



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/1324

Doves Place, Coxham Lane, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3LG

DESCRIPTION:

Outline Application for the erection of a single dwelling with all matters reserved.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/21/2259	Fell x1 Beech, Surgery to x1 Beech	Application 19.01.2022	Permitted	on
DC/24/0507	Surgery x1 Pine	Application 13.09.2024	Permitted	on
DC/24/1417	Fell 1x Beech.	Application 20.11.2024	Permitted	on
DC/25/1226	Surgery to 1x Maritime Pine.	Application 15.10.2025	Permitted	on

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site is located within the residential curtilage of Doves Place, situated off Coxham Lane. The site falls within the defined Built-Up Area Boundary of Steyning. Coxham Lane is a relatively narrow, single-track, no-through road characterised by residential properties positioned along either side. Doves Place is accessed via a private gravel driveway which also serves other residential properties.

The application site comprises an area of residential garden land positioned to the west of the existing dwelling at Doves Place. The site is relatively small and irregular in shape, comprising a triangular parcel of land which narrows towards its western extent. The land is bounded by the existing residential development and associated access arrangements, with an adjoining footpath running alongside part of the site.

The site contains established vegetation, including trees and boundary planting, which contribute to the verdant appearance and character of the immediate surroundings. The relationship between the site, adjoining footpath, existing vegetation and neighbouring residential development is an important characteristic of the location.

The surrounding residential development comprises predominantly detached dwellings positioned within individual plots, with areas of landscaping and separation between buildings contributing to the established character of the locality.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

The application seeks outline planning permission for the erection of one detached dwelling within the existing residential garden associated with Doves Place, with all matters reserved for subsequent consideration. The application seeks to establish whether the application site is suitable in principle for the erection of a dwelling.

The application is accompanied by a Location and Details Plan which includes an illustrative layout and conceptual house design. The drawings indicate a two-storey detached dwelling with an approximate footprint of 8 metres by 9 metres and an overall floorspace of approximately 150 square metres.

The proposed dwelling would be accommodated within the triangular parcel of garden land to the west of Doves Place, with access indicated from the existing shared gravel driveway. The submitted drawings illustrate the proposed subdivision of the existing residential curtilage and the relationship of the indicative dwelling to the surrounding boundaries, footpath, existing vegetation and neighbouring development.

As the application is submitted with all matters reserved, the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale are not formally submitted for approval. Nevertheless, the illustrative drawings are relevant insofar as they seek to demonstrate that a dwelling could be satisfactorily accommodated within the application site.

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 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
Policy 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs
Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking

Steining Neighbourhood Development Plan (2019–2031):

SNDP1 – Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
SNDP2 – Responsible Environmental Design
SNDP3 – Contribution to Character

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

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

Parish Design Statement:

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:

HDC Arboricultural Officer: No Objection - The Tree Officer advises that, based on a desk-based assessment and historical records, no protected trees would be affected by the proposed development, as the two trees formerly protected within the site footprint under TPO 0413 (an Acacia and a Walnut) were lost many years ago. While a number of smaller, well-maintained trees are present within the development area, their removal is not considered likely to result in significant adverse landscape or amenity impacts and could be appropriately mitigated through replacement planting. However, to ensure the effects of the development on retained trees are properly assessed and safeguarded, details of any trees proposed for removal, together with measures for the protection of retained trees during construction, should be submitted and secured by planning condition.

Southern Water: Comment – Standard Advice

WSCC Highways: No Objection - The Local Highway Authority raises no objection to the outline application, noting that access would be taken from the existing private access road and that the proposal for a single dwelling is unlikely to result in a significant increase in traffic movements. While the indicative plans suggest the loss of an existing double-bay garage serving the host property, parking provision can be appropriately assessed at the Reserved Matters stage, where parking should accord with WSCC Parking Standards. Overall, the Highway Authority considers that the development would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the operation of the highway network and therefore raises no transport-related grounds for refusal.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Representations:

None Received

Parish Comments:

Steyning Parish Council: No Objection

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:

The application site is located within the defined BUAB of Steyning, which is identified as a Small Town/Larger Village under Policy 3 of the HDPF. The site is therefore located within an established settlement where the principle of additional residential development is generally supported.

The proposal would involve the subdivision of the existing residential curtilage of Doves Place to accommodate one additional dwelling. Although the site comprises residential garden land, this does not automatically preclude its development for residential purposes. The acceptability of such development depends upon the individual characteristics of the site and whether an appropriate form of development can be achieved.

The NPPF supports the delivery of additional housing within existing settlements and the effective use of land. However, this must be balanced against the requirement to achieve a high standard of design and ensure that development responds appropriately to its surroundings.

Whilst the principle of residential development within the settlement boundary is supported, this does not establish that every residential plot is suitable for subdivision or intensification.

The application site is relatively small and irregular in configuration, with a triangular shape which narrows towards its western extent. The site is further constrained by its close relationship with the adjoining footpath, existing vegetation, neighbouring residential development and the need to accommodate appropriate access, parking and private amenity space.

These constraints raise concerns regarding the ability of the site to accommodate an additional dwelling without resulting in an overly cramped form of development or compromising the living conditions of future occupiers.

Whilst the site lies within the Built-Up Area Boundary where new residential development is generally supported, outline planning permission can only be granted where there is a reasonable prospect that the site is capable of accommodating a form of development that complies with the relevant policies of the Development Plan. In this instance, having regard to the site's restricted size, irregular shape and physical constraints, Officers are not satisfied that the site is capable of accommodating a dwelling together with the necessary access, parking, landscaping and private amenity space whilst achieving an acceptable standard of design and residential amenity. Accordingly, the proposal is not considered to represent an acceptable form of residential development in principle on this particular site.

As such, whilst the location of the proposed dwelling is acceptable in principle under Policy 3 of the HDPF, the suitability of the site for the proposed development is dependent upon whether an acceptable form of development can be achieved. These matters are considered in further detail below.

Design and Appearance:

Policy 33 of the HDPF seeks to ensure that new development provides an acceptable standard of residential amenity for both existing and future occupiers, having regard to matters including privacy, outlook and the relationship between buildings and their surroundings.

The proposed development would involve the subdivision of the existing residential garden at Doves Place to accommodate one additional dwelling. The application site is relatively small and irregular in shape, narrowing towards its western extent, which significantly restricts the area available for the proposed dwelling and associated private amenity space.

The submitted indicative layout illustrates a detached dwelling occupying a substantial proportion of the usable area of the site, with the remaining external space distributed around the building and adjoining boundaries.

Whilst the precise scale and layout of the dwelling are reserved, the provision of adequate private amenity space is a fundamental consideration in determining whether the site is suitable for residential development. Such space should be sufficient in size, appropriately configured, functional and capable of providing an acceptable degree of privacy for future occupiers.

The restricted and triangular configuration of the site would result in much of the residual external space comprising narrow or awkwardly shaped areas around the proposed dwelling. These areas

would have limited functionality and would not provide a satisfactory standard of usable private garden space.

The close relationship with the adjoining footpath would further compromise the quality of the proposed residential environment. The footpath runs immediately alongside the application site and is enclosed by existing timber fencing and vegetation. Whilst these features provide a degree of screening, the limited separation between the proposed residential plot and the pedestrian route would restrict the opportunity to provide private and usable external amenity space.

The presence of the football ground on the opposite side of the footpath is also relevant. The recreational use has the potential to generate intermittent noise and activity associated with football matches and training. Although such activities are an established feature of the locality and would not necessarily be incompatible with residential development, the restricted dimensions of the application site limit the opportunity to provide meaningful separation between the proposed dwelling, its private garden and the adjoining recreational use.

The provision of additional boundary screening could assist in addressing privacy concerns associated with the footpath. However, such measures would further enclose the limited garden areas and could adversely affect the quality of the external space available to future occupiers.

The need to accommodate appropriate parking, access arrangements and landscaping would place further demands upon the available land, reducing the opportunity to provide an adequate and functional private garden.

The submitted information therefore fails to demonstrate that a dwelling could be satisfactorily accommodated whilst providing an adequate amount of usable, functional and private external amenity space.

The proposal would consequently result in an unsatisfactory standard of residential amenity for future occupiers, contrary to Policy 33 of the HDPF and the relevant residential amenity provisions of the NPPF.

Trees and Landscaping

Policies 25 and 31 of the HDPF seek to protect and enhance the natural environment, landscape character, green infrastructure and biodiversity. Policies SNBP1 and SNBP2 of the Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan similarly seek to ensure that development respects existing natural features and incorporates appropriate landscaping and biodiversity enhancements.

The application site comprises an area of residential garden containing established trees and boundary vegetation which contribute to the verdant character of the locality. The Council's Arboricultural Officer has reviewed the application and raises no objection. It has been confirmed that the two trees previously protected within the site under TPO 0413, comprising an Acacia and Walnut, were lost many years ago and would therefore not be affected by the proposal.

Whilst a number of smaller trees are present within the development area, their removal is not considered likely to result in significant adverse landscape or amenity impacts. The Arboricultural Officer considers that any resulting impacts could be appropriately mitigated through replacement planting.

The proposed development would involve the loss of an area of existing residential garden, with potential implications for the site's existing habitats and biodiversity. However, given the nature and scale of the proposal, opportunities for replacement planting and ecological enhancements could be considered through a subsequent reserved matters application, subject to any applicable statutory biodiversity requirements.

Notwithstanding the absence of an arboricultural objection, the existing vegetation and the need to provide appropriate landscaping are relevant to the wider consideration of whether the site can satisfactorily accommodate an additional dwelling. The restricted size and irregular configuration of the

plot would limit opportunities for meaningful landscaping alongside the proposed built development, parking arrangements and private amenity space.

Overall, it is not considered that the proposal would result in unacceptable harm to trees, landscape features or biodiversity sufficient to warrant a separate reason for refusal. However, these considerations do not overcome the concerns regarding the cramped nature of the proposed development and the inadequate provision of usable private amenity space, as assessed elsewhere in this report.

Residential Amenity:

Policy 33 of the HDPF seeks to ensure that new development provides an acceptable standard of residential amenity for both existing and future occupiers, having regard to matters including privacy, outlook and the provision of functional external amenity space.

Although the detailed scale and layout of the dwelling are reserved for future consideration, the site must be capable of accommodating a dwelling that provides a satisfactory living environment. In this instance, the constrained nature of the plot raises significant concerns regarding the quality of accommodation that could be achieved.

The proposed dwelling would be positioned in close proximity to a public footpath that runs immediately alongside the site. Whilst existing boundary treatments provide some screening, the limited separation between the proposed residential curtilage and the footpath would result in a diminished sense of privacy for future occupiers. Any additional screening required to address these concerns would further enclose the available garden areas, reducing their openness and overall quality.

Furthermore, the site shares a close relationship with the adjacent football ground. Whilst recreational facilities are not inherently incompatible with residential development, the constrained dimensions of the plot limit opportunities to provide meaningful separation between private residential space and the activity associated with the sports use. Future occupiers would therefore be likely to experience a level of noise and disturbance that would undermine the quality of the residential environment.

The need to provide access, parking and landscaping within the limited site area would place further pressure on the amount and usability of private amenity space available to future occupiers. Consequently, the submitted information has failed to demonstrate that the site can accommodate a dwelling capable of providing an acceptable standard of residential amenity.

The proposal would therefore result in an unsatisfactory living environment for future occupiers, contrary to Policy 33 of the HDPF and the residential amenity objectives of the NPPF.

Highways Impacts:

Policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF seek to ensure that development provides safe and appropriate access arrangements and adequate parking facilities.

The application proposes that the dwelling would be accessed via the existing private access road serving Doves Place. The Local Highway Authority has reviewed the proposal and raises no objection. It is acknowledged that the development of one additional dwelling would be unlikely to result in a significant increase in vehicle movements or an unacceptable impact upon the operation of the surrounding highway network.

The indicative plans suggest that the development may involve the loss of an existing double-bay garage serving the host dwelling. The Highway Authority advises that the provision of appropriate parking facilities for both the existing and proposed dwellings should be considered at reserved matters stage, with reference to the relevant West Sussex County Council Parking Standards.

As access and layout are reserved, detailed arrangements would be subject to further consideration should outline permission be granted. In view of the Highway Authority's response, there are no substantive highway safety grounds upon which to resist the development. However, the requirement

to provide appropriate parking and manoeuvring facilities remains relevant to the overall assessment of the site's capacity to accommodate an additional dwelling. Whilst these matters may be capable of resolution in highway terms, the associated land requirements would further restrict the space available for landscaping and private residential amenity.

The absence of a highway objection does not overcome the wider concerns regarding the constrained nature of the application site and the resulting form of development.

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 1,608,679 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 1,608,679 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 establishes the statutory biodiversity net gain requirements for qualifying development, subject to relevant exemptions.

The application proposes one additional dwelling within an existing residential garden. However, the erection of a single dwelling does not, in itself, establish that the development is exempt from the statutory biodiversity net gain requirements.

The applicant's submitted information should therefore be reviewed to establish whether a valid exemption has been claimed and demonstrated, or whether the statutory biodiversity gain condition would apply.

As the application is recommended for refusal on design and residential amenity grounds, this matter does not alter the overall recommendation.

Conclusions:

Whilst residential development is generally supported within the BUAB, the application has failed to demonstrate that this particular site is capable of accommodating a dwelling of an appropriate form and quality that would comply with the requirements of Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF. The site's restricted size, irregular triangular shape and relationship with the adjoining footpath significantly constrain its development potential and limit opportunities to provide a satisfactory living environment for future occupiers. In particular, the proposal would result in a cramped form of development with inadequate provision of functional and private external amenity space. Although no objections have been raised in relation to highway matters, trees, these considerations do not overcome the fundamental constraints of the site. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF and Policy SNDP3 of the Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

Horsham District Council has adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule which took effect on 1st October 2017. **This development constitutes CIL liable development.**

In the case of outline applications the CIL charge will be calculated at the relevant reserved matters stage.

Recommendation: Application Refused

Reason for Refusal:

1. The application has failed to demonstrate that the site, by reason of its restricted size, irregular triangular configuration and physical constraints, is capable of accommodating a dwelling together with appropriate access, parking, landscaping and private amenity space whilst providing a satisfactory standard of design and residential amenity. The submitted information fails to demonstrate that an acceptable form of residential development can be achieved without resulting in a cramped and constrained form of development and an inadequate living environment for future occupiers. The Local Planning Authority is therefore not satisfied that the principle of residential development on this particular site is acceptable, notwithstanding its location within the Built-Up Area Boundary. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), SNDP3 of the Steyning Neighbourhood Plan (2022) and the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026).

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/26/1324

Schedule of plans/documents **not approved:**

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Location & Block plan	Proposed ground floor, first floor and roof plans	23005-101	14.08.2026

Design & Access Statement	Design and Access Statement		14.08.2026
Supporting Statement	Planning Statement		16.09.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Shazia Penne Date: 08.10.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 09/10/2026