

PLANNING STATEMENT

IN RELATION TO:

‘Erection of 2 No. semi-detached houses on land to the side of 9 Montpelier Gardens. Demolition of single storey element to side of existing No. 9 and new 2-storey extension to the rear of this host dwelling’

**No. 9 Montpelier Gardens, Washington,
West Sussex, RH20 3BW**

March 2026

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application seeks planning permission for the erection of 2 No. semi-detached houses on land to the side of 9 Montpelier Gardens. The application also includes the demolition of a single storey element to the side of existing No.9, and a new 2-storey extension to the rear of this host dwelling.
- 1.2 This Planning Statement is submitted in support of the above planning application. The statement describes the site, its surroundings and the proposal itself. The Planning Policy background is considered along with an assessment of the proposal in light of the relevant policy and all other material planning considerations.
- 1.3 This statement should be read in conjunction with the package of proposed and existing drawings. The application is also accompanied by the following supporting statements: -
- Design and Access Statement.
 - Highways Technical Note, prepared by Motion.
 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Preliminary Roost Assessment, prepared by Arbtech.
 - Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, prepared by Arbtech.
 - BNG Statutory Metric, prepared by Arbtech.

2.0 SITE CIRCUMSTANCES

- 2.1 The area of land that is the subject of this planning proposal currently forms part of the domestic garden of No. 9 Montepelier Gardens. The Application Site measures 440 sqm.



Fig 1. Aerial map showing the Site and its surroundings (*courtesy of Promap*)

- 2.2 The parcel of land is primarily laid to grass, with a paved parking area to the frontage, which is demarcated by low fencing.



Fig 2. Photograph of the application site (*Courtesy of DAS*)

- 2.3 No. 9 Montpelier Gardens comprises a two-storey semi-detached dwelling house. It comprises brick walls and a hipped tiled roof. There is a single storey side extension to the south side of the property, which will be demolished in order to facilitate the development proposal.
- 2.4 Montpelier Gardens is residential in character, typified by two storey semi-detached properties with brick walling and tiled roofs. Properties are varied in their scale and orientation. Plots are generally rectangular in appearance (with a few exceptions) and mixed in size.
- 2.5 The Horsham District Policy Map confirms that the site is outside the defined built-up area. However the Council's interactive map also identifies the site as being within the Local Neighbourhood Plan Housing Site Allocation Policy: 'Infill at Montpelier Gardens'.

- 2.6 The South Downs National Park is located further to the southwest, as defined by vertical hatching on the Councils interactive mapping system (refer to **Fig 3**).
- 2.7 To our knowledge, the site has no other planning constraints or designations. No trees are identified as being subject to a TPO, there are no Listed or locally listed buildings on-site or nearby, and nor is the site located within a Conservation Area. Further, the site is outside of the archaeological notification areas nearby (purple diagonal lines) and is also outside of the bat sustenance zone (light blue diagonal lines).

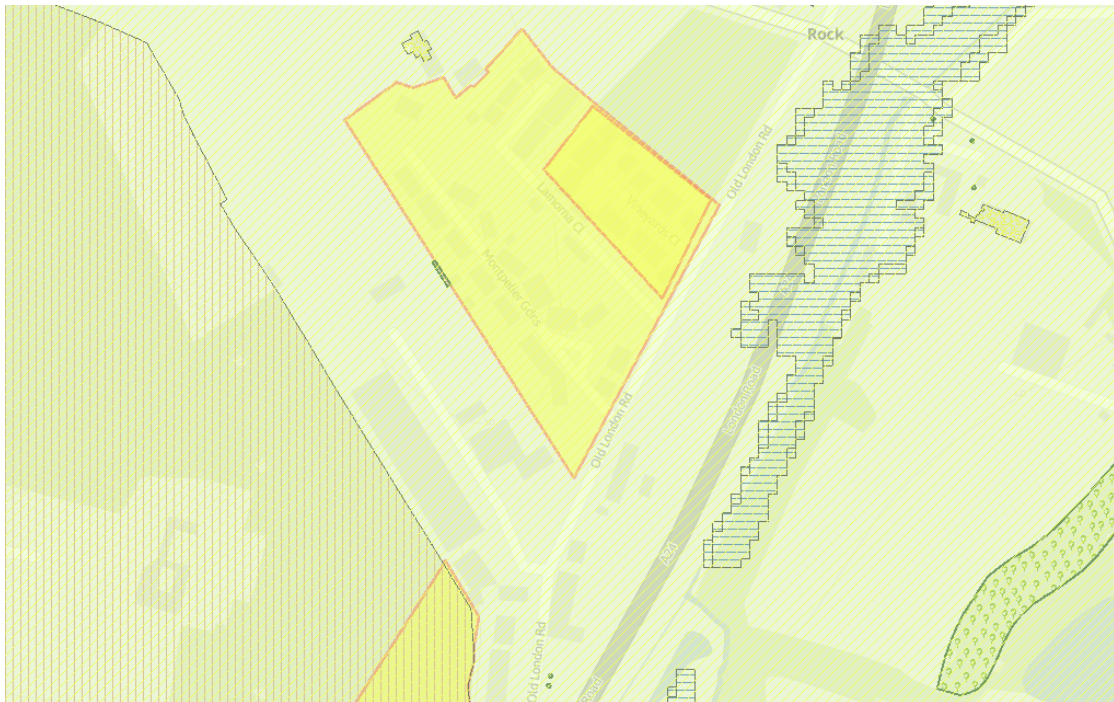


Fig 3. Extract from the HDPF Local Plan Interactive Mapping

- 2.8 It is understood from the Environment Agency online mapping, that the site is not in an area identified at being at risk of flooding.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published on 27th March 2012 and updated on a number of occasions, the most recent version being December 2024. This sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 3.2 The NPPF confirms that planning law, as set out at Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, requires that applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.3 The focus of the revised NPPF continues to be achieving sustainable development. At paragraph 8 the Framework sets out that in planning terms, and in order to achieve sustainable development there are *"three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives)"*. These objectives are economic, social and environmental, which *"should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area"* (paragraph 9).
- 3.4 Paragraph 11 is an important element of the NPPF. It states that: *"Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development... For decision-taking this means: c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or d) where there are no relevant development*

plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date⁸, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination”.

3.5 Paragraph 12 confirms that *“the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed”.*

3.6 Section 4 of the Plan refers to Decision-making. At paragraph 39 of the Framework, it sets out that *“Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”.*

- 3.7 Section 5 relates to delivering a sufficient supply of homes. It reiterates at paragraph 61 that the Government's objective is to significantly boost the supply of new homes. Paragraph 65 confirms that non-major development schemes should not have to provide affordable housing (although a lower threshold is applicable in designated rural areas). Paragraph 73 identifies the important role small and medium sized sites can make to meeting the housing supply of an area. It states that local planning authorities should *"support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes..."*.
- 3.8 At paragraph 78 the NPPF sets out that *"Strategic policies should include a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period, and all plans should consider whether it is appropriate to set out the anticipated rate of development for specific sites. Local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies³⁸, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old³⁹. The supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) of:*
- a) 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or*
 - b) 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply; or*
 - c) From 1 July 2026, for the purposes of decision-making only, 20% where a local planning authority has a housing requirement adopted in the last five years examined against a previous version of this Framework⁴¹, and whose annual average housing requirement⁴² is 80% or less of the most up to date local housing need figure calculated using the standard method set out in national planning practice guidance".*

- 3.9 It continues at para 79 that *“to maintain the supply of housing, local planning authorities should monitor progress in building out sites which have permission. Where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery has fallen below the local planning authority’s housing requirement over the previous three years, the following policy consequences should apply:*
- a) where delivery falls below 95% of the requirement over the previous three years, the authority should prepare an action plan to assess the causes of under delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years;*
 - b) where delivery falls below 85% of the requirement over the previous three years, the authority should include a buffer of 20% to their identified supply of specific deliverable sites as set out in paragraph 78 of this framework, in addition to the requirement for an action plan;*
 - c) where delivery falls below 75% of the requirement over the previous three years, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, as set out in footnote 8 of this Framework, in addition to the requirements for an action plan and 20% buffer”.*
- 3.10 Paragraph 82 states that *“in rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs, including proposals for community-led development for housing. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this”.*
- 3.11 Paragraph 83 refers to rural housing, noting that *“to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local*

services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby”.

3.12 Paragraph 84 states that *“planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:*

a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;

b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;

c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;

d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building;
or

e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:

i. is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and

ii. would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area”.

3.13 Section 9 discusses promoting sustainable transport, including the need to support opportunities, and give priority to walking, cycling and public transport, in addition to creating places that are safe, accessible, address the needs of people with disabilities, and are designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

- 3.14 Paragraph 113 states that *“maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport (in accordance with chapter 11 of this Framework). In town centres, local authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking so that it is convenient, safe and secure, alongside measures to promote accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists”*.
- 3.15 Paragraph 116 goes on to state that *“development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios”*.
- 3.16 Section 11 is entitled ‘Making effective use of land’. Paragraph 119 confirms that *“Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions”*.
- 3.17 Paragraph 120 sets out that decision makers are required to give regard to benefits of development, including environmental gains, and should *“give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, proposals for which should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;...(and) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively”*.
- 3.18 Paragraph 127 states that *“decisions need to reflect changes in the demand for land... applications for alternative uses on the land should be supported, where the*

proposed use would contribute to meeting an unmet need for development in the area”.

- 3.19 Paragraph 129 discusses the need to achieve appropriate densities. Account needs to be given to the identified need for different types of housing and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it, local market conditions, sustainability, existing character and setting, and *“the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places”.*
- 3.20 Paragraph 130 states that *“area-based character assessments, design guides and codes and masterplans can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places. Where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for 37 meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site...local planning authorities should refuse applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in this Framework. In this context, when considering applications for housing, authorities should take a flexible approach in applying policies or guidance relating to daylight and sunlight, where they would otherwise inhibit making efficient use of a site (as long as the resulting scheme would provide acceptable living standards)”.*
- 3.21 Section 12 refers to achieving well-designed places. Paragraph 131 states “the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development”.
- 3.22 Paragraph 130 sets out that *“decisions should ensure that developments:*
- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience”.

3.23 Paragraph 139 confirms that “development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design⁵⁴, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or

b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings”.

- 3.24 Further parts of the Framework that are of particular note include Section 14, which relates to matters of climate change, and flooding; and Section 15, which refers to conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

The Horsham District Planning Framework, 2015

- 3.25 On 27th November 2015 Horsham District Council adopted the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF). With the exception of land within the South Downs National Park, the HDPF replaces the policies contained in the Horsham District Core Strategy and General Development Control Policies which were both adopted in 2007. This plan is now more than 5 years old and as a consequence the HDPF is now out of date.
- 3.26 The HDPF sets out the planning strategy for the years up to 2031 to deliver the social, economic and environmental needs for the district (outside the South Downs National Park).
- 3.27 The following policies and text are considered relevant to the consideration of this Planning Proposal: -
- 3.28 **Policy 2** – *“The spatial strategy is to... (5) Continue to support in principle the sustainable development of settlements through an appropriate scale of development which retains the existing settlement pattern over the plan period. (6) Manage development around the edges of existing settlements in order to prevent the merging of settlements and to protect the rural character and landscape. (8) Encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value. (11)*

Support the provision of rural housing which contributes towards the provision of affordable housing where there is a demonstrable need...”

- 3.29 **Policy 3** sets out the settlement hierarchy for Horsham District and confirms that *“Any infilling or redevelopment will be required to demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale”*.
- 3.30 **Policy 4 - Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion** – *“The growth of settlements across the District will continue to be supported in order to meet identified local housing, employment and community needs. Outside built-up area boundaries, the expansion of settlements will be supported where;*
- 1. The site is allocated in the Local Plan or in a Neighbourhood Plan and adjoins an existing settlement edge.*
 - 2. The level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement type.*
 - 3. The development is demonstrated to meet the identified local housing needs and/or employment needs or will assist the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services.*
 - 4. The impact of the development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long term development, in order not to conflict with the development strategy; and*
 - 5. The development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape and townscape character features are maintained and enhanced.”*
- 3.31 **Policy 15** sets out the housing needs for the District. It makes an allowance of 750 units throughout the plan period for ‘windfall development’. The Glossary for the plan specifies that ‘windfalls’ are described as: *“A site not specifically allocated for development in the Local Development Framework which unexpectedly becomes available for development during the lifetime of a plan.”*

- 3.32 **Policy 26** sets out that the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside will be protected and that outside of built-up areas, proposals must be essential to a countryside location, be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location, and meet one or more criteria which include enabling the sustainable development of rural areas.
- 3.33 **Policies 32 and 33** together seek high quality design and include requirements that the scale, massing and appearance of development relates sympathetically to its surroundings and that it provides an attractive environment which complements locally distinctive character.
- 3.34 The following policies are also considered to be of relevance: -
- **Policy 1** - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
 - **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 35** - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
 - **Policy 36** - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
 - **Policy 37** - Sustainable Construction
 - **Policy 38** - Strategic Policy: Flooding
 - **Policy 39** - Strategic Policy: Infrastructure Provision
 - **Policy 40** - Sustainable Transport
 - **Policy 41** - Parking
- 3.35 The Appendix 1 glossary to the HDPF describes Brownfield/Previously Developed Land (PDL) as *“In the sequential approach this is preferable to Greenfield land. It is land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings), and associated fixed surface infrastructure. The definition*

covers the curtilage of the development. Previously- developed land may occur in both built-up and rural settings.”

Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2031

- 3.36 The application site is shown on Policy Map 4 (**Fig 4** refers) of this neighbourhood plan (SSWNP) as being allocated for infill at Montpelier Gardens. As such, the most relevant policy of the most recently adopted development plan document is set out below:

Policy 1: A Spatial Plan for the Parishes

The Neighbourhood Plan defines the Built-Up Area Boundaries of Storrington, Sullington and Washington, as shown on the Policies Map. Development proposals located inside the boundaries will be supported provided they accord with other provisions of the Development Plan.

Development proposals outside the Built up Area of Washington will be supported on any allocated site(s) and within the area within and around Montpelier Gardens / Luckings Yard as shown on Inset Plan 4 or if it results in the reuse of previously developed land on land outside the South Downs National Park provided the proposal accords with other policies in the Development Plan.

Development proposals outside of these definitions will be require to conform to Development Plan policies in respect of the management of development in the countryside.

The Built-Up Area Boundary and all the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan that affect housing supply, including allocations and the BUAB (but excluding Local Green Space), will need to be reviewed once the Horsham Local Plan has been adopted, if not earlier, to avoid the policies becoming out of date.

Storrington, Sullington and Washington
Neighbourhood Plan
Policy Map Inset 4

Legend

-  Policy 1(2) Infill at Montpellier Gardens
-  Policy 2i – Land at Old London Road (Vineyards)
-  Policy 3: A24 Corridor
-  Policy 7: Washington Village Centre
-  Policy 16: Local Green Spaces;
-  10. Washington Recreation Ground
-  12. The Triangle
-  13. Jockey's Meadow
-  14. Vera's Shelter and Green (Heath Common)
-  15. 1st Extension Graveyard
-  16. Milford Grange Country Park
-  Built Up Area Boundary
-  Proposed Amendment to Built Up Area Boundary
-  South Downs National Park
-  Parish Boundary

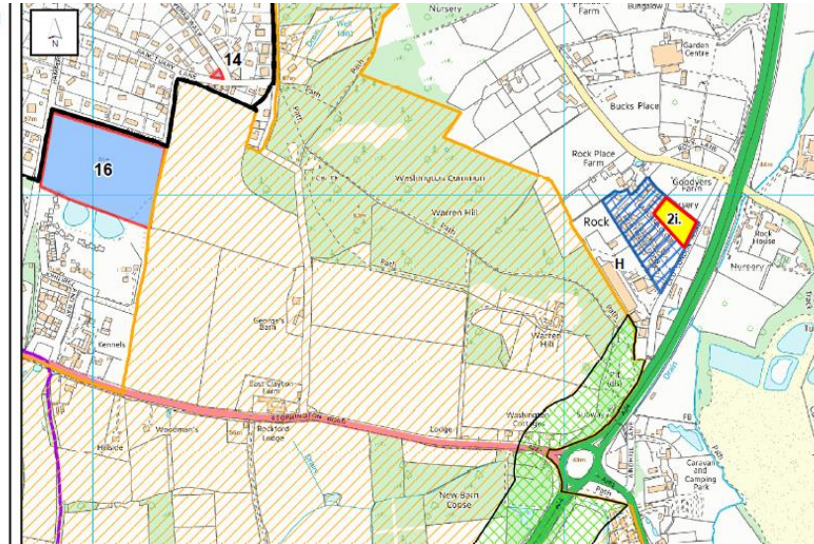


Fig 4. Extract from Policies Map Inset 4

3.37 The supporting text to this policy states:

“4.17 Washington Village is classified as a category 2 settlement in the Core Strategy 2007 (Tier 4 in the SDLP). No land within or adjoining the settlement is available for development. The Village is constrained due to its location in the South Downs National Park. However, some development of rural areas will be necessary to meet the recognised local needs and in order to maintain the vitality of smaller villages and support local facilities such as shops and schools whilst retaining existing settlement functions and rural character.

4.18 A small cluster of residential dwelling to the north west does offer the opportunity to meet the housing needs of the parish including affordable housing.

4.19 There is a need to allow for Neighbourhood Planning to operate with a degree of flexibility in the context provided by national policy, in particular paragraph 54 of the NPPF which requires plan makers to be responsive to, and plan housing development to reflect local needs. Furthermore paragraph 55 of the NPPF stipulates: “To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby”.

4.20 It is within this context that it is considered appropriate to proceed with the allocation of 15 dwellings at Vineyards, Washington (policy 2 i) as development will help to meet identified local housing needs, support local services and is appropriate in scale and function of Washington as a whole.”

3.38 The following policies are also considered to be of relevance: -

Policy 2 – Site Allocations for Development.

Policy 8 – Countryside Protection.

Policy 9 – Green Gap.

Policy 14 – Design.

Policy 15 – Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity.

Policy 17 – Traffic and Transport.

Emerging Policy

3.39 In terms of emerging planning policy at the District level, the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF), was adopted in November 2015. It is a requirement of the Inspector’s report on the HDPF that a review of the plan commences within three years from adoption. The Councils Local Development Scheme (LDS) confirms that a new Local Plan will be produced, which, when adopted will replace the HDPF.

3.40 It is understood that the Examination Hearings are scheduled to re-commence on Tuesday 21st April 2026.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

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

Planning Advice Notes

- Shaping Development in Horsham (SDPAN – Sept 2025)
- Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

(i) Application Site

4.1 According to the Council's online planning records, the application site (9 Montpelier Gardens), has no planning history.

(ii) Neighbouring Sites

4.2 The following planning approvals are considered to be of relevance.

Land north of 6 Montpelier Cottages, Old London Road, Washington, West Sussex

Planning ref: DC/25/1480/: Erection of 4 No. 3-bedroom dwellings with associated car parking, private amenity space and acoustic fencing. Creation of an ecological buffer zone. Application Permitted 23rd January 2026.



Fig 5. Extract from approved block plan (ref: DC/25/1480)

- 4.3 This application follows a previous planning application on the site for the construction of 3 No. 2-bed terraced dwellings under reference **DC/14/1720**, which was refused and subsequently dismissed at appeal. The committee report noted that *“the Inspector considered that the site would not be classified as being accessible to local services, and even with some local bus services and cycling potential, car usage would be necessary. The Inspector recognised that the Council did not have a five year housing land supply, but considered that the 3no. additional dwellings would make only a very slight difference to housing supply in the district context. On this basis, the Inspector did not consider the site to be sustainable.*

It is however noted that subsequent to this appeal decision, the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan [SSWNP] has been adopted. Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan states that “Development proposals outside the Built Up Area of Washington will be supported on any allocated site(s) and within the area within and around Montpelier Gardens/Luckings Yard...or if it results in the reuse of previously developed land on land outside the South Downs National Park provided the proposal accords with other policies in the Development Plan.” [emphasis added]. This is considered to be a material consideration of significant weight in assessing the planning application.

The proposed site is immediately opposite the area identified under Policy 1 in the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan [SSWNP]. As such, it can be considered as being ‘around Montpelier Gardens / Luckings Yard’. By virtue of the specific wording to Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan, the principle of development of this site is therefore considered acceptable”.

- 4.4 It should be acknowledged that unlike the above application, the current development proposal is in fact located **within** the area identified under Policy 1 in the SSWNP.

Land at Montpelier Gardens

Planning ref: DC/20/0660/: Erection of 3 dwellings with associated car parking and landscaping. Application Permitted 21st October 2020.



Fig 6. Extract from Approved Block Plan (ref: DC/20/0660)

- 4.5 The case officer concluded within their committee report that *“the proposal for three dwellings, as amended, comprises land allocated for housing development under Policy 1 of the SSWNP and is considered to be acceptable in terms of both scale and design within the site and its wider context. The proposal would not have an adverse impact in the amenities of existing or future occupiers, on the setting of the South Downs National Park, the safe operation of the public highway, or on the ecological value of the site. In this respect, the development proposals are considered to accord with the relevant policies of the HDPF and SSWNP”*.

Land north of 6 Montpelier Cottages, Old London Road, Washington, RH20 3BN

- **Planning ref: DC/21/1689/:** Outline application (all matters reserved) for the erection of 2 x 2 bed semi-detached dwellings, 3 x 2 bed terraced dwellings and 4 x 3 bed semi-detached dwellings (9 units in total), provision of parking for 24 vehicles. Application Permitted 7th May 2024.

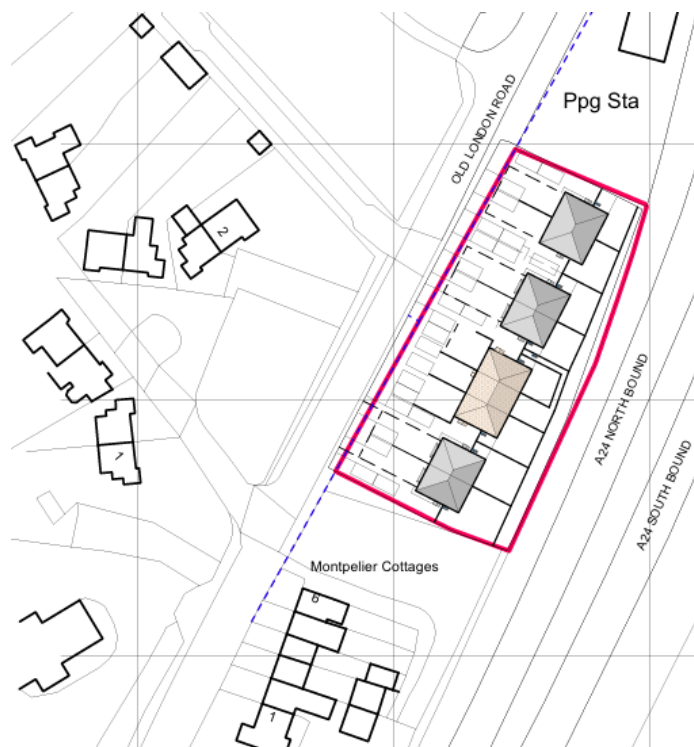


Fig 7. Extract from approved Location Plan (ref: DC/21/1689)

Vineyards, Old London Road, Washington, RH20 3BN

- **Planning ref: DC/20/0717/:** Demolition of existing dwellinghouse and erection of 16 no. residential dwellings (C3) with associated works. Application Permitted 15th September 2020.



Fig 8. Extract from approved Block Plan (ref: DC/20/0717)

Lamorna, Old London Road, Washington, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 3BN

- **Planning ref: DC/12/0113/:** Erection of 8 (6 x 3-bed and 2 x 4-bed) new family homes with garages (following approval of outline planning application DC/10/1287) (Full Planning). Application Permitted 10th May 2012.



Fig 9. Approved Site Layout Plan (ref: DC/12/0113)

- **Planning ref: DC/12/0114/:** Erection of 8 (6x3-bed and 2x4-bed) new family homes with garages (following approval of outline planning application DC/10/1287) (Conservation Area Consent). Note: Conservation Area Consent not required. Withdrawn 19th January 2012.
- **Planning ref: DC/10/1287/:** Proposed cessation of use of traveler pitches and ancillary buildings and demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 8 dwellings (Outline with some matters reserved). Application Permitted 2nd November 2011.

5.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 5.1 This planning application seeks permission for the erection of 2 no. semi-detached houses on garden land to the southeast side of 9 Montpelier Gardens. The plans also include the demolition of a single storey element to the side of existing No.9, and a new 2-storey extension to the rear of this host dwelling.

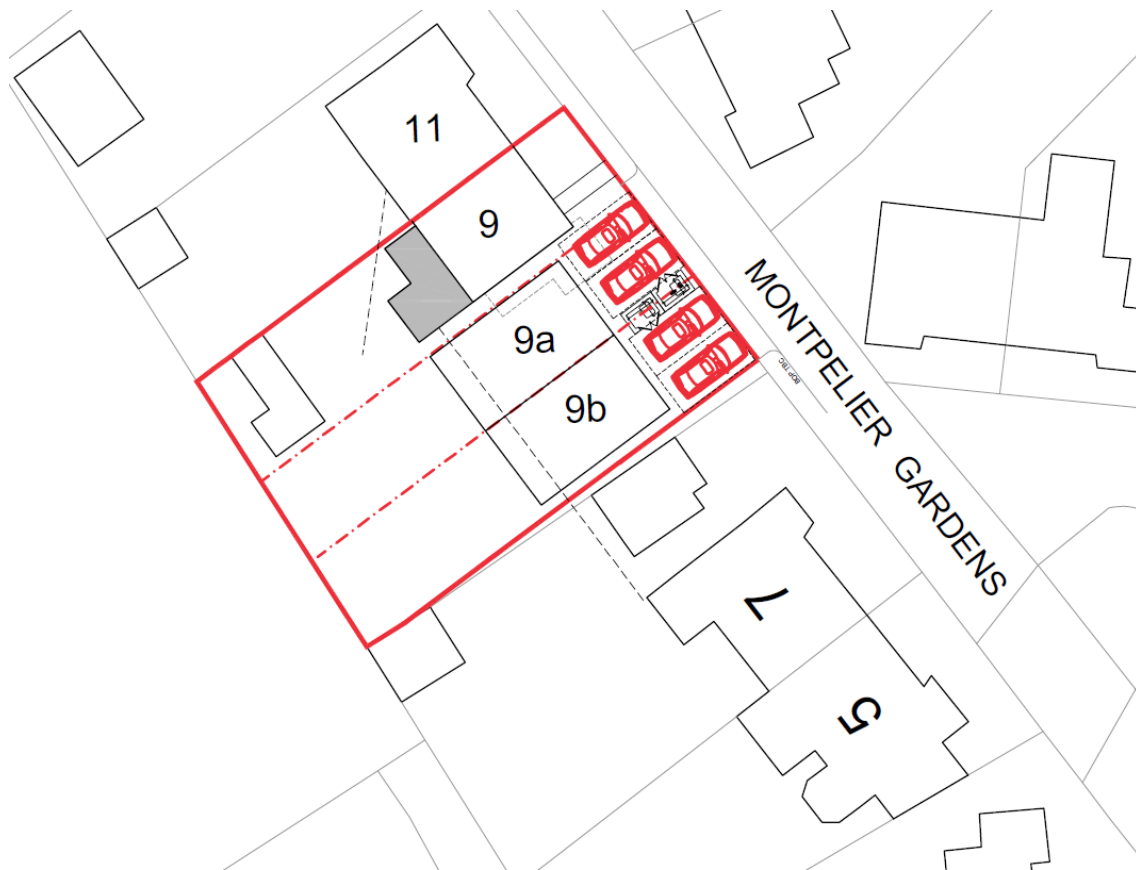


Fig 10. Extract from proposed Site Plan

- 5.2 The proposed new dwellings would be a mirror image of one another, comprising an open plan living/ dining area, kitchen and w.c. at ground floor level, with 2 No. bedrooms (1 double; 1 single) above.

5.3 The proposed dwellings would be two storeys in height and echo the scale, form and design of properties within the immediately surrounding area. The use of a traditional material palette in line with the prevailing vernacular style will further ensure that the dwelling appropriately respects its setting. The external materials proposed are as follows:

- Red facing brickwork to the external walls.
- Clay or concrete plain roof tiles.
- High-performance uPVC windows.
- Hardwood or composite timber-effect front doors.



Fig 11. Proposed front (east) elevation



Fig 12. Proposed rear (west) elevation

- 5.4 Access to the proposed dwellings will be taken directly from Montpelier Gardens via individual driveways serving each property. Each dwelling is provided with two off-street parking spaces, ensuring an appropriate level of parking provision in accordance with local standards. Secure cycle storage will be provided within the rear garden of each dwelling.
- 5.5 The proposal would also include the demolition of a single storey element to the side of existing No.9, and a new 2-storey extension to the rear of this host dwelling.



Fig 13. Proposed south elevation and rear (west) elevation



RODWAY PLANNING
CONSULTANCY LIMITED

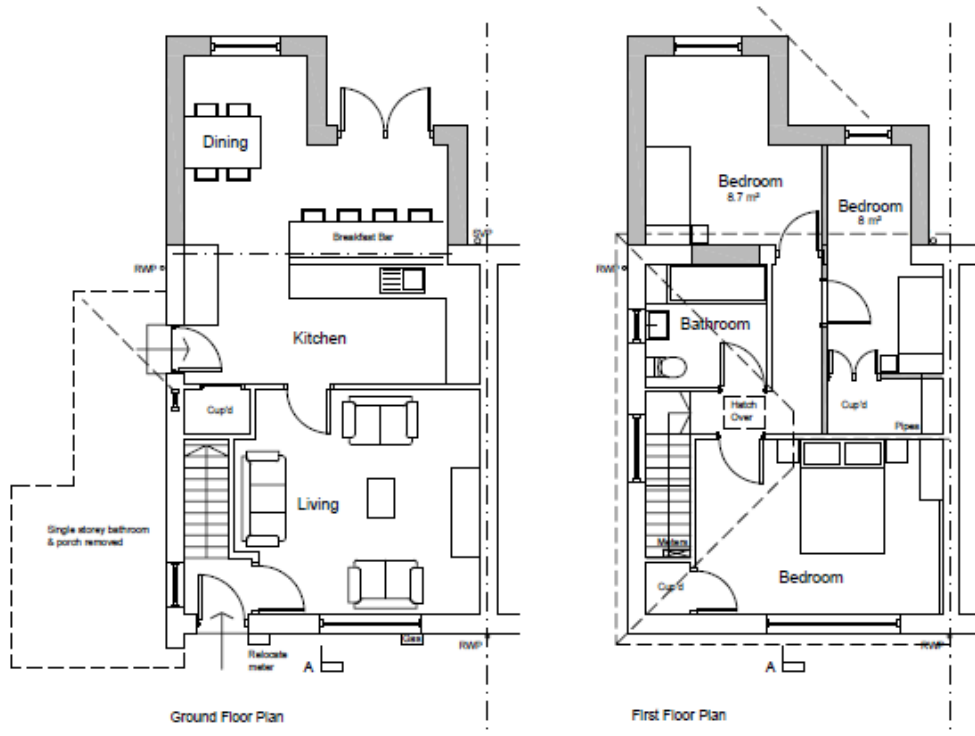


Fig 14. Proposed ground and first floor plans

- 5.6 With regard to landscaping, additional planting will be introduced within the rear gardens to enhance the green character of the site and provide ecological benefits. The proposed development will retain all existing trees on the site, and no tree removal is required to facilitate the proposed development.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

a. Principle of New Development

- 6.1 As outlined above, this planning application seeks permission for the erection of 2 No. semi-detached houses on land to the side of 9 Montpelier Gardens. The application also includes the demolition of a single storey element to the side of existing No.9, and a new 2-storey extension to the rear of this host dwelling.
- 6.2 It is noted that the HDPF is now over 10 years old. In this context it is important to note that Paragraph 34 of the NPPF states: *“Policies in local plans and spatial development strategies should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and should then be updated as necessary¹⁹. Reviews should be completed no later than five years from the adoption date of a plan, and should take into account changing circumstances affecting the area, or any relevant changes in national policy. Relevant strategic policies will need updating at least once every five years if their applicable local housing need figure has changed significantly; and they are likely to require earlier review if local housing need is expected to change significantly in the near future”*. The 5 year review of a Local Plan is a legal requirement, as set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. It is understood that Horsham District are preparing a new Local Plan; with it being understood that the Examination Hearings are scheduled to re-commence on Tuesday 21st April 2026, following a significant delay.
- 6.3 It is clear that currently the HDPF remains out-of-date in terms of the housing requirement, and a new Local Plan is only progressing slowly (having previously been recommended for withdrawal by the Planning Inspector), Although the Local Plan examination is to imminently re-commence, there are unresolved objections, and no weight can be attributed to this at the current time in our opinion. Therefore there is currently a policy vacuum, and as a consequence our position is that the Council’s

decision making should be led by the NPPF, and in particular the criteria set out at paragraph 11, in addition to the SSWNP.

- 6.4 The District Council's policy map confirms that the site application site is located outside of any defined built-up area boundary.
- 6.5 The site is however allocated by **Policy 1** of the SSWNP (**Fig 4** refers). This policy states that *"Development proposals outside the Built Up Area of Washington will be supported on any allocated site(s) and within the area within and around Montpelier Gardens/Luckings Yard...or if it results in the reuse of previously developed land on land outside the South Downs National Park provided the proposal accords with other policies in the Development Plan."*
- 6.6 Indeed, with relation to the recent planning application for 'erection of 4 No. 3-bedroom dwellings with associated car parking, private amenity space and acoustic fencing. Creation of an ecological buffer zone' being considered at Land north of 6 Montpelier Cottages, (ref: DC/25/1480), the Council noted that policy 1 of the SSWNP was applicable in that case, even though the site was located opposite the identified allocation area. This differs from our Client's application site, which is located within the Policy 1 area allocated within the SSWNP. At the time of application DC/25/1480 being considered, the HDC Planning Officer noted that the *"proposed site is immediately opposite the area identified under Policy 1 in the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan. As such, it can be considered as being 'around Montpelier Gardens / Luckings Yard'. By virtue of the specific wording to Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan, the principle of development of this site is therefore considered acceptable"*.
- 6.7 The location of the application site within the Policy 1 development allocation area, as identified within the Neighbourhood Plan, confirms that the principle of new housing at this site is acceptable.

b. Five year housing land supply

- 6.8 At the current time, it is understood that HDC's position is that they are unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply.
- 6.9 Horsham District Council Authority Monitoring Report 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025 states that *"for the 2024/25 monitoring year, a total of 328 net dwellings were completed. The Government has not yet published the Housing Delivery Test measurement for 2024, however in 2023 Horsham District had only delivered 62% of its overall housing target over the previous three years. The standard method formula with a 20% buffer gives a new five year supply target of 8,028. The Council can only demonstrate a 34% (1.7 years) supply against the new requirement"*.
- 6.10 This is a material planning consideration, which weighs in favour of the planning proposal. Paragraph 11(d)(ii) of the NPPF is therefore engaged, which confirms that planning applications should be determined with a presumption in favour of sustainable development applied ('the tilted balance').
- c. Highways Impacts and Sustainability
- 6.11 This planning application is accompanied by a Highway Technical Note, which was prepared by Motion.
- 6.12 The report confirms that access to the site will be achieved via the existing access taken from Montpelier Gardens via Old London Road to the south. Car and cycle parking will be provided in accordance with local policy standards. The note confirms that *"the site benefits from close proximity to both the strategic highway network, including the A24 and M25 London Orbital Motorway to the north and the A283 to the south-east, and existing public transport infrastructure including existing bus stops on Storrington Road"*.

- 6.13 The report notes that planning permission was granted in January 2026 for ‘erection of 4 no. 3-bedroom dwellings with associated car parking, private amenity space and acoustic fencing. Creation of an ecological buffer zone’ (ref: DC/25/1480). It states that “the consented development is situated approximately 75 metres southwest of the site on Old London Road. West Sussex County Council as Local Highways Authority provided no formal objection to the proposals and stated the following with regard to the proposed access arrangements and trip generation: “The site fronts onto Old London Road which forms part of the public highway network and is described as a ‘D’ classified road subject to 60mph speed limit. The site is located at the end of a no-through road, and the character of the road is quiet and lightly trafficked. The plans show driveways onto the street. Assuming the speeds here will be much lower the driveways onto the existing highway are unlikely to cause any safety issues...No traffic flow information has been provided with the current application. However, the Highway Authority from experience with similar site context, consider that although there are additional trips associated with the proposal it is not to an extent that could cause capacity issues on the local highway network.”
- 6.14 With regard to sustainability, the report notes that “there are no footways within the immediate vicinity of the site on Montpelier Gardens. However, the reasonably narrow carriageway width of Montpelier Gardens and residential land use lends itself to ensuring that vehicles travel at low speeds within the vicinity of the site. As such, it is reasonable to suggest that Montpelier Gardens operates as a shared surface, which can accommodate the simultaneous movement of both vehicles, pedestrians and cycles...The closest footway is located on the north side of Old London Road approximately 60 metres south of the site. The existing footway on Old London Road leads south to tie into the existing footways on London Road (A24). The footways on London Road (A24) route west towards the existing bus stops on Storrington Road (A283)...There are a number of Public Rights of Way within the vicinity of the site. Key Public Rights of Way include Footpath WAS 2630/2 situated

approximately 250 metres south-west of the site, which routes north to connect with Bridleway WAS 2623/2 and WAS 2629/1. These bridleways provide a direct connection towards Heath Common village to the north, and Footpath 2625/5 which can be accessed via Bridleway WAS 2629/1 and routes north-west towards Storrington town centre”.

6.15 With regard to buses, the closest stops are on Storrington Road (A283), approximately 650 metres southwest of the site. Please refer to table below.

Bus Service	Route	Approximate Frequency of Services		
		Monday-Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	Worthing – Broadwater – Offington – Findon – Washington – Storrington – West Chiltington Common – Pulborough – Fittleworth – Petworth – Midhurst	1 service every hour	1 service every hour	1 service every 2 hours
100	Horsham – Broadbridge Heath – Slinfold – Five Oaks – Billingshurst – Parbrook – Adversane – Pulborough – Wiggonholt – Cootham – Storrington – Washington – Steyning – Upper Beeding – Henfield – Woodmancote – Sayers Common – Burgess Hill	1 service every hour	1 service every hour	No services

Fig 15. Summary of Local Bus Services (*courtesy of Transport Note*)

6.16 It is noteworthy that the following facilities and services are also located within close proximity of the site: -

Primary Schools

St. Marys CofE Primary School	0.6 miles
Ashington CofE Primary School	1.4 miles
Thakeham Primary School	1.4 miles
Storrington Primary School	2.3 miles

Secondary Schools

Steyping Grammar School	3.6 miles
Durrington High School	6 miles
The Sir Robert Woodard Academy	6.3 miles
Bohunt School, Worthing	6.3 miles
Worthing High School	6.3 miles

Doctors

Glebe Surgery	2.3 miles
Steyping Health Centre	3.7 miles
Lime Tree Surgery	4.5 miles

Hospitals

Meadowfield	4.9 miles
Worthing Hospital	7 miles

- 6.17 The transport report states that *“the site is located approximately 1 kilometre north of Washington village centre and therefore benefits from reasonable proximity to a number of local amenities. Key amenities within Washington village include St. Marys C of E Primary School, a community centre and a church. It is also noted that there a number of readily accessible amenities within both Ashington to the north and Storrington to the west, including a number of convenience stores, pharmacies, chemists and primary and secondary schools”*.
- 6.18 It is our opinion that the site is located within a sustainable location.
- 6.19 Access to the site will be achieved via the existing access taken from Montpelier Gardens, via Old London Road to the south. All vehicular movements associated with the neighbouring residential properties on Montpelier Gardens are accommodated by the existing access. This technical note *“demonstrates that the development*

proposals will result in an imperceptible increase in vehicle movements during both the morning and evening peak hour periods, as well as over the course of an average weekday”.

- 6.20 Car and cycle parking will be provided in accordance with the standards set out in the ‘Guidance on Parking at New Developments’ document published by West Sussex County Council in September 2020. Each residential dwelling will be provided with two car parking spaces and one cycle parking spaces. As detailed in the technical note, *“this is consistent with the provision approved for the aforementioned consented scheme on Old London Road”*. Cycle storage will be provided within the curtilage of each dwelling, with each dwelling accommodating a minimum of two cycle spaces.
- 6.21 The report concludes that *“the development proposals comprise the demolition of a side extension of 9 Montpelier Gardens, the extension to 9 Montpelier Gardens to the rear and the construction of two 2-bedroom residential dwellings. Access to the site will be achieved via the existing access taken from Montpelier Gardens via Old London Road to the south. Car and cycle parking will be provided in accordance with local policy standards...Safe and suitable provision can be made for access, parking and servicing in accordance with relevant design guidance and standards. It is also envisaged that the development proposals will result in a negligible increase in vehicle movements during both the morning and evening peak hour periods. On the basis of the above review, it is concluded that the proposals accord with national and local transport related policies and can be accommodated without detriment to the safety and operating capacity of the local highway network. It is therefore concluded that there is no reason as to why the development should be resisted on traffic or transportation grounds”*.

6.22 The proposal would be acceptable from a highways perspective, compliant with guidance contained within the NPPF and **policies 39, 40 and 41** of the HDPF and draft policies **24 and 25** of the emerging local plan.

d. Character and Visual Amenity

6.23 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting; establish a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit; optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development; and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible.

6.24 **Policies 25, 32 and 33** of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015) requires development to be of a high standard of design and layout. Development proposals must be locally distinctive in character and respect the character of their surroundings. Where relevant, the scale, massing and appearance of development will be required to relate sympathetically with its built-surroundings, landscape, open spaces and to consider any impact on the skyline and important views.

6.25 **Policy 14** of the SSWNP (2019) seeks to ensure development respects the scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and material palette of surrounding buildings and characters.

6.26 The scheme for 2 No. semi-detached house to the southeast side of an existing pair of semi-detached dwellings would result in the re-use of the previously developed site as sought by SSWNP **Policy 1** and would constitute infilling between No.9 and 7 Montpelier Gardens.

- 6.27 Montpelier Gardens is residential in character, typified by two storey semi-detached properties with brick walling and tiled roofs. Properties are varied in their scale and orientation. Plots are generally rectangular in appearance (with a few exceptions) and mixed in size. Some plots are smaller, including No. 1 and 3 Montpellier Gardens and properties along Maple Gardens. The proposed rectangular plots are of a size and shape, which would appear perfectly in context with neighbouring development.
- 6.28 As set out in detail within the planning history section above, a clear planning precedent has been established in this area for infill developments similar to the current development proposal.
- 6.29 The development proposal would appear in keeping with the established character of the surrounding area. The DAS notes that *“the proposed dwellings are positioned slightly set back from the prevailing building line along Montpelier Gardens. This modest setback maintains an appropriate relationship with neighbouring properties and contributes to a sense of openness within the street scene...To the rear, the building line broadly reflects that of the neighbouring property to the south and aligns with the proposed extended rear elevation of the existing dwelling at No. 9, ensuring a coherent relationship between the built forms on the site. The development comprises a pair of two-storey dwellings with pitched roofs running from front to back and hipped ends. This roof form reflects the architectural character of surrounding properties within Montpelier Gardens. The proposed dwellings sit at a slightly lower level relative to neighbouring houses due to the natural topography of the site. As a result, both the eaves and ridge heights remain below those of adjacent dwellings, ensuring the development integrates comfortably within the established streetscape...Overall, the scale and massing are considered appropriate to the character of the area and will not appear dominant or incongruous within the street scene”*.

6.30 It is our opinion that the proposal will provide 2 No. modest sized residential properties that appear in keeping with the form, scale and pattern of development along Montpelier Gardens. We are confident that the development proposal will sit sensitively in its setting, fulfilling the requirement to ensure that the intrinsic character area is recognised and that the development contributes to protecting the existing built environment. The proposals would provide an efficient use of the available land resource without leading to a harm to the existing character or any other matter of acknowledged importance.



Fig 15. Extract from proposed Street Scene Elevation



Fig 16. Illustrative view from Montpelier Gardens (*Courtesy of DAS*)

- 6.31 The proposal would also include the demolition of a single storey element to the side of existing No.9, and a new 2-storey extension to the rear of this host dwelling.
- 6.32 The demolition of the single storey element would not require planning permission and would have minimal impact on the existing property from a visual perspective. The proposed two storey extension has been sensitively designed to sit below the main roof line, allowing a level of visual subservience to be achieved. It would be positioned to the rear of the property, screened from Montpelier Gardens by the existing dwelling house, and the proposed new housing to its side. All materials will match the main dwelling house, and our client would be happy for this to be ensured via condition.



Fig 17. Proposed south elevation and rear (west) elevation

6.33 At the time of application ref: **DC/25/1480** being considered, the Council noted that *“the proposal would be designed to reflect similar development within the immediate surroundings, with the roof form, projections, and materials, considered to reflect the built features of the adjacent residential dwellings. The proposed dwellings would be of a similar scale, massing, and bulk to the adjacent residential dwellings, where each would benefit from a similar plot size. For these reasons, it is considered that the proposal would reflect the character and appearance of similar development within the immediate locality and would relate sympathetically to the built surroundings...The proposed development is considered to reflect the townscape character and appearance of the immediate surroundings, sitting comfortably within the context of existing residential development, and of a form and appearance that would relate sympathetically to the built development. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the above policies”.*

6.34 It is our opinion that the above is wholly applicable in relation to the current application. Great care and consideration has been paid to designing a pair of semi-

detached dwellings that would reflect similar built form within the surrounding area, in terms of scale, form, siting, design and use of materials. The high quality development would sit comfortably within the context of the immediately surrounding area, in compliance with policies guidance contained within the NPPF, **Policies 25, 32 and 33** of the HDPF and **Policy 14** of the SSWNP.

e. Residential Amenity and Noise Impact

- 6.35 **Policy 32** of the HDPF states that development will be expected to provide an attractive, functional, accessible, safe, and adaptable environment that contribute a sense of place both in the buildings and spaces themselves. **Policy 33** continues that development shall be required to ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land.
- 6.36 The proposed semi-detached dwellings would represent an infill development, adjoining Montpelier Gardens to the north east side and residential properties to the north west and south east sides.
- 6.37 It is our view that the proposed dwellings would be set a sufficient distance away from these neighbouring properties, which would reflect the layout of neighbouring development and would not cause demonstrable harm to the residential amenities of this property by way of loss of light, loss of privacy, or overbearing effect.
- 6.38 Access to the proposed dwellings will be taken directly from Montpelier Gardens the adjustment of an established access and parking area. The increase in site usage would be negligible and in our opinion would not cause demonstrable harm by way of increased noise and disturbance associated with movements generated by the proposed new housing.
- 6.39 The DAS reiterates the above, noting that *“each dwelling will benefit from a private rear garden of a generous size, providing appropriate outdoor amenity space for*

future occupants. The orientation of the plots ensures the gardens will receive a good balance of natural sunlight throughout the day. Soft landscaping and native planting will be incorporated to enhance the character of the gardens and contribute positively to biodiversity. The scale, siting and relationship of the proposed dwellings have been carefully considered to ensure that neighbouring residential amenity is preserved, with no unacceptable impacts in terms of overlooking, overshadowing or loss of outlook”.

6.40 We are aware that the site is located in close proximity to the A24 highway and as such there could be associated noise implications. We are aware that the Council did not however raise any concerns in relation to road noise when considering application ref: **DC/25/1480**, which is in fact located appreciably closer to the A24 than the current application site. Further, the proposal is for an infill development amongst established residential development. Given the above, we are of the opinion that the planning proposal would be acceptable from a noise perspective and would be compliant with **Policy 33** of the HDPF.

f. Space Standards

6.41 The development proposal would comprise 2 No. two bedroom (3 person occupancy) dwelling houses. It should be noted that the dwellings have been designed internally to meet the requirements laid out in the Governments ‘Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard’ document. The proposed two storey, two-bedroom (3 per occupancy) dwellings would each have a gross internal floor area of 72sqm, which would exceed the 70sqm requirement.

g. Water Neutrality

6.42 Following the Natural England’s statement issued in October 2025 which confirms that its Water Neutrality Position Statement of September 2021 has been withdrawn, it is now understood that there are no Water Neutrality requirements for this development proposal. It is further understood that HDC will now be using the

2024/25 water efficiency savings made by Southern Water to allow all development to move forward as water neutral from 1st November 2025. The District Council's website confirms that for planning applications there is no longer a requirement for a Water Neutrality Statement, and no payment into Sussex North Water Certification Scheme will be needed. However, it is further noted that the Council's website advises that *"given the area remains at significant water stress, all applications for new housing will be required by condition to comply with the Building Regulations Part G Optional Technical Standard (currently 110 l/p/d) as required by Policy 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework. We would welcome and support any applicant who still wishes to include water efficiencies below this standard."*

h. Ecology

- 6.43 The Applicants have commissioned Ecology Consultants, Arbtech, to provide a 'Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Preliminary Roost Assessment'. This report confirms that the risk to bats is low. Recommendations and enhancements are set out in the report including that demolition should be timed to take place when bats are least likely to be present; November to March. The report says *"As the buildings are unsuitable for hibernation due to unstable temperature and humidity regimes, this means that the likelihood of disturbing a bat is extremely low. In the unlikely event that a bat is found, work will stop and the ecologist will advise on how to proceed."* Arbtech's suggested enhancements in respect of bats include the addition of *"one integrated bat box within each of the proposed new buildings... [and] A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development, which will be designed to incorporate the measures laid out in the latest (2023) bat lighting guide Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting..."*
- 6.44 The report does not identify any issues with respect to Great Crested Newts, reptiles, badgers, and dormouse. Arbtech made recommendations relating to management of the construction stage, in addition to suggested habitat creation and enhancement opportunities.

6.45 The proposals are therefore in compliance with Policy 31 of the HDPF, and Policy 15 of the SSWNP in that the proposal will contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity, and retains existing features of nature conservation (e.g. all existing trees are to be retained and unaffected by the proposals).

i. Biodiversity Net Gain

6.46 The Application is supported by the BNG Statutory Metric, which has been completed on the Applicant's behalf by Arbtech. In support of this submission, Arbtech have provided a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment report. This report confirms that the creation of native hedgerow on-site will ensure that the development proposals meet the 10% BNG requirements.

j. Sustainable Development Assessment

- The Economic Objective

6.47 The proposed development is seeking planning permission for 2 No. dwellings. It is considered that this provision would make a small, albeit positive contribution to the building industry of the area. The proposed development would result in the creation of construction jobs during the build period. The additional population will generate more local spending in the local community, provision of infrastructure and services. In summary, it is clear that these economic benefits, which are directly associated with the implementation of the proposed development, would secure both short and long term economic benefits to the settlement of Washington and the wider locality generally. These are material to the consideration of the scheme and are an additional factor in favour of the proposals.

- The Social Role

6.48 The NPPF seeks to promote a strong vibrant and healthy community by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generation

and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and supports its health, social and cultural well-being.

6.49 The site is located outside of the built-up area boundary of Washington; however for the reasons outlined above can be considered sustainable in terms of its location. We are aware of the Council's current lack of Housing Land Supply and in our view, the erection of 2 No. additional family dwellings will make a small, albeit useful contribution towards the Council's housing stock which will provide housing for future generations.

- The Environmental Role

6.50 The application scheme would represent a high-quality designed infill development. It is our view that the new dwellings would appear wholly appropriate in the context of this local area and would make a welcome introduction to this locality.

6.51 Therefore the visual qualities of the landscape will not be disturbed by this small scale, infill style development. The site is well related to existing built form. There would be no harm resulting from the development proposed in terms of impact on the openness of the rural area, or the intrinsic qualities of the rural landscape.

6.52 Existing trees will be retained, and no ecological impacts will be resultant. There is scope for enhanced landscaping to benefit local biodiversity.

6.53 We therefore consider that this scheme is entirely appropriate in environmental terms, and specifically with respect to its impact on the character of the area. The development, through its siting and intensity, would represent good design and demonstrates that it will respond sensitively to the area's character. The established built form and the natural beauty of the wider countryside will both be conserved.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 This application seeks planning permission for the erection of 2 No. semi-detached dwelling houses on land to the side of 9 Montpelier Gardens. The application also includes the demolition of a single storey element to the side of existing No.9, and a new 2-storey extension to the rear of this host dwelling.
- 7.2 The Horsham District Policy Map confirms that the site is outside the defined built-up area in policy terms the site is therefore in a countryside location.
- 7.3 The site is however allocated by **Policy 1** of the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan (**Fig 4** refers). This policy states that *“Development proposals outside the Built Up Area of Washington will be supported on any allocated site(s) and within the area within and around Montpelier Gardens/Luckings Yard...or if it results in the reuse of previously developed land on land outside the South Downs National Park provided the proposal accords with other policies in the Development Plan.”*
- 7.4 At the time of an application ref: **DC/25/1480** being determined, the Council noted that the above policy was applicable, even though the site was located opposite the allocation, unlike our application which is within the allocation. They noted *“proposed site is immediately opposite the area identified under Policy 1 in the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan. As such, it can be considered as being ‘around Montpelier Gardens / Luckings Yard’. By virtue of the specific wording to Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan, the principle of development of this site is therefore considered acceptable”*. The terms of SSWNP Policy 1 is considered to be a material consideration of significant weight in assessing the planning application.

- 7.5 Further, a clear planning precedent for this form of built development in this area has been established, as set out in full within the Planning History section of the report.
- 7.6 The District is unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply at this time. Therefore the NPPF's 'tilted balance' is applicable (para 11d[ii]), which requires a presumption in favour of sustainable development with permission only being refused where *"any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits"*. This is a material planning consideration, which given the lack of any harmful impacts arising from the development proposals, strongly weighs in favour of the Planning Application being granted.
- 7.7 The site is sustainably located. The scale of development is consistent with the site's context. There is an identified local and District wide housing need. There are no unacceptable impacts on landscape and character and appearance of the area. The benefits of the planning proposal are not outweighed by the impacts, and therefore it is in this context that we consider the planning balance tilts in the applicant's favour. The proposal for 2 No. new dwellings on the site represents sustainable development in compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 7.8 It is our opinion that the above is wholly applicable in relation to the current application. Great care and consideration has been paid to designing a pair of semi-detached dwellings that would reflect similar development within the surrounding area, in terms of scale, form, siting, design and use of materials. The high quality development would sit comfortably within the context of the immediately surrounding area, in compliance with policies guidance contained within the NPPF, **Policies 25, 32 and 33** of the HDPF and **Policy 14** of the SSWNP.
- 7.9 The planning proposal would not cause demonstrable harm by way of increased noise and disturbance, or any other impacts to existing residents' amenities.

7.10 In summary, the proposal would constitute sustainable development, with compliance with the economic, social and environmental objectives of the NPPF. In the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan and a lack of a deliverable 5YHLS, a presumption in favour of sustainable development should be applied. Further, the site is allocated within the Neighbourhood plan and a clear planning present for this form of development has been established within the area. Therefore, as the proposal accords with the aims and objectives of national and local guidance, the application site is a suitable for the proposed development and permission should therefore be granted.

March 2026