



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/1070

Derwent Lodge, West Street, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9LX

DESCRIPTION:

External alterations to create a ground floor link between the two care home buildings and infilling of an existing porch. Internal alterations to create 2no. additional bedrooms and addition of ensuite bathrooms.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/24/0373	Erection of a first floor extension above the existing single storey wing, internal alterations, and the creation of a new link at both ground and first floors levels.	Application Permitted on 13.08.2024
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DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The site comprises of a care home and lies within the built-up area boundary of Billingshurst to the north of West Street and the south of Arun Road. There are a number of protected trees on site towards the eastern boundary and a Large TPO Maple tree lies to the front of the site. The Care Home is divided between two main buildings.

There is an area of hardstanding for visitor and staff parking to both sides of the application site with provision for 22 care parking spaces to serve the site. No alterations are proposed to the parking or access arrangements.

The Care home has 69 resident bedrooms. The current alterations proposed would result in an additional two bedrooms within the current class C2 use through the addition of a ground floor link between the two care home buildings and would involve the infilling of the existing porch. No new staff are required as a result of the proposal and there would be internal alterations.

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 7 - Strategic Policy: Economic Growth
Policy 9 - Employment Development
Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development
Policy 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
Policy 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs
Policy 18 - Retirement Housing and Specialist Care
Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character

Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 27 - Settlement Coalescence
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 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking
Policy 42 - Strategic Policy: Inclusive Communities

Billingshurst Neighbourhood Plan

Policy Bill 1- Billingshurst Built-Up Area Boundary
Policy Bill 2- Housing Design and Character
Policy Bill 3- Energy Efficiency and Design
Policy Bill 14- Residential Parking Provision

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 9: Water Neutrality
Strategic Policy 11: Environmental Protection
Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality
Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles
Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
Policy 25: Parking
Strategic Policy 27: Inclusive Communities, Health and Wellbeing
Policy 28: Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation
Strategic Policy 30: Enhancing Existing Employment
Strategic Policy 35: Town Centre Hierarchy and Sequential Approach
Strategic Policy 36: Town Centre Uses
Strategic Policy 37: Housing Provision
Strategic Policy 38: Meeting Local Housing Needs
Policy 40: Improving Housing Standards in the District
Policy 42: Retirement Housing and Specialist Care

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

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

Planning Advice Notes:

Facilitating Appropriate Development
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:

Natural England: Standing advice

Southern Water: No Objection

Surface water should not be disposed of into a public foul sewer and should comply with Buildign regulations.

WSCC Highways: No Objection

The existing access and parking arrangements are to continue as currently operating. From observation of data supplied to WSCC by Sussex Police, there appear to have been no registered highway collisions or personal injury claims at the point of access to flag a concern with the current operation of the care home.

From inspection of the plans, the proposed extension appears to provide 19sqm of C2 residential floorspace and alterations which equate to 2 additional bedrooms within the property. Considering the capacity of the existing care home, it would not be anticipated that this number of additional rooms would give rise to a significant material intensification of movements to and from the site, over that which the site currently generates.

The care home is well accessible on foot for local visitors, with linked and street lit footways and bus services operate from the nearby Highstreet. Parking is available within the associated car park for 22 vehicles and on street parking is an option in several nearby adjoining roads.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:**Representations:**

None received

Parish Comments:

Parish Council: Neutral comment received.

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:**

Development under HDPF Policy 3 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) should be of an appropriate scale and nature to maintain the characteristics and functions of the relevant settlement according to the hierarchy of Policy 3.

Policy 18 of the HDPF states that proposals for development which provide retirement housing and specialist care housing will be encouraged and supported where it is accessible by foot or public transport to local shops, services, community facilities and the wider public transport network. The Council will particularly encourage schemes that meet identified local needs for those on lower incomes and provide affordable accommodation for rent or shared ownership/equity.

Policy 42 of the HDPF outlines that development which helps to create socially inclusive and adaptable environment for a range of occupiers and users to meet their long-term needs will be encouraged and supported, this includes those of an ageing population.

The application site is an established residential care home (C2 Use) and the proposed alterations would facilitate internal alterations resulting in an additional two bedrooms within the facility.

Billingshurst and the application site are considered well connected with pedestrian access and public transport options to nearby services.

This development would help to meet the need for specialist accommodation within the district. It is also recognised that the development may have the potential for a contribution to the local economy by providing and retaining on-site employment opportunities.

As such, the principle of the proposed development is considered to accord with national and local planning policies relating to the development of sites within established BUAB and making efficient use of land.

Design and Appearance:

Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF promote development that is of a high-quality design, which is sympathetic to the character and distinctiveness of the site and surroundings.

The proposed materials would relate well to the existing appearance of the application site and the ground floor link between the two buildings would not be unduly prominent from the streetscene. The ground floor extension to the front of the building would not be out of character for the site and therefore would not harm the character of the area. The ground floor link would be comprised of uPVC glazed windows and roof to match that on the existing building. The proposed alterations to the appearance of the site would be minor, and only visible to the north west elevation and the south west elevation.

There are no objections to the proposal in light of policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF.

Residential Amenity:

Policy 33 states that development should consider the scale, massing and orientation between buildings, respecting the amenities and sensitivities of neighbouring properties. Policy 33(2) 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 alterations are a modest ground floor increase in footprint and have a limited impact on the appearance of the application site. It is not considered that the proposal would have potential to result in an unacceptable impact on the amenities of the neighbouring properties by way of loss of light, privacy or obtrusive appearance. The applicant has outlined in their submission that the size of the bedrooms would be an acceptable size such that the amenity of the future occupiers of the site would not have unacceptable lack of space.

There are no objections to the proposal in light of policy 33 of the HDPF.

Highways Impacts:

Policy 40 of the HDPF states that transport access and ease of movement is a key factor in the performance of the local economy. The need for sustainable transport and safe access is vital to improve development across the district.

Policy 41 of the HDPF stipulates that development must provide adequate parking and facilities to meet the needs of anticipated users, with consideration given to the needs of cycle parking, motorcycle parking and electric/low emission vehicles. Development which involves the loss of existing parking spaces will only be allowed if suitable alternative provision has been secured elsewhere or the need for

development overrides the loss of parking and where necessary measures are in place to mitigate against the impact.

The access and parking arrangements would not be altered as part of the development and the application site is considered to be in a sustainable location with regards to access to facilities and public transport options. Highways have been consulted during the course of the application and have no objection to the proposal in terms of parking, access or highways safety.

There are no objections to the proposal in light of policies 40 and 41 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.

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.

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 N6 of the NPPF.

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

Conclusions:

It is acknowledged that the proposal would result in specialist care facilities that would contribute to provision within the district in accordance with policies 3, 18 and 42 of the HDPF.

The proposal would be acceptable in terms of design, scale and would not harm the amenity of neighbouring properties, result in poor amenity for future occupiers and would represent a water neutral development. The proposal is recommended for approval subject to conditions on this basis.

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 and finishes of all new external walls, windows and roofs of the development hereby permitted shall match those described within the Planning statement.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policy 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/26/1070

Schedule of plans/documents **approved:**

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Location plan		PL-500	06.07.2026
Site plan	Existing	PL-510 REV P1	06.07.2026
Floor plan	Existing Ground	PL-520 REV P2	06.07.2026
Floor plan	Existing First	PL-521 REV P2	06.07.2026
Roof plan	Existing	PL-522 REV P1	06.07.2026
Floor plan	Ground Demolition	PL-530 REV P1	06.07.2026
Floor plan	First Demolition	PL-531 REV P1	06.07.2026
Floor plan	Proposed Ground	PL-540 REV P2	06.07.2026

Floor plan	Proposed First	PL-541 REV P1	06.07.2026
Roof plan	Proposed	PL-542 REV P1	06.07.2026
Elevation plan	Existing 1/2	PL-550 REV P1	06.07.2026
Elevation plan	Existing 2/2	PL-551 REV P1	06.07.2026
Elevation plan	Proposed 1/2	PL-555 REV P1	06.07.2026
Elevation plan	Proposed 2/2	PL-556 REV P1	06.07.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Hannah Darley Date: 28.08.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 07.09.2026