Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/24/1669
3 Platts Meadow, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9HX

DESCRIPTION:
Erection of a 1.8m closeboard fence (Retrospective).

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

None relevant to this application.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES
The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles

The Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan (2019 - 2031):
Policy Bill 1 – Billingshurst Built-Up area boundary
Policy Bill 2 – Housing Design and Character

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):
Policy 9: Water Neutrality
Policy 19: Development Quality
Policy 20: Development Principles

Parish Design Statement:
Design Statement for the Parish of Billingshurst

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:

Natural England: Standing Advice:-
It cannot be concluded that existing abstraction within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone is not having an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC/SPA/Ramsar sites. Developments within Sussex North must therefore must not add to this impact and one way of achieving this is to demonstrate water neutrality. The definition of water neutrality is the use of water in the supply area before the development is the same or lower after the development is in place.

To achieve this Natural England is working in partnership with all the relevant authorities to secure water neutrality collectively through a water neutrality strategy. Whilst the strategy is evolving, Natural England advises that decisions on planning applications should await its completion. However, if there are applications which a planning authority deems critical to proceed in the absence of the strategy, then Natural England advises that any application needs to demonstrate water neutrality.

West Sussex County Council Highway: No objection

Parish Comments:
Billingshurst Parish Council – raised no objection

Representations:
1 no. representations have been received, objecting to the application for the following reasons: -

- Appears to have no allocated parking and place additional communal parking.
- Suspect area now forming garden was part of open space under covenant.
- Loss of hedging and bird habitat due to erection of fence.

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:

The application has been assessed on the basis of the submitted details, together with the planning history of the site and adjoining properties, available images and photographs obtained during site visit. These details were considered sufficient to allow the application to be properly considered and determined.

Character and Appearance

Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF seek to ensure that development promotes a high standard and quality of design in order to enhance and protect locally distinctive characters. The policies also seek to ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of development relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the skyline and important views.

Policy Bill 1 of the Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan aims to maintain that Development in Billingshurst parish shall be focused within the proposed built-up area boundary of Billingshurst village.

Additionally, Policy Bill 2 of the Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan states that development are required to reflect the scale and local vernacular of the surrounding buildings.

This application seeks retrospective planning permission for the erection of a 1.8m close board fence. Whilst the height of the fence is high however the fence is set back from the highway and situated behind existing grass verges comprising of trees and low-level hedgerows adjacent to the highway. The intervening features of the vegetations ensures there is sufficient separation distance between the fence and the highway. Also, there are examples of similarly high-level close board fencing located within close proximity of the application site. Therefore, it is viewed that the proposal integrates with the

existing properties on this part of Platts Meadow, where frontages typically comprise a mixture of high-level hedgerows and close board fencing.

The proposal is considered to integrate with the prevailing character of the street scene consisting of high-level boundary treatment with the resulting visual impact considered acceptable and in accordance with the above policies.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

Policy 33 of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.

Given the characteristic of the immediate surrounding and orientation of the application site, it is considered that the siting and layout of the proposal and the resulting relationship with adjacent properties would be sufficient to prevent any unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity.

Highways Impacts:

Policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF states that development should provide safe and adequate access and parking, suitable for all users.

It is acknowledged that the proposed fence appears to be situated within the applicant's own land and does not encroach upon the public highway. It does not appear to obstruct visibility for vehicles traveling along Platts Meadow. As such, no highways safety concerns was raised by the Local Highway Authority (LHA).

The LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network

Water Neutrality

There is no clear or compelling evidence to suggest the nature and scale of the proposed development would result in a more intensive occupation of the dwelling necessitating an increased consumption of water that would result in a significant impact on the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The grant of planning permission would not therefore adversely affect the integrity of these sites or otherwise conflict with policy 31 of the HDPF, NPPF paragraph 193 and the Council's obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Biodiversity Net Gain

In accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, all householder applications are current exempt from the statutory requirement to demonstrate a 10% net gain in biodiversity.

Conclusion

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

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: DC/24/1669
Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Block plan	Site	NONE	26.02.2025
Elevation plan		NONE	26.02.2025
Location plan		NONE	25.03.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Halima Chowdhury Date: 12.05.2025

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 20.05.2025