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Response to NPPF 2026 changes corresponding to Appeal 6012734 (Application Ref: DC/26/0823)

Permission in Principle (PIP) relating to the erection of six dwellings

Land north of Moat Cottage,
Worthing Road,
Dial Post,
RH13 8NS

October 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1 This statement provides comments in relation the new NPPF which was published on the 17 August 2026 and is relevant to the consideration of the current appeal against Horsham District Council's refusal of Permission in Principle (PIP) application, DC/26/0823, on the 23rd June 2026.

1.2 The application sought a PIP for development of six new residential dwellings on land to the north of Moat Cottage. The application was submitted with an indicative block plan, floor plans and elevations which shows 6 No. 3 bed dwellings situated parallel to the linear form of the road to the east. The indicative block plan showed the proposed development in three pairs of two storey, semi-detached dwellings accessed from one access point from Old Worthing Road.

1.3 Horsham District Council refused the planning application, under delegated powers on the 23rd June 2026. There was a single reason for refusal.

> *The proposed development would be located within an unsustainable location in the countryside, beyond a defined built-up area on a site not allocated within the Development Plan and would not be essential to this countryside location. The development would therefore be contrary to the overarching spatial strategy and hierarchy approach of concentrating development within defined settlements and advocating a planned approach to settlement expansion, contrary to policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015). Notwithstanding the absence of a five-year land housing supply, and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) at paragraph 11(d), it is not considered that there are any material considerations which would outweigh harm arising from conflict with the above policies.*

2. Planning Policy

2.1 The following policies of the new NPPF published on the 17 August 2026 are considered relevant to this proposal in addition to the policies previously listed within the planning statement submitted with the PIP submission.

National Planning Policy Framework (2026)

- Policy DM3: Determining Development Proposals
- Policy S3: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy S5: Principle of Development Outside Settlements
- Policy CC2: Mitigation of Climate Change
- Policy CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- Policy HO7: Meeting the Need for Homes
- Policy L2: Making Effective Use of Land
- Policy L3: Achieving Appropriate Densities
- Policy DP3 – Key Principles for Well-Designed Places
- Policy DP4: The Design Process
- Policy TR3: Locating Development in Sustainable Locations
- Policy F4: Assessing Flood Risk for Decision Making
- Policy F8: Sustainable Drainage Systems
- Policy N2: Improving the Natural Environment
- Policy HE4: Securing the Conservation of Heritage Assets
- Policy HE5: Assessing Effects on Heritage Assets

3. Planning Considerations

3.1 This statement will consider the principle matters comprising the location, land use and amount of the development in relation to the NPPF 2026 changes.

4. Location of Development

4.1 Refusal reason 1 states:

> *The proposed development would be located within an unsustainable location in the countryside, beyond a defined built-up area on a site not allocated within the Development Plan and would not be essential to this countryside location. The development would therefore be contrary to the overarching spatial strategy and hierarchy approach of concentrating development within defined settlements and advocating a planned approach to settlement expansion, contrary to policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015). Notwithstanding the absence of a five-year land housing supply, and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) at paragraph 11(d), it is not considered that there are any material considerations which would outweigh harm arising from conflict with the above policies.*

4.2 Within their consideration of the application the Council acknowledged that they are not able to demonstrate a full five year housing land supply against the provisions of paragraph 11d of the former NPPF 2024, and therefore the presumption in favour of development and the tilted balance was considered to be engaged. The Council also confirmed that paragraph 14 of the former NPPF and the footnote 7 matters relating to paragraph 11d(i) did not apply. The Appellant previously agreed with the Council's view on this matter.

4.3 The NPPF 2026 has introduced national decision making policies which are now relevant to the consideration of this PIP application.

4.4 Policy S3 of the NPPF 2026 confirms that decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development and where developments are located outside settlements, policy S5 of the Framework would apply.

4.5 Policy S3 advises that in all locations, development proposals that accord with both an up-to-date development plan and decision making policies within this Framework should be approved without delay.

4.6 Annexe A of the NPPF confirms that where development plan policies (or parts of those policies are materially inconsistent with national decision making policies of the NPPF should be given very limited weight.

4.7 Policy S5 lists certain forms of development that should be approved outside settlements, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by the any adverse effects when assessed against the Framework.

4.8 Policy S5(j) confirms that one of the exceptions relates to housing development that meets an unmet housing where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year housing land supply of deliverable housing sites or meet the Housing Delivery Test. Like with the former paragraph 11 of NPPF 2024, the Council cannot demonstrate a five year housing supply and therefore the development would fall under one of the exceptions for development outside settlement, providing that it meets either part i) or ii) of policy S5(j).

4.9 Part i) relates to the site being physically well related to an existing settlement and being of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure. Part ii) is not considered relevant to this proposal as it relates to the major development being for freight or logistics purposes.

4.10 In this case, it is noted that the site is located approximately 260 m from facilities within the village of Dial Post, see Figure 1. This includes a village hall, village green, public house and Knepp café/restaurant & farm shop.

4.11 The Council also acknowledge in their Regulation 19 version Local Plan Review of Dial Post that the Dial Post should comprise a new secondary settlement given the presence of a community within the village which comprises a village green, village hall, local employment and amenities giving it a sense of place. The site would be physically well related to the settlement of Dial Post, with the facilities within the village being easily accessible by foot or bicycle further along the road to the north. The site would therefore occupy a sustainable location and would be suitable for the provision of six dwellings.

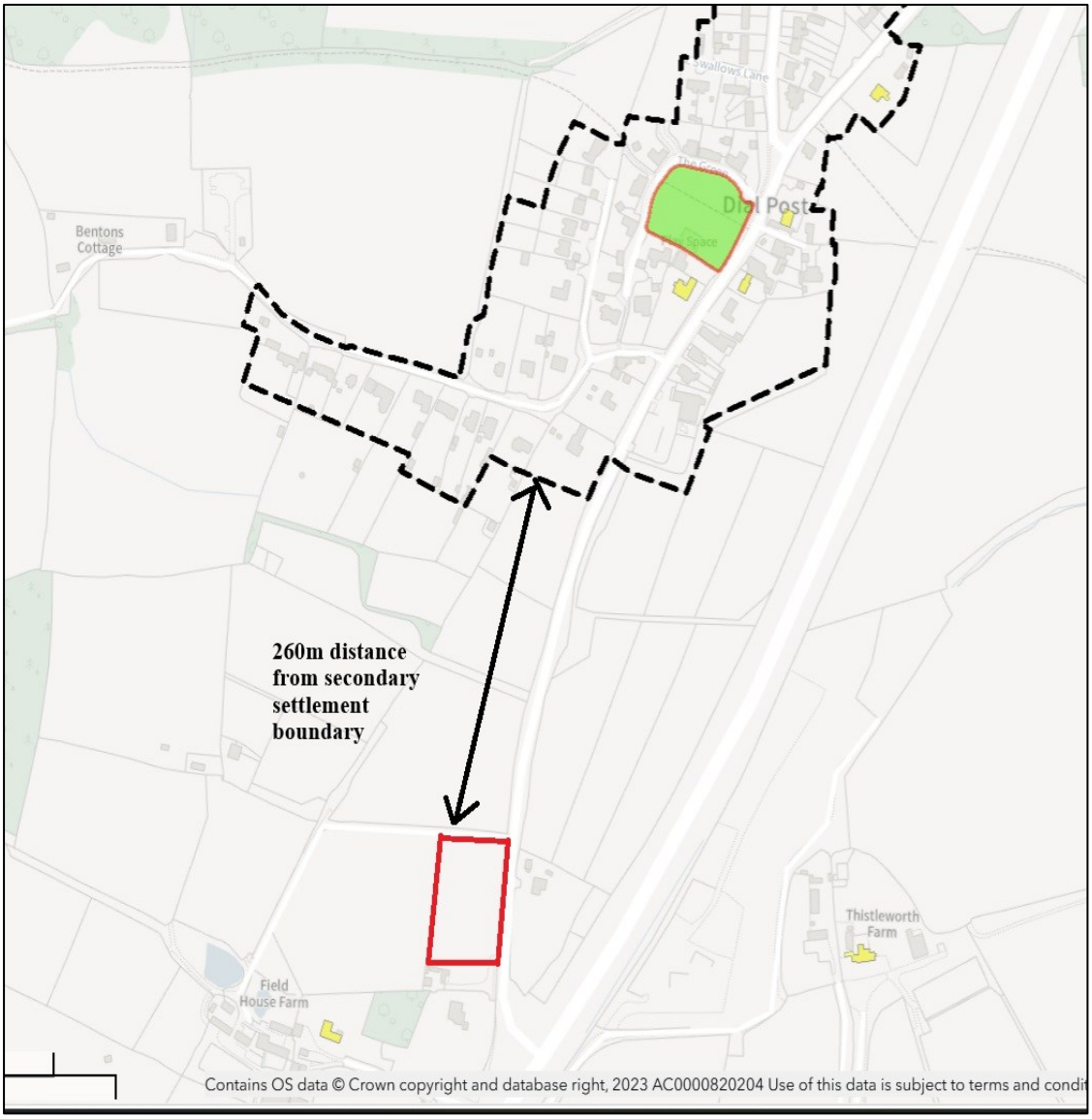

Figure 1: Location of site to secondary settlement boundary of Dial Post

4.12 The scale of development which comprises six houses is relatively modest and would be accommodated to the north of Moat Cottage and to the west of Hurst Cottage, without any significant additional infrastructure required.

4.13 The proposal would therefore comply with the requirements of policy S5(j) of the NPPF 2026 and in light of the Council's current housing land supply position and unknown position regarding whether examination of the Local Plan will be successful, it is considered that the benefit of providing six houses in a short walking or cycling distance to the amenities within Dial Post would outweigh the conflict identified with the Council's policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26.

5. Land Use

5.1 The Council consider that the change of use of the site to residential use would be unacceptable and this predominantly relates to those concerns relating to location of the development as considered in the previous section of this statement.

5.2 Within the Council's Delegated Report comparisons are drawn to the refused application for one dwelling to the south of Moat Cottage, DC/22/1830. The Appellant contends that the reasons for dismissal of this appeal were the same as those relating to the former outline application. The main concerns in relation to the 2024 appeal was the impact to the amenity of future occupiers in terms of traffic noise from the adjacent A24 and the impact to the protected sites in respect of additional water abstraction.

5.3 The matter of water neutrality was addressed by Natural England's withdrawal of their 2021 Position Statement, and the package of water saving measures introduced in conjunction with Southern Water to safeguard the Arun Valley protected sites.

5.4 The appeal site is distanced 70m from the A24 with the front of the dwellings orientated to Old Worthing Road, a less busy road which provides access through Dial Post village, rather than the busier A24. The proposed use of the site for residential purposes would not therefore give rise to unacceptable noise impacts to future occupiers by virtue of its proximity to the A24. Also, in any event technical details regarding the noise insulation of the proposed dwellings could be submitted as part of the later technical matters stage.

5.5 It is also noted that the Council considers that the proposed development would conflict with policy 32 of the HDPF in respect of the land use not providing an attractive, functional, accessible, safe and adaptable environment. This is however not included within the refusal reason. There does not appear to be any reason why the proposed residential development of the site could be designed to create an accessible, safe and adaptable environment in this location. This matter would however be likely for further consideration at the technical matters stage.

6. Amount of Development

6.1 Matters relating to landscape and heritage impacts have been raised in the Council's Delegated Report. In respect of landscape impact, it is acknowledged that the proposed development would result in a degree of change by virtue of introducing new built form into the existing small grassland field. However, these changes are considered by the Council's Landscape Consultant as localised and limited to the immediate surrounding area, predominantly the grassed fields enclosed by hedging and planting to the north and west.

6.2 The landscape character of the existing site is currently impacted by the existing surrounding land uses, these include the residential dwellings and buildings located south and east of the site. The Council's Landscape Consultant acknowledges that the existing development would reduce the adverse effects of any residential development on the appeal site to the landscape character. It was also acknowledged by Place Services that the presence of the A24 and other commercial uses within the wider locality of the site also reduces the rural character of the landscape and results in the site being less sensitive to new development. The proposal would therefore respond to and integrates with the surrounding landscape and existing residential uses within close proximity of the site in accordance with policy DP3 of the NPPF 2026.

6.3 The indicative drawings show the proposed dwelling in a linear pattern parallel to the road. The Council's Landscape Consultant comments that the ribbon form of development is a development pattern within the LCA J2, yet is not a settlement pattern characteristic of Dial Post. Whilst this can be considered further at the Technical Design stage, it is noted that there is a degree is linear ribbon development on the eastern side of Old Worthing Road when travelling through Dial Post, and therefore a more linear layout of development would not be entirely out of keeping with other the form of other ribbon type development within the village. This would relate well to the existing landscape character of the area in accordance with policies DP3 and N2 of the NPPF 2026.

6.4 The Council's Conservation Officer provided advice on the application, advising that the introduction of additional residential dwellings within the wider setting of the designated heritage asset would have the potential to urbanise the landscape setting and would likely result in the incremental erosion of the rural setting of the heritage asset comprising Woodmans Stud.



6.5 Woodmans Stud is a Grade II Listed Building located 90m to the south-west of the appeal site at the closest point, as shown in the aerial image above. There is a dense tree screen located along the northern boundary of the Woodmans Stud site which limits intervisibility between the appeal site and the listed building and its wider setting to the north.

Figure 2: Location of site in relation to Woodmans Stud

6.6 It is also noted that this dense tree screen wraps round the eastern boundary separating Woodmans Stud and Moat Cottage. On the previous appeal relating to application DC/22/1830 for one dwelling to the south of Moat Cottage, the Inspector noted that the appeal site was separated by dense trees and hedgerows and as a result the site did not form part of the setting of the listed building, Woodmans Stud.

6.7 Given the distance and strong intervening tree lined boundary between the appeal site and the listed building to the south-west, it is considered that the site provides limited contribution to the wider rural setting of the heritage asset. It is therefore concluded that the proposed development would cause no harm to the setting of the heritage asset.

7. Conclusion

7.1 This statement has provided an assessment relating to the Council's refusal of PIP application, DC/26/0823, for six dwellings against the requirements of the new NPPF 2026.

7.2 In relation to policy S5(j) of the NPPF 2026, the proposal would address an evidenced unmet need comprising the provision of housing where the Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a five year housing land supply. The proposed development would therefore provide a significant benefit of providing six houses towards the Council's current housing shortfall when weighed in the planning balance.

7.3 When considering whether the principle of the location and residential use of the land is acceptable, it is maintained that the appeal site would be physically well-related to and sustainably located within walking distance of amenities within the village of Dial Post village. The sustainability of the village is supported by the Council's designation of Dial Post as a secondary settlement in their Local Plan Review. The scale of the development comprising six dwellings would be able to be accommodated taking into account the existing infrastructure and the proposal would comply with the requirements of policy S5(j) of the NPPF.

7.4 The conflict with Council's HDPF policies in respect of housing being located outside the built up area boundary and the localised landscape harm in respect of the amount of development would be substantially outweighed by the significant benefit of providing six houses in relation to the Council's current housing shortfall. It is therefore respectfully requested that the Inspector allow this appeal.