna would read as a clearly subservient addition and would not appear isolated within the site. The A-frame structure would have a width of 3.8 metres, a depth of 6.4 metres and a height of 3.8 metres, and would be constructed using materials to match the existing pod, including horizontal timber cladding to the walls, timber windows and doors, and standing seam metal cladding to the roof, with matching colours to ensure a visually unified appearance.

By reason of its modest scale, limited height and massing, and its close relationship with the existing glamping pod, the proposed sauna would not result in adverse impacts on the wider landscape character. The site is screened by existing boundary treatment and the development would be set well back within the site, such that it would be largely hidden from public vantage points. As a result, the proposal would not harm the visual amenity and would respect the landscape character and setting of the site, in accordance with Policies 25, 32 and 33 of the HDPF and Policy 5 of the ANP.

**Amenity Impacts:**

Policy 33 of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.

The site is well screened by mature trees and hedgerows, and the nearest residential dwellings are more than 400 metres from the proposal. It is also noted that no objections have been received in relation to the application. Given the separation distances and the existing screening, the proposed development would not give rise to unacceptable impacts in terms of overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light or overbearing impact.

The sauna is proposed in connection with the existing glamping pod and would therefore not result in a limited intensification of use of the site, for example through increased visitors. However, this relationship would be secured by condition to ensure that the sauna is not used independently of the approved holiday let accommodation for separate business or commercial purposes. Having regard to the nature of the use and the relationship to neighbouring land and properties, it is considered that the proposal would not result in unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity and would accord with Policy 33 of the HDPF.

**Water Neutrality**:

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.

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.

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.

The proposal seeks planning permission for the erection of a detached outbuilding for use as a sauna, in connection with the lawful use of the site as a holiday let accommodation. The applicant’s have confirmed the sauna can be delivered without the need for any water connections. As such, it would not give rise to any additional likely significant effects on the protected Arun Valley SAC, SPA or Ramsar sites, either alone or in combination. The proposal can therefore be screened out at HRA Stage 1 and does not require progression to Appropriate Assessment. On this basis, the development is considered acceptable in ecological terms and compliant with Policy 31 of the HDPF and relevant national policy.

**Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):**

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.

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.

The Applicant has demonstrated that the development is exempt from the requirement to achieve a minimum 10% BNG by reason of:

- The development qualifies as 'de minimis' under Regulation 4 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024

**Conclusions**:

The proposed sauna, as an ancillary facility to the approved holiday let use, is considered acceptable within the wider context of the site and would not result in demonstrable harm. The proposal therefore accords with Policies 10, 11, 25, 26, 32 and 33 of the HDPF.

**Recommendation: Application Permitted**

Conditions:

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

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).

4 **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).

5 **Regulatory Condition**: The building hereby permitted shall be used solely for purposes in connection with the holiday let accommodation, approved under DC/21/1592, and shall not be used for independent business or commercial purposes.

Reason: The establishment of a business would give rise to an over-intensive use of the site and lead to an unsatisfactory relationship, contrary to Policies 28 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

Statement pursuant to Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received, in order to be able to, where possible, grant permission.

**Plans list for: DC/25/1976**
Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

| Plan Type | Description | Drawing Number | Received Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| Location plan | | 100 REV C | 01.12.2025 |
| Block plan | | 101 REV C | 01.12.2025 |
| Floor plan | Proposed Floor Plan | NONE | 01.12.2025 |
| Elevation plan | Proposed North-East Elevation | NONE | 01.12.2025 |
| Elevation plan | Proposed North West Elevation | NONE | 01.12.2025 |
| Roof plan | Proposed Roof Plan | NONE | 01.12.2025 |
| Elevation plan | Proposed South-East Elevation | NONE | 01.12.2025 |
| Elevation plan | Proposed South-West Elevation | NONE | 01.12.2025 |

**DELEGATED**

Case Officer sign/initial Sam Nye Date: 26/01/2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 26.01.2026