

Horsham District Council

Our Ref: SDNP/25/00427/ADJAUT
Contact Officer: Stella New
Tel. No.: 01730 819216

13th February 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

Neighbouring Authority Consultation

Applicant: Horsham District Council
Proposal: Adjoining Authority Consultation - Horsham District Council (DC/23/0406) - Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 180 dwellings, all-weather sport pitch, sports pavilion and allotments; with associated access, landscaping, open space and infrastructure (amended plans)
Location: Land to The West of Ashington C of E School, Park Lane, Ashington, West Sussex,

Thank you for your correspondence received 30 January 2025, consulting us as a neighbouring authority on the above noted development proposals.

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

- Purpose 1:** To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.
- Purpose 2:** To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.
- Duty:** To seek to foster the social and economic wellbeing of the local communities within the National Park in pursuit of our purposes.

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

Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 strengthens the Section 11A (2) duty of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and requires all relevant authorities including neighbouring local planning authorities to further the National Park's statutory purposes.

The first purpose is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area. Development within the setting of a national park should be consistent with the section 245 duty, and Paragraph 189 of the NPPF now includes specific reference to the setting of National Parks: "Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, **while any development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.**" It is therefore important to consider direct and indirect effects upon the National Park designated landscape **and its setting** as well as its special qualities.

The site is located some 1.7km from the national park boundary. Given the intervening rolling topography it is unlikely that the development will have any significant impact up on the setting of the landscape designation. The Authority agrees with the conclusions of the Council's landscape officer that the provision of a strong buffer would reduce the potential visual impact from publically accessible locations within the South Downs National Park.

Consideration should be given to impacts from lighting and dark night skies, which are a special quality of the National Park. The South Downs National Park is a designated International Dark Sky Reserve and Paragraph 198(c) of the NPPF 2024 outlines that development should limit the impact of light pollution on intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation. In particular, the flood lighting to the MUGA should be carefully considered to avoid harmful sky glow, which has far reaching effects.

Yours faithfully



TIM SLANEY
Director of Planning
South Downs National Park Authority

Contact Officer
Stella New

