



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/0984
Westons Farm, Westons Hill, Itchingfield, West Sussex, RH13 0BD

DESCRIPTION:

Removal of condition 3 and variation of condition 1 of previously approved application reference DC/25/0173 (Erection of a glasshouse) in relation to removal of Water Neutrality.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/24/0114	Demolition of building and erection of replacement agricultural garage/store. Construction of a new infill section to boundary wall. (Full Application)	Application 14.05.2024	Permitted	on
DC/24/0115	Demolition of building and erection of replacement agricultural garage/store. Construction of a new infill section to boundary wall (Listed Building Consent).	Withdrawn 14.05.2024	Application	on
DC/24/0269	Minor external alterations to elevations.	Application 29.04.2024	Permitted	on
DC/23/2263	Overhead Lines. Transformer to be upgraded from existing single pole construction to an H pole.	NO OBJECT	Overhead Line	on 25.03.2024
DC/25/0173	Erection of a glasshouse.	Application 23.07.2025	Permitted	on
DISC/25/0240	Approval of details reserved by condition 3 to approved letter DC/25/0173	Application 26.09.2025	Permitted	on
DISC/25/0274	Approval of details reserved by statutory biodiversity gain condition to approved application DC/25/0173.	Application 31.10.2025	Permitted	on

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):

Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
Policy 7 - Strategic Policy: Economic Growth
Policy 9 - Employment Development
Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development
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 40 - Sustainable Transport

Policy 41 - Parking

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

Policy 1: Sustainable Development

Policy 2: Development Hierarchy

Policy 9: Water Neutrality

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

Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment

Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport

Policy 25: Parking

Strategic Policy 30: Enhancing Existing Employment

Policy 31: Rural Economic Development

Barns Green & Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan 2024 - 2031:

Policy 16: Water Neutrality

Policy 17: Small-scale Businesses

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:

None

Parish Comments:

Itchingfield Parish Council: None received

Representations:

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:

Removal of condition 3 of previously approved application reference DC/25/0173 (Erection of a glasshouse) in relation to removal of Water Neutrality.

This application seeks to remove the Water Neutrality Condition 3 of the approved scheme reference DC/25/0173.

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. This was delivered by condition 4 of DC/25/1106.

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 Policy N6 of the NPPF.

Variation of condition 1 of previously approved application reference DC/25/0173 (Erection of a glasshouse) in relation to removal of Water Neutrality.

This application also seeks to remove the Water Neutrality Statement (688769 REV 2, 04.02.2025) from the approved plans listed in the schedule set out in Condition 1 of the decision for planning permission ref: DC/25/0173.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered to comply with relevant local and national planning policies and is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation: Application Permitted

Conditions:

- 2 **Standard Time Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of 23.07.2025.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3 **NOT USED**

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

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 5 **Regulatory Condition:** The building hereby permitted shall be used for agricultural purposes only, as defined in Section 336(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Reason: The site lies in an area where, in accordance with Policy 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) development unrelated to an essential rural activity would not normally be permitted.

NOTE TO APPLICANT

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.

Under Regulations 4, 5, 7 & 8 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024 the statutory biodiversity gain condition required by Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) does not apply in relation to planning permission for development which:

- 1. does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (a hedgerow habitat or watercourse habitat identified for the purposes of the biodiversity metric);
- 2. is the subject of a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015;
- 3. is undertaken solely or mainly for the purpose of fulfilling, in whole or in part, the biodiversity gain planning condition which applies in relation to another development (In determining whether a development is undertaken solely or mainly for this purpose, no account is to be taken of any facility for the public to access or to use the site for educational or recreational purposes, if that access or use is permitted without the payment of a fee);
- 4. consists of no more than 9 dwellings, is carried out on a site which has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares, and consists exclusively of dwellings which are self-build or custom housebuilding ("Self-build or custom housebuilding" has the same meaning as in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended)).

In addition, the Biodiversity Gain Plan Condition does not apply to applications for major development made before 12 February 2024, or non-major development made before 2 April 2024.

Based on the information submitted in the planning application documents, the Planning Authority considers that this permission is exempt from biodiversity net gain, and as such does not require approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun.

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.

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/26/0984

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

Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Location plan		001 REV P3	04.02.2025
Block plan	Existing	002 REV P1	04.02.2025
Block plan	Proposed	002 REV P1	04.02.2025
Floor plan	Proposed	010 REV P1	04.02.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed South	012 REV P2	04.02.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed East	013 REV P2	04.02.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed North	014 REV P2	04.02.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed West	015 REV P2	04.02.2025
Roof plan		011 REV P1	04.02.2025
Supporting Statement	Planning	none	04.02.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Steve Astles Date: 16.09.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial Tamara Dale Date: 22.09.2026