



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/0823

Land To The North of Moat Cottage, Worthing Road, Dial Post, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 8NS

DESCRIPTION:

Permission in Principle for the erection of 6 nos dwellings

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/21/2796	Erection of a detached garden building (Lawful Development Certificate - Proposed).	Application Refused on 22.02.2022
DC/22/0647	Erection of a garden building (Lawful Development Certificate - Proposed).	Application Refused on 06.06.2022
DC/26/0416	Demolition of existing storage structures and sheds and erection of a storage building.	Application Returned
DC/22/1830	Outline Application for the erection of 1no detached dwelling with all matters reserved except access and layout.	Application Refused on 22.11.2022
DC/25/1988	Erection of a 3.6m close boarded fence located to the eastern boundary.	Application Permitted on 06.02.2026
DISC/26/0119	Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 3 to approved application DC/25/1988	Pending Decision

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The Site is located to the west of Worthing Road and close to the A24. It comprises a single rectangular parcel of grassland, surrounded by hedgerows and trees. Farm buildings are situated to the southwest and an access track runs along the southern boundary. There are several dwellings located in the vicinity of the site, including the Grade II listed Woodman's Stud to the southwest. The site is located outside of a defined built-up area boundary, with nearby settlements including Dial Post and Ashington.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

The application seeks permission in principle for 6 dwellings with the majority of matters to considered at Technical Detail stage. The applicant has submitted an indicative block plan, layout and elevations plans (ref. 2605MO_002 and 26015MO_200) which shows access gained from Worthing Road and dwellings arranged in a linear pattern.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (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 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs
Policy 17 - Exceptions Housing Schemes
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 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking

West Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan (2021)

No relevant policies

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 12: Air Quality
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 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment
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
Policy 41: Rural Exception Homes

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (2017)
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (2017)

Planning Advice Notes:

Shaping Development in Horsham (SDPAN)
Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

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:

INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

HDC Conservation: Advice

It is suggested that the proposal would result in less than substantial harm at the lower end of the scale. This harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

HDC Landscape Architect: Not supportive on landscape grounds.

The proposed development would introduce noticeable change at the Site level, replacing a simple pastoral field with residential form and domestic features, resulting in localised adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity. While these effects are judged to be moderate and localised, concerns remain regarding principle of development in this detached location beyond the BUAB.

If minded for approval, we advise that our recommendations are taken into consideration within the design proposals and recommended conditions considered.

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

Southern Water: No 'In Principle' Objection

Southern Water has no objections to this proposal in principle but we are unable to comment further until full details of the proposed foul and surface water drainage disposal have been submitted for our review.

WSCC Highways: Comment

The level of information currently provided is not sufficient to provide a formal response. However, WSCC Highways are unlikely to object to the development providing a safe access can be provided.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Representations:

1 letter of Objection has been received from 1 address, objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- Six houses would change the countryside character around a listed building which could harm its significance.
- Noise during construction and operation could disturb horses in adjacent paddock.
- Site is outside of the built-up area boundary and does not adjoin Dial Post.

No letters of support have been received.

Parish Comments:

West Grinstead Parish Council: Recommend Refusal

WGPC's recommendation is that HDC should REFUSE this application. It is in the middle of the countryside, outside the secondary settlement boundary, and the design is out of keeping with the surroundings. There are concerns about safety as the site falls outside of the 30mph speed limit area, close to the A24 exit road.

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

The Permission in Principle consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for residential development, which separates the consideration of matters of 'principle' for the proposed development, from the 'technical details' of the development. As such, the Permission in Principle route has two stages: the first being the 'Permission in Principle' stage (subject of this current application), which establishes whether the site is suitable in-principle; and the second being the 'Technical Details consent' stage which is when the detailed development proposals are assessed.

The scope of the Permission in Principle application is limited to location, land use, and amount of development.

Principle of Development:

Location

Policy 2 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) 2015 sets out the overarching growth strategy, specifying that development should be focused in and around the key settlement of Horsham and in line with the identified settlement hierarchy. The adopted settlement hierarchy (Policy 3) represents that most sustainable approach to accommodating growth and directs development to settlements with a good range of employment, services and facilities. The nearest defined built-up area to the proposal is Ashington, which is classed as a medium village and located some 3 miles southwest. In addition, the settlement of Dial Post is located a short distance to the north, however this is listed as an unclassified settlement within Policy 3 of the HDPF.

It is acknowledged that the applicant has submitted a Planning Statement referencing Policy 2 of the emerging Horsham Local Plan, which reclassifies Dial Post as a Secondary Settlement where development would be permitted providing it infills a gap within the built-up area. The proposal is located wholly outside of the secondary settlement boundary (ref: Figure 2) and therefore would not be considered 'infill' development. In any case, the policies contained within the emerging Local Plan carry limited weight whilst the Plan is subject to ongoing examination.

Policy 4 of the HDPF supports limited settlement expansion outside built-up area boundaries where:

1. The site is allocated in the Local or Neighbourhood Plan and adjoins an existing settlement edge;
2. The scale of growth is appropriate to the settlement;
3. The proposal meets identified local needs,
4. The development does not prejudice long term development; and
5. The development is contained within defensible boundaries that respect landscape character.

While it is acknowledged that there is a district wide need for housing, owing to a lack of 5-year housing land supply, the proposal is not allocated in a Local or Neighbourhood Plan and does not adjoin an existing settlement edge. In addition, the scale of growth in this location is not considered to be appropriate given the absence of key services, public transport and suitable pedestrian infrastructure. Finally, though the development would be contained within defensible boundaries it is questionable whether the addition of six dwellings would respect the existing landscape character, though it is difficult to ascertain this in the absence of detailed design. Irrespective of this, the proposal is not considered to meet the requirements of Policy 4 (1 & 2).

As the proposal is in a countryside location, Policy 26 of the HDPF is engaged. This policy seeks to protect rural areas against inappropriate development unless it is essential to its location and meets one of the following:

- Supports the needs of agriculture or forestry;
- Enables mineral extraction or waste disposal;
- Provides for quiet informal recreation;
- Enables the sustainable development of rural areas.

The proposal would provide for 6 market dwellings with no connection to rural enterprise and is therefore not considered to meet the requirements of Policy 26. Thus, when considering the overarching spatial strategy as outlined in the HDPF, the principle of development is not acceptable in this location.

Land Use

The application relates to the erection of 6 dwellings on a site located outside of a defined built-up area boundary, on a grassed area of land under the same ownership as the adjacent Moat Cottage. The site is located in close proximity to the A24 however is still considered to be rural in character, with limited built development from the entrance of Worthing Road until you reach Dial Post (approx. 300m north of the proposal). In the context of the Permission in Principle application the consideration of 'land use' is taken to relate to whether the proposed land use change to residential is acceptable.

It is noted that the same concerns were raised as part of a separate application (ref. DC/22/1830) on the adjacent site to the south for 1no. dwelling. The application was ultimately refused partly due to these concerns, with a subsequent appeal dismissed for the same reason.

Furthermore, though the site is not considered isolated in the truest sense of the word, the proposed dwellings would be physically separate from Dial Post and other nearby settlements (e.g. Ashington) by all transport modes other than the private car. This is due to the lack of pedestrian routes immediately adjacent to the site, the lack of an accessible bus service and the road being unsafe for novice cyclists. This is likely to result in a development that is segregated from key services and community networks.

Given the above it is considered that the change in land use would be contrary to Policy 32 (provide an...accessible, safe...environment). The use of the land as residential is therefore considered unacceptable.

Amount of Development

Policies 25 and 33 and the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) promote development that protects, conserves and enhances landscape character and ensures that proposals reflect the locally distinctive character of settlements. In addition, Policy 32 requires high quality design which considers landscape characteristics and contributes to a sense of place while also ensuring buildings are of a scale, massing and appearance that relate sympathetically to their surroundings.

Within the context of a Permission in Principle application the consideration of 'amount' is limited to whether the number of dwellings proposed is appropriate in relation to the size of the site, having regard to the site's countryside location and position outside the defined settlement boundary. While the applicant has provided an indicative site layout and elevations plan to aid with decision making, it is important to note that these are not fixed at this stage.

The proposal would result in the addition of built form in a linear pattern close to the eastern boundary of the site adjacent to Worthing Road, in an area where only two dwellings are currently located. The submitted Proposed Block Plan demonstrates that the 6 dwellings can be accommodated on the site alongside good sized gardens, private off-road parking, visitor parking and landscaping along the northern and eastern boundaries.

The Council's Landscape Architect has advised that they are not supportive of the application, though this is primarily on the basis that the site falls outside of a built-up area boundary rather than exhibiting significant landscape and visual effects. They have set out a series of recommendations in their consultation response including additional woodland planting along boundaries, minimal hard surfacing and soft boundary treatments to reduce the urbanising effect of development. Should the application be permitted, the applicant would need to demonstrate that this has been considered at technical detail stage.

In addition, the Council's Conservation Officer has provided comment with regard to Woodmans Stud which is a Grade II listed building located to the southwest of the site. They have suggested that the proposal would result in less than substantial harm at the lower end of the scale, which should be weighed against public benefit in line with NPPF paragraph 215.

Given the above it is concluded that, although some harm has been identified with regards to landscape, this could be satisfactorily mitigated at the Technical Detail stage. Ignoring the conflict with the overarching spatial strategy, the amount of development is considered acceptable in this location.

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.

As this application is for Permission in Principle, only matters of land use and location are within scope. Detailed water consumption information is not required at this stage. However, the application has been subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment, which concludes that the development – using a precautionary occupancy rate of 3.09 persons per dwelling and subject to standard water efficiency requirements secured at the Technical Details stage – would not give rise to an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC/SPA/Ramsar sites, either alone or in-combination.

On this basis, the principle of development is not precluded on water neutrality grounds, and the completed Appropriate Assessment provides the necessary certainty – beyond reasonable scientific doubt – that the development can proceed without adverse effects on the Arun Valley designated sites.

Other Environmental Considerations:

Climate Change

Policies 35, 36 and 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) require that development mitigates the impacts of climate change through measures including improved energy efficiency, reduced flood risk, lower water consumption, enhanced biodiversity and the promotion of sustainable transport modes. These policies reflect Chapter 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) which requires that local plans and decisions support the transition to a low carbon future and minimise vulnerability to climate impacts.

Given the outline nature of this Permission in Principle application, limited technical detail has been provided at this stage. At the detailed design stage, it is anticipated that the following measures could be incorporated to ensure the development builds resilience to climate change and reduces carbon emissions:

- Integration of decentralised, renewable and/or low carbon energy;
- Measures to limit water use to 110 litres/person/day;
- Electric vehicle charging points and/or cycle storage;
- Integration of SuDS and green infrastructure to manage flood risk;
- Requirement to provide full fibre broadband site connectivity;
- Refuse and recycling storage

Full details of these measures would be expected at the Technical Details Consent stage, where conditions can be imposed to secure their implementation. Subject to these future provisions, the proposed development could suitably reduce its impact on climate change and would accord with Policies 35, 36 and 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Given the outline nature of this Permission in Principle application, detailed ecological information has not been submitted at this stage. Should the principle of development be supported, ecological survey work and appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures would be required at the Technical Details Consent stage to ensure compliance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), the NPPF (2024), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

The site also falls within the scope of the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) regime. A minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity value will be required to be demonstrated at the Technical Details Consent stage, through submission of a habitat baseline assessment and Biodiversity Metric calculation in accordance with the Environment Act 2021 and the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (General) Regulations 2024.

At this stage, it is considered that the site provides scope to deliver BNG through appropriate landscaping and habitat creation as part of any detailed design, and that the requirements of Policy 31 and national BNG legislation could reasonably be met.

Design and Appearance

The matters of scale, design, layout, and access for the proposed development are reserved for consideration under the subsequent 'Technical Details' application.

Conclusions and Planning Balance:

As the site is not allocated for development within the HDPF (2015) or a made neighbourhood plan, the principle of development is contrary to Policies 1, 2, 4 and 26 of the HDPF, and paragraphs 2, 11, 12 and 47 of the NPPF owing to the site's location outside of the built-up area boundary.

However, Chapter 3 of the Council's most recent Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) states that the Council currently benefits from a deliverable supply of housing sites of 1.7 years. Therefore, the presumption in favour of development as dictated by paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged in this instance.

NPPF paragraph 11(d)(ii) states that where there are no relevant development plan policies in place or the policies that are considered most important for the determination of applications are out of date (in this case, Policies 1, 2, 4 and 26 of the HDPF, owing to the lack of a five-year housing supply) permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

It should be noted that neither Footnote 7 nor paragraph 14 of the NPPF applies and therefore the tilted planning balance is not nullified.

Planning Balance

The proposal would provide six additional dwellings. As the Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year housing supply, the provision of six additional dwellings towards this supply is afforded *significant weight*.

However, the proposed dwellings would be located outside of a defined settlement boundary and a significant distance away from a number of key services. Occupants would be heavily reliant on the use of a private motor vehicle and the proposal would therefore be incompatible with paragraphs 110 and 115 of the NPPF, which focus development in locations which limit the need to travel, offer a choice of transport modes, and prioritise sustainable transport modes with suitable access for all users. Furthermore, the lack of pedestrian access to Dial Post raises questions around whether the proposal would maintain and/or enhance the vitality of the rural community and support local services in line with paragraph 83 of the NPPF.

It is therefore concluded that, even when applying the tilted balance under paragraph 11(d), the proposal does not constitute sustainable development. For these reasons, the application is recommended for refusal.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

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
	690	0	690
		Total Gain	690
		Total Demolition	0

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.

Recommendation: Application Refused

Reason(s) for Refusal:

1. The proposed development would be located within an unsustainable location in the countryside, beyond a defined built-up area on a site not allocated within the Development Plan and would not be essential to this countryside location. The development would therefore be contrary to the overarching spatial strategy and hierarchy approach of concentrating development within defined settlements and advocating a planned approach to settlement expansion, contrary to policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015). Notwithstanding the absence of a five-year land housing supply, and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) at paragraph 11(d), it is not considered that there are any material considerations which would outweigh harm arising from conflict with the above policies.

NOTE TO APPLICANT

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/26/0823

(The approved plans will form Condition 1 on the Decision Notice of all Permitted applications)

Schedule of plans/documents not approved:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Location plan		2605MO_000	20.05.2026
Block plan	Existing	2605MO_001	20.05.2026
Block plan	Proposed	2605MO_002	20.05.2026
Elevation & Floor plan	Proposed	2605MO_200	20.05.2026
Supporting Statement	Planning	NONE	20.05.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Sophie Moore Date: 22/06/2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial Adrian Smith

Date: 23/06/2026