



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DISC/25/0399

Land North of Shermanbury Road, Partridge Green, RH13 8EU,

DESCRIPTION:

Approval of details reserved by condition 6 to approved application DC/24/0428.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/24/0428	Outline planning application for the erection of up to 120 dwellings with public open space, landscaping, and sustainable drainage system (SuDS) with vehicular access point with all matters to be reserved except access.	Application Permitted on 05.11.2025
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PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Planning Application DC/24/0428 was granted consent on 05.11.2025. This permission was for the following:

Outline planning application for the erection of up to 120 dwellings with public open space, landscaping, and sustainable drainage system (SuDS) with vehicular access point with all matters to be reserved except access.

Consent is sought to discharge the details reserved by condition 6

Condition 6:

Pre-Commencement Condition: No development shall commence until either:

- i) Details have been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority confirming that the necessary credits to achieve water neutrality have been secured via the Sussex North Offsetting Water Scheme;*
- or*
- ii) A site-specific water neutrality mitigation scheme has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The site-specific water neutrality mitigation scheme shall include full details of the means of any and all onsite and offsite mitigation and any necessary agreements pursuant to S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to deliver and secure the approved mitigation; and*
- iii) The development shall not be first occupied until evidence has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority confirming that the approved site-specific water neutrality mitigation scheme has been fully implemented. The approved mitigation shall thereafter be retained, maintained and operated to the same or better water performance standard.*
- or*
- iv) Evidence has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority that a water neutrality mitigation scheme is not required.*

Reason: To ensure the development is water neutral to avoid an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SAC/SPA and Ramsar sites in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), and to enable the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

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.

Condition 6 was attached to the planning permission to ensure that the development was water neutral.

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 wording of this condition allows for it's discharge where 'iv) *Evidence has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority that a water neutrality mitigation scheme is not required.*' In light of the above, it is agreed that a water neutrality mitigation scheme is not required and a revised Appropriate Assessment has been prepared.

Officers have undertaken an Appropriate Assessment which demonstrates that the anticipated increase in mains water consumption from this development (120 homes at a 304.84 occupancy x125lppd= 33,532.4 litres per day), alongside all other development granted since the 31st October 2025, will not exceed 3,240,000 litres per day.

At the time of writing, applications for some 1,189 homes and 46,443 m² floorspace with a total mains water consumption of circa 326,734 litres per person per day have been granted planning permission since the 1st November 2025 (the day after Natural England withdrew its 2021 Position Statement). As such, there remains considerable capacity for the proposed development to be delivered without resulting in adverse impacts on the integrity of the Arun Valley sites.

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 paragraph 193 of the NPPF.

The requirements of the condition have been satisfied and can be discharged under part iv.

Recommendation: Application Permitted

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: DISC/25/0399

(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
Supporting Statement	Supporting Statement		12.12.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Kate Turner Date: 19.01.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial Adrian Smith Date: 19/01/2026