Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 3 November 2025

by C Coles MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18th December 2025

Appeal A Ref: APP/Z3825/W/25/3370974
Little Wantley, Fryern Road, Storrington, West Sussex RH20 4BJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Simon and Victoria Oliphant-Hope against the decision of Horsham District Council.
- The application Ref is DC/25/0401.
- The development is houseboat with associated decking referred to as 'The Cruiser' and its use as a holiday let.

Appeal B Ref: APP/Z3825/W/25/3370975
Little Wantley, Fryern Road, Storrington, West Sussex RH20 4BJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Simon and Victoria Oliphant-Hope against the decision of Horsham District Council.
- The application Ref is DC/25/0400.
- The development is use of 'The Chalet' as a holiday let.

Decision

Appeal A

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for houseboat with associated decking referred to as 'The Cruiser' and its use as a Holiday Let at Little Wantley, Fryern Road, Storrington, West Sussex RH20 4BJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DC/25/0401, subject to the following condition:

    1) The development shall be occupied as holiday accommodation only and shall not be occupied as a sole or main place of residence or by any persons exceeding a period of 28 days in any calendar year. An up to date register shall be kept and be made available for inspection by the local planning authority upon request. The register shall contain details of the names of all the occupiers of the accommodation, their main home addresses and their date of arrival and departure from the accommodation.

Appeal B

2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for use of 'The Chalet' as a holiday let at Little Wantley, Fryern Road, Storrington RH20 4BJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DC/25/0400, subject to the following condition:

    1) The development shall be occupied as holiday accommodation only and shall not be occupied as a sole or main place of residence or by any persons exceeding a period of 28 days in any calendar year. An up to date register

shall be kept and be made available for inspection by the local planning authority upon request. The register shall contain details of the names of all the occupiers of the accommodation, their main home addresses and their date of arrival and departure from the accommodation.

Applications for costs

3. An application for a full award of costs for Appeal A and Appeal B was made by the appellants against Horsham District Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters

4. Applications for the use of the Cruiser and the Chalet were made at the same time. At the time of my site visit I saw that the buildings described by the appellants as 'the Cruiser' and 'the Chalet' had already been constructed and were in use as holiday lets. However, retrospective as referred to in the application form for the Cruiser and the decision notice for the Cruiser and the Chalet does not constitute an act of development. I have dealt with the appeals on the basis that planning permission is being sought for the Cruiser and its use as a holiday let and the use of the Chalet as a holiday let.

5. The description of the development for Appeal A differs from the application form to the decision notice. That above has been taken from the application form, which adequately describes the development, albeit I have omitted wording that is not a description of development.

6. The site falls within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone as defined by Natural England which draws its water supply from groundwater abstraction at Hardham. In 2021 a position statement from Natural England required all new development within this area to demonstrate water neutrality to ensure development would not contribute to an existing adverse effect upon the integrity of the internationally designated Arun Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar sites by way of increased water extraction.

7. On 31 October 2025 Natural England formally withdrew the 2021 position statement and subsequently confirmed that water neutrality measures are not required for the developments. I am therefore satisfied, on that basis that the proposals would not have a significant adverse impact on the integrity of the protected sites, particularly given the measures adopted by the appellant to reduce the use of water.

Main Issue

8. The main issue for Appeal A and Appeal B is the effect of the developments on the character of the countryside.

Reasons

9. The appeal sites lie within the established residential curtilage of Little Wantley, to the east of Fryern Road in a countryside location. The sites are located to the east of the existing residential dwelling (Little Wantley) and a 1-bed holiday let, but share access from the main road with these properties. A separate access track forks off the main access to dedicated gravel areas providing parking for the appeal developments.

10. The appeal sites are contained within the four acre residential curtilage of Little Wantley which is landscaped and within a wider estate of over 12 acres. The sites are not visible from the road or any neighbouring property.

11. Policy 11 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) encourages measures which promote tourism that is of a scale and type appropriate to the location.

12. Policy 10 of the HDPF encourages sustainable rural economic development in order to generate local employment opportunities and economic, social and environmental benefits for local communities. In the countryside, development which maintains the quality and character of the area whilst sustaining its varied and productive social and economic activity will be supported in principle.

13. Policy 26 of the HDPF states that outside built-up area boundaries, the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside will be protected against inappropriate development. Any proposal must meet one of the following criteria (amongst others); provide for quiet informal recreational use or enable the sustainable development of rural areas. In addition proposals must be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location and would not lead cumulatively or individually to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside and protects, and/or conserves, and/or enhances the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area in which it is located.

14. The Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan supports development in accordance with the HDPF.

15. The Horsham District Hotel and Visitor Accommodation Study (2016) identifies a district wide requirement for additional tourism and visitor accommodation.

16. The appeals are for the use of two structures on the site for tourist accommodation. There is existing tourist accommodation on the wider site in the form of an established 1 bed holiday let. The additional holiday lets (subject of these appeals) are currently operated as part of the established tourism business on the site.

17. The appeals are retrospective. I have not been provided with any evidence that increasing the intensity of the use of the site has caused harm to the highway from additional traffic movements in connection with the developments.

18. Whilst the cumulative effect of the developments is to add two additional holiday lets to the site, the overall size of the site can accommodate the additional developments. On my site visit, it was clear that there is sufficient screening around the wider site and space between the holiday accommodation that guests would be unaware of other visitors to the holiday accommodation or of residents of the main dwelling or neighbouring properties outside the site. The visual screening and physical separation between the accommodation on site ensures there is no materially harmful effect on the informal, rural character of the area or the ambience on the site, either from a guest perspective or from the perspective of the occupants of the main dwelling or its neighbours.

19. In conclusion, the developments support rural tourism and would not result in the intensification of activity in the countryside to a level that would have a materially harmful effect on the informal character and ambience of the countryside. The

developments therefore comply with Policy 26 of the HDPF which seeks to protect the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside against inappropriate development.

Conditions

20. I have not been provided with a list of suggested conditions by the Council. As the appeals are retrospective I have no need to impose a time limit or plans condition. I have applied a condition restricting the use of the Cruiser and the Chalet to holiday accommodation only and not to be occupied as a sole or main residence to protect the countryside from inappropriate development.

Conclusion

Appeal A

21. For the reasons given above the appeal should be allowed.

Appeal B

22. For the reasons given above the appeal should be allowed.

C Coles

INSPECTOR