Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/24/1917
Rookery Wood, The Coach House, Five Oaks Road, Slinfold, West Sussex, RH13 0RQ

DESCRIPTION:
Conversion of existing stable block to a pool house. Construction of an outdoor swimming pool.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/24/1442	Conversion of existing stable block to a pool house (Lawful Development Certificate - Proposed).	Withdrawn Application on 14.10.2024
DC/24/1441	Erection of a double garage with office space above and installation of fencing.	Application Permitted on 03.12.2024
DC/08/1249	Retention of stable block and hardstanding	Application Permitted on 29.07.2008

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 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 28 - Replacement Dwellings and House Extensions in the Countryside
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles

2014-2031 Slinfold Neighbourhood Plan:
Policy 4 – Conserve and Enhance Biodiversity
Policy 5 – Development Principles

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):
Policy 9: Water Neutrality
Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 19: Development Quality
Policy 20: Development Principles
Policy 45: Replacement Dwellings and House Extensions in the Countryside

Slinfold Parish Design Statement

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: No objection subject to appropriate mitigation being secured:-

Natural England considers that without appropriate mitigation the application would:

- Have an adverse effect on the integrity of Arun Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection (SPA) and Ramsar site.
- Damage or destroy the interest features for which Amberley Wild Brooks Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Pulborough Brooks SSSI have been notified.

In order to mitigate these adverse effects and make the development acceptable, the following mitigation measures are required / or the following mitigation options should be secured:

- The delivery, management and maintenance of any measures identifies in the applicant's water neutrality statement that are required to ensure that the proposed development will not result in increased levels of abstraction within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone.

We advise that an appropriate planning condition or obligation is attached to any planning permission to secure these measures.

HDC Arboriculture: Advice (Summary):-
No direct arboricultural impacts subject to any permission including control of spoil spreading and building activities outside of the root protection areas of the bounding Ancient Woodland (AW) trees.

An arboricultural method statement is recommended.

Parish Comments:
Slinfold Parish Council does not object to this proposal.

Representations:
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:

Character and Appearance

Policy 28 of the HDPF relates to house extensions and outbuildings in the countryside, stating that ancillary accommodation and garaging must demonstrate that the need for additional space cannot be met from an existing dwelling or buildings suitable of conversion on the site, with new outbuildings sited to have regard to the dwelling they serve and be grouped with the house. The policy also states that the use of ancillary accommodation as a separate dwelling will not be supported.

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 4 of the SNP requires development proposals to conserve designated sites, protected species and ancient or species-rich hedgerows, grasslands and woodlands. Policy 5 seeks to ensure that

development respect the design, density and layout of the surrounding area as detailed in the Slinfold Parish Design Statement.

Previous planning application DC/08/1249 permitted the retention of stable block and hardstanding at the application site, with condition 1 requiring the stables to be used 'for private equestrian use and for purposes ancillary to the use of the residential property of Rookery Wood Coach House only and shall not be used for commercial purposes or in connection with any form or riding establishment'. Permitted development rights for the stable block and its associated hardstanding area have also been removed in condition 4 of the planning permission.

Ownership of the site has changed since and equestrian use has ceased. This proposal relates to the conversion of existing stable block to a pool house and the construction of an outdoor swimming pool at Rookery Wood, The Coach House, Five Oaks Road, Slinfold.

The application site is located outside of any built-up area and is therefore considered as part of the countryside. The site consists of a large detached dwellinghouse and a stable block, and a detached garage and office is to be erected under recently approved application DC/24/1441.

Tree Preservation Orders are found on site near Five Oaks Road on the northern site boundary, and the eastern part of the site and its southern border, part of the Rookery Wood woodland and along River Adur, are part of an Ancient Woodland and non-statutory Local Wildlife Site.

Previously approved plans of the stable block indicate that fencing was installed around the stables and its associated hardstanding area forming an enclosure for horses, separating from the rear garden of the dwellinghouse at the Coach House. A site visit has been carried out for this proposal and it is confirmed that such area has now be fully incorporated into the rear garden of the site, with fencing separating the stables and the rest of the rear garden removed.

Existing fenestration on the northeastern and southeastern elevations of the existing stables would be removed and filled in the proposal, the wall separating existing stables 4 and 5 would be removed forming a lounge for the pool house, and full-length glazed grey aluminium doors would be installed. No other windows would be installed.

The proposed external material of the stable block conversion / pool house would be grey or darker horizontal timber cladding, replacing the existing dark brown cladding, the existing corrugated roof would be replaced by grey or black shingles, black rainwater goods would be used, and a 3.5-metre-wide plant room with a depth of 1.5 metres and a flat roof would be erected to the southwestern end of the pool house.

The proposed 12m x 5m swimming pool would be built into the ground and would be located on parts of the existing hardstanding area for the stables, and it would be approximately 4.7m away from the stable block.

The proposed stable block conversion / pool house would be of a use ancillary to the enjoyment of the occupiers of the dwellinghouse, consisting of a lounge, gym, changing area and a games room. Its proposed external material would appear different to existing, however it would remain sympathetic to the character of the surrounding countryside and its adjacent Ancient Woodland, and would not detract from its original character.

The stable block conversion would not appear dominant, and its proposed external materials would resemble a stable block or an ancillary building. The re-use of an existing building on site are also considered appropriate to the countryside setting.

The proposed swimming pool, which would be built into the ground, is not considered to result in an unacceptable level of harm to the character of the existing dwelling, and its surrounding countryside.

A row of trees are also proposed to be planted to the west and south of the proposed swimming pool, with no details on the species or type of trees provided. These proposed trees could enhance visual amenity to the rear garden of Rookery Wood the Coach House. However, taking into consideration the

siting of the proposed trees and scale of the proposed development, the proposed trees are not considered to be a significant contributor to enhancing the character of the area.

The proposal is considered to be of a design, form and scale which is appropriate to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, and which would not harm the character or appearance of the countryside and surrounding area. It is therefore considered that the visual impact of the proposal is acceptable and would accord 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.

The location of the proposal would be of a distance from the adjacent dwellinghouse of Rookerywood to the west of the site. Additionally, the proposed swimming pool would be built into the ground, the proposed plant room is considered of an appropriate scale and the proposed replacement external materials of the stable block are considered acceptable.

The stable block is part of the existing curtilage of the dwellinghouse. The conversion of the existing stable block into a domestic outbuilding for the purposes ancillary to the enjoyment of the occupiers of the dwellinghouse would not result in a more intensive use of land or unacceptable levels of overlooking.

It is considered that the siting and layout of the proposed extension and the resulting relationship with adjoining properties would be sufficient to prevent any unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity.

Impact on Trees and Ancient Woodland

Policy 26 of the HDPF seeks to ensure proposals to be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location. Development will be considered acceptable where it does not lead, either individually or cumulatively, 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, including the pattern of woodlands, fields, hedgerows and trees.

Policy 4 of the SNP requires development proposals to conserve designated sites, protected species and ancient or species-rich hedgerows, grasslands and woodlands.

The proposed development is located of close proximity to the Ancient Woodland south of the application site, and the Council's Arboricultural Officer has explained the Ancient Woodland has been denuded over time.

Parts of the proposal would be located within the Ancient Woodland buffer. Considering the existing stable block and its associated hardstanding area as part of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse on site, the Council's Arboricultural Officer does not consider the proposed development would place the woodland under grater pressure for denudation or fragmentation.

To further mitigate impacts to the ancient woodland, the proposed plant room, which would be located the closest to the ancient woodland, have been amended on 29 January 2025 to be built on slabs and pads to minimise the need for a foundation.

Both the proposed swimming pool and stable block conversion would not be located of proximity to any Tree Preservation Orders.

A condition is included to this planning permission requiring an Arboricultural Method Statement to ensure all trees and hedgerows on site are protected.

Water Neutrality

Water neutrality is required to be demonstrated in householder applications with proposed swimming pools.

The proposed stable block conversion would not be connected to mains water and no toilet, bathroom facilities, taps, or any other water-consuming facilities and / or appliances are proposed.

The proposed swimming pool would be 12m x 5m. According to the water neutrality statement received by the Department on 14 January 2025, it is proposed that mains water would not be used for both the filling and topping up of the proposed swimming pool.

The swimming pool would be filled by a tanker from outside of the Sussex North Water Resource Zone (WRZ), and would subsequently be topped up through rainwater collection from the existing pool cover, and rainwater collected would flow directly into the swimming pool and water would be stored in the pool itself. There would be no rainwater harvesting tanks.

Waterproof concrete, membranes and tiles would be used for the construction of the pool to prevent loss of water through the pool structure; a pool cover with a horizontal PVV/Polycarbonate roller shutter door would be used to reduce water loss through evaporation; the pool edge would be designed in a way that water loss through bather activity would be reduced; and the proposed pool would contain an automatic filter monitoring system which would reduce the need to clean the pool filters.

Paragraph 4.21 of the water neutrality statement states that an onsite well could also be used for the initial fill and additional topping up, should rainwater be insufficient. No information was submitted, however, regarding whether the source of the well is linked to the Sussex North WRZ.

A condition will be imposed to restrict the use of the on-site well for the swimming pool unless details are submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, and a pre-use condition will also be imposed to ensure water for the first filling of the proposed pool would be sourced from outside the Sussex North WRZ.

It is recognised that water butts with a 210-litre capacity would also be installed for the garage approved in DC/24/1441 and the proposed pool house, according to the water neutrality statement. However, as it does not relate to the proposed swimming pool, such rainwater harvesting measures would not be considered as part of water neutrality.

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.

Other Matters

Further amended plans were submitted to the Department on 14 February 2025 due to discrepancies in width of the proposed plant room.

Conclusion

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

Recommendation: Application Permitted

Conditions:

2 **Standard Time Condition**: The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3 **Pre-Commencement Condition**: No development shall commence, including demolition pursuant to the permission granted, ground clearance, or bringing equipment, machinery or materials onto the site, until an Arboricultural Method Statement detailing all trees/hedgerows on site and adjacent to the site to be retained during construction works, and measures to provide for their protection throughout all construction works, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented and thereafter carried out at all times strictly in accordance with the agreed details. Any trees or hedges on the site which die or become damaged during the construction process shall be replaced with trees or hedging plants of a type, size and in positions agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to ensure the successful and satisfactory protection of important trees and hedgerows on the site in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

4 **Pre-Use Condition**: The swimming pool hereby permitted shall not be first used (through its filling with water) until details setting out how water will be provided to the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall set out measures to ensure the swimming pool sources water by way of delivery without placing additional demand on the mains water supply and the Sussex North Water Resource Zone. The swimming pool shall thereafter be filled in accordance with the details stated in the submitted water neutrality statement, which shall be adhered to thereafter.

Reason: To ensure the development is water neutral to avoid an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SACSPA and Ramsar sites in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), Paragraphs 192 and 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).

5 **Regulatory Condition**: The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall strictly accord with those indicated on the application form, approved plans and email correspondence regarding proposed materials for doors and windows dated 2 January 2025.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

6 **Regulatory Condition**: The well on site, mentioned in paragraph 4.21 and Appendix F of the water neutrality statement received by the Council on 14 January 2025, shall not be used for any purposes in relation to the swimming pool unless details of its sources is submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development is water neutral to avoid an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SACSPA and Ramsar sites in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), Paragraphs 192 and 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).

7 **Regulatory Condition**: The stable block conversion / pool house hereby permitted shall be used solely for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the residential property at Rookery

Wood, The Coach House, Five Oaks Road, RH13, 0RQ. The stable block conversion / pool house shall not be used as a separate unit of accommodation, primary living accommodation, commercial purposes or for any other purposes(s) / uses(s).

Reason: The establishment of an additional independent unit of accommodation, additional living accommodation, commercial use or any other use(s) would give rise to an over-intensive use of the site and/or lead to an unsatisfactory relationship between independent units of living accommodation contrary to Policies 26 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework; and to ensure the development is water neutral to avoid an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SACSPA and Ramsar sites.

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/24/1917

Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	**Description**	**Drawing Number**	**Received Date**
Supporting Statement	Technical Paper No. 0303 Revision A	NONE	10.01.2025
Supporting Statement	Water Neutrality Statement	NONE	14.01.2025
Elevation & Floor plan		RW-PH_P_02 REV A	29.01.2025
Elevation & Floor plan	Existing roof and section	RW-PH_EX_02	10.12.2024
Tree plan		2408035-01	10.12.2024
Layout plan	Pool & Landscaping Layout Proposed	RW-PH_P_03 REV A	14.02.2025
Site plan	Site / Block Plan	RW-PH_P_01 REV A	14.02.2025
Location plan		RW-PH_EX_01 REV A	14.02.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Joshua Lee Date: 14.02.2025

Authorising Officer sign/initial ..... Date: .....