**PLANNING COMMITTEE APPLICATIONS**

**POST COMMITTEE REPORT**

APPLICATION REFERENCE / ADDRESS:
DC/24/1502
Sussex Topiary, Naldretts Lane, Rudgwick

*'Change of use to four pitch settled gypsy site along with the formation of hardstanding and utility/day room buildings.'*

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At its meeting on 21 October 2025 Planning Committee resolved to approve the application in accordance with the officer recommendation.

This resolution was subject to an amendment to Condition 3 to also require details of surface water drainage, to read as follows: -

***Pre-Commencement Condition:*** *No development shall commence until a drainage strategy detailing the proposed means of foul and surface water disposal has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.*

*Reason: As this matter is fundamental to ensure that the development is properly drained and to comply with Policy 38 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).*

In addition, an informative was added to advise the applicant that a mains connection to dispose of foul water (generated by the development) would be supported by the Local Planning Authority.

An additional condition was added to read as follows: -

***Regulatory Condition****: A fire hydrant shall be provided on the site, or as near to the site as is practicable. The fire hydrant shall accord with the specifications set out by the West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service.*

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

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.

Since the application was determined by Planning Committee, on 31 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.

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. Natural England have been consulted on this Appropriate Assessment and have raised no objection.

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 s.70 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, HDPF Policy 31, and paragraph 193 of the NPPF.

As outlined within the addendum report (dated 21.10.2025) for this item, condition 4 is removed and replaced with the condition below:

***Regulatory Condition:*** *The dwelling(s) hereby permitted shall meet the optional requirement of building regulation G2 to limit the water usage of each dwelling to no more than 110 litres per person per day. The subsequently installed water limiting measures shall thereafter be retained.*

*Reason: To limit water use in order to improve the sustainability of the development in accordance with Policy 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).*

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| **Case Officer:** | Hannah Darley | **Date:** | 11th November 2025 |
| **Authorising Officer:** | Guy Everest | **Date:** | 24.11.2025 |