Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/26/1311
Land At 518795 120095, Jolesfield, Partridge Green, West Sussex, RH13 8JT

DESCRIPTION:
Outline application for the development of 9 new residential dwellings, with all matters reserved except for access.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/26/0262	Outline Application for the development of 9 new residential dwellings with all matters reserved except access.	Application Refused on 11.05.2026

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

Land North of Jolesfield Cottages comprises a 0.87ha parcel of undeveloped land located to the north of the defined settlement boundary of Partridge Green, with the site considered a countryside location for planning purposes. The site can be accessed from the B2135 and is relatively flat in nature, enclosed on its eastern and western boundaries by existing vegetation. Parts of the site are situated within Flood Zone 2 and 3, and subject to an identified medium and high risk of surface water flooding, commensurate with a pond that sits centrally along the western boundary to the site.

The site is part of a Local Gap designated by West Grinstead Parish in their Neighbourhood Plan to prevent settlement coalescence of Partridge Green and Littleworth. The surrounds are predominantly rural in character, with some low-density residential development along the B2135 including Jolesfield Cottages immediately to the south of the proposal. There is an existing PRoW (ref. 1839) to the south of the site, within the proposed development boundary. Jolesfield Common (playing fields) sit immediately to the east of the site. The Common and adjacent allotments are accessible via a short track along the application site's northern boundary. Grade II listed Medway House sits opposite the site to the west.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

The application seeks outline planning permission for nine residential dwellings with all matters reserved other than access. An indicative site layout shows five dwellings located in the northern part of the site and four dwellings in the southern part of the site. Access is proposed to be facilitated by two existing access points from Jolesfield (B2135) serving the northern and southern parts of the site respectively. The proposal seeks to retain the existing pond feature in the centre of the site and would not require changes to the existing PRoW (ref. 1839).

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
Policy S5: Principle of development outside settlements
Policy HO8: Providing affordable homes
Policy HE6: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets
Policy TR6: Assessing transport impacts

Policy F4: Assessing flood risk for decision-making
Policy F5: The sequential test

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):
Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
Policy 4 - Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion
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 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 27 - Settlement Coalescence
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking

West Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan (2021):
Policy 1: Local Gap
Policy 4: Green Infrastructure: Existing Trees, Hedgerows, Habitats and Wildlife

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):
Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Strategic Policy 2: Development Hierarchy
Strategic Policy 3: Settlement Expansion
Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change
Strategic Policy 7: Appropriate Energy Use
Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction
Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality
Strategic Policy 10: Flooding
Strategic Policy 11: Environmental Protection
Strategic Policy 12: Air Quality
Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection
Strategic Policy 15: Settlement Coalescence
Strategic Policy 16: Protected Landscapes
Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality
Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles
Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment
Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
Policy 25: Parking
Strategic Policy 37: Housing Provision
Strategic Policy 38: Meeting Local Housing Needs
Policy 39: Affordable Housing
Policy 40: Improving Housing Standards in the District

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)
Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

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:

INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

HDC Arboricultural officer: Advice / Further Information Required
[Summary] The principal arboricultural features are the belt of mature oak trees along the eastern boundary. No built development is proposed within the Root Protection Area (SPA) of retained trees. However, it is evident that sections of the roadside hedge would likely require removal to facilitate the proposed access, which is not currently illustrated in the submission. Whilst the loss of sections of the hedge would initially be noticeable, the impact could likely be mitigated through replacement planting and ongoing management.

Whilst the indicative layout is broadly acceptable from an arboricultural perspective, further details will be required regarding the extent of hedgerow removal necessary to fully assess the proposals impact on the site's existing tree and landscape features. In addition, the drainage proposals as presented will require the removal of some of the group G2 to allow for the drainage system to be installed.

HDC Conservation: No response provided.

HDC Drainage Engineer: Further Information Required (to be secured via condition)
[Summary] Please disregard previous HDC Drainage consultation response, dated 01/10/2026. HDC Drainage has since sought advice regarding this application. In retrospect, concerns on 01/10/2026 were overstated for an outline application and misconceptions have been addressed. The applicant has provided an in-depth report, with a suitable level of detail for the outline nature of the application. Further information is sought however this can be provided at a later stage of planning.

HDC Ecology (BNG): Further Information Required
[Summary] The submitted small sites metric demonstrates that the development will have a +10.62% net gain (+0.41 units) in area habitats and a +10.03 net gain (+0.07) units in hedgerows. However, there are issues pertaining to the baseline that need to be addressed prior to the grant of planning permission. Furthermore, there are several concerns relating to the post-development habitats that should be addressed at Reserved Matters, and more information required in the HMMP to discharge the suggested condition.

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

Ecology Consultant: No Objection Subject to Conditions
[Summary] We have no objection on ecological matters and support the reasonable biodiversity measures for protected, Priority and threatened species. Impacts will be minimised such that the proposal is acceptable, subject to the conditions suggested being applied.

NatureSpace: Further Information Required
[Summary of Comments dated 13/10/2026] The applicant must either;

- Submit a NatureSpace Report or Certificate to demonstrate that the impacts of the proposed development can be addressed through Horsham District Council's District Guidance.
- Provide further information (survey information on ecologically connected waterbodies), in line with Natural England's advice to rule out impacts to GCN or demonstrate how impacts can be mitigated/compensated for; or

- If through survey work it is determined that there is no suitable habitat impacted on site and the likelihood of GCN is very low, then a precautionary working statement may be acceptable.

[Updated Comments dated 28/10/2026] The admin fee for the above case has now been paid and the applicant will be in receipt of their NSP documents soon. I will be in touch once these have been sent to outline the condition wording which must be used on the decision notice in verbatim.

Southern Water: Insufficient Information Provided
[Summary] Construction of the development should not commence until details of the proposed means of foul water drainage disposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Southern Water.

WSCC Highways: No Objection
[Summary] The Local Highways Authority (LHA) do not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network; therefore, is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraphs TR1-TR8, as revised August 2026. Therefore, there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

WSCC Rights of Way: No Objection
[Summary] The application acknowledges the presence of Public Footpath 1839 and confirms that it will be sensitively integrated into the development layout. The submitted information also states that public access will be maintained at all times, unless a temporary diversion is applied for. Therefore, the Public Rights of Way Team offers no objection to this proposal.

A series of informatives have been recommended to be attached to any planning permission given, with particular attention given to points I and K.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Representations:
11 letters of Objection have been received from 9 addresses, objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- Overdevelopment of a rural site
- Increased urbanisation
- Increased risk of vehicular accidents
- Harm caused to the Local Gap
- Site is susceptible to flooding
- Site is not suitable for residential development
- BNG assessment contains errors
- Lack of evidence that drainage can be delivered alongside other commitments
- Proximity to a listed building

No letters of Support have been received.

Parish Comments:
West Grinstead Parish Council: Objection
Recommends that HDC should refuse the application as per their previous comments. There have been no material changes that alter the views of the members.

Member Comments:
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

Background:

It is important to note that this application is a resubmission of a previous application (ref. DC/26/0262) which was refused by the Council in May 2026 for the following reasons:

1. The development would be contrary to the overarching spatial strategy outlined in the adopted development plan.
2. Insufficient information provided to rule out impacts upon Hazel Dormouse, a European Protected Species.
3. Insufficient information provided to rule out an unacceptable impact upon highways safety resulting from the proposed access arrangements.
4. Absence of a S106 legal agreement to secure and monitor the proposed significant onsite Biodiversity Net Gain.

In order to address the latter three reasons for refusal, this application is accompanied by a Transport Technical Note, a Method of Works for Dormice and an updated Biodiversity Net Gain Report/Metric. In addition, an updated NPPF has been published since the previous refusal which provides additional context to the discussion around principle. These have been reviewed by the relevant parties and are discussed in the relevant sections below.

Principle of Development:

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)

Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF, 2015) Policies 2, 3 and 4 collectively seek to ensure that development is appropriately sited to retain the district's distinctive settlement pattern and rural landscape character. Policy 3 designates a series of built-up area boundaries (BUAB) where development is considered acceptable in principle, with development on land outside of these boundaries more strictly controlled. The proposal is located outside of a defined BUAB meaning that Policy 4, which outlines the circumstances where development outside of a BUAB will be supported, is relevant.

The proposal does not meet the criteria for Policy 4 as the site is not allocated in a Local or Neighbourhood Plan and the red line boundary does not adjoin an existing settlement edge. There are some allowances made for a certain level of development in the countryside under Policy 26 of the HDPF, for example if it supports rural enterprise, however the proposal does not meet any of the criteria stated and is therefore not compliant with Policy 26. The proposal conflicts with the overarching spatial strategy dictated by the development plan, a fact not disputed by the applicant in paragraph 7.1 of their Design and Access Statement (August 2026).

Emerging Local Plan

Horsham District Council is in the process of preparing a new local plan. At the time this report was written the Inspectors hearings had concluded and main modifications recommended. Following a period of public consultation on the main modifications and the release of the Inspectors final report, it is expected that the plan will be adopted early in 2027. Given the late stage of the plan making process and the growing weight of policies, it is necessary to consider emerging policy as part of this assessment.

Policy 2 of the emerging Horsham District Local Plan (HDLP) states that development will be permitted within towns and villages with defined built-up area boundaries so long as it is of an appropriate nature and scale to maintain the characteristics and function of the settlement. The policy also introduces a series of 'secondary settlements' whereby development will be permitted providing that it falls entirely within the settlement boundary, is infilling a gap or plot within an otherwise built-up settlement form and the proposal is limited in scale to reflect the existing settlement. The application site is not located within a defined built-up area boundary nor is it located within a secondary settlement boundary and therefore Policy 2 does not apply.

Policy 3 of the emerging HDLP makes allowance for the expansion of settlements by setting out where development would be permitted outside defined built-up area boundaries and secondary settlements. The criteria is as follows:

1. The level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement type;
2. 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;
3. The impact of the development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long-term development, in order not to conflict with the development strategy.
4. The development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape and townscape character features are maintained and enhanced.

While the proposal is considered to meet criterion 2, 3 and 4, it is not considered to be in keeping with the existing scale and function of the settlement of Jolesfield. Development in Jolesfield looks to have grown incrementally and is arranged in a linear pattern fronting the road. Dwellings are predominantly detached and set back to allow for off-street parking, with the resulting low density providing a sense of arrival / departure from the more urbanised Partridge Green. The proposal seeks a total of 9 dwellings – around a 50% increase in the number of dwellings in Jolesfield – arranged in a cul-de-sac format with no road frontage. Though the proposed layout is not fixed at this stage, it is likely to be broadly similar to that shown on the Proposed Block Plan given flood risk constraints at the site. The proposed format fails to connect with the existing linear settlement pattern and is inappropriate in scale when compared with surrounding development. It is therefore considered that Policy 4 does not apply.

Officers conclude that the proposal conflicts with the policies contained within the emerging local plan and fails to establish a principle for development. It is noted that Policy 14 of the emerging HDLP has not been discussed, however as this refers to national policy (NPPF Policy S5) it was considered more appropriate to discuss this below.

National Planning Policy Framework (2026)

Since the refusal of application DC/26/0262 a new NPPF (August 2026) has been published which provides a series of national decision-making policies, including Policy S5 (Principle of development outside settlements) which sets out the types of development that are to be considered acceptable outside existing settlements. Though many are not relevant to this proposal, part (j) applies as Horsham District cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing. Part (j) reads:

> *j. Development which would address an evidenced unmet need (including, but not limited to, development proposals involving the provision of housing where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites or scores below 75% in the most recent Housing Delivery Test), and where the development would:*
>
> *i. Be physically well-related to an existing settlement (unless the nature of the development would make this inappropriate) and be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure; or*
> *ii. Comprise major development for freight and logistics purposes which accords with policy E3.*

The NPPF defines a settlement as:

> *'cities, towns, villages and other predominantly built-up areas. This includes areas defined as settlements in the development plan…Settlements do not include hamlets or scattered groups of houses located outside predominantly built-up areas, unless specifically defined as a settlement in the development plan.'*

When considering the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF, 2015) the nearest defined settlement to the appeal site is Partridge Green located some 500m to the south. However, the West Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan (WGNP, 2021) defines Jolesfield as a settlement and it is also designated as a 'secondary settlement' in the emerging Horsham District Local Plan. Officers have therefore decided to consider Jolesfield a settlement in this instance.

The application site is located adjacent to the secondary settlement boundary proposed in the emerging HDLP for Jolesfield and is therefore considered to be well-related with regard to physical proximity. However, in a recent appeal decision (ref. 6008253) the Inspector stated that being physically well-related goes beyond solely considering physical proximity and relates also to impact upon the existing character and local context of an area. As mentioned above, the proposal is introducing a form of development that is uncharacteristic of Jolesfield and is also part of an area designated as a Local Gap in the WGNP (Policy 1). This gap is in place to ensure that the openness and rural character between the settlements of Partridge Green, Littleworth and Jolesfield is retained. It could therefore be argued that the existence of the Local Gap precludes the site from being physically well-related to Jolesfield with regards to development, given the potential for it to impact upon the character and context of the area.

According to Policy 1 of the WGNP, development within the Local Gap would only be deemed acceptable if it met the following criteria:

- It does not result in an unacceptable reduction in the openness and break between settlements;
- It contributes to the conservation and enhancement of landscape character; and
- It safeguards the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

With regard to the first point, whilst it is accepted that the site does not contribute visually to the openness of the Local Gap from the roadside due to it being well contained by hedgerows and trees, views from the PRoW (ref. 1839) to the north remain open. It is considered that the addition of 9 dwellings in this location would result in a reduction in this openness for users of the PRoW and a change in landscape character from inherently rural to more urbanised. As discussed above the proposal does not follow the existing settlement pattern and instead proposes a concentration of development to the east of the site. This layout results in a greater portion of the Local Gap being impacted and increased visibility of the proposal, particularly when viewed from the south. It is therefore determined that the proposal does not meet criterion 1 or 2 of the WGNP Policy 1 and development would not be considered acceptable in this location.

Given the above, Officers do not consider the development to be physically well-related to the settlement of Jolesfield and the proposal therefore conflicts with both the overarching hierarchical and locational strategy of the development plan and the national decision-making policies outlined in the NPPF.

Housing Mix and Affordable Housing:

Policy 16 of the HDPF (2015) seeks to achieve a mix of housing sizes, types and tenures in order to meet the district's housing needs as identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and create sustainable, balanced communities. The policy also sets out requirements for affordable housing, requiring all residential development of 5 dwellings or more to include an appropriate proportion of affordable homes. On sites providing 15 or more dwellings **or greater than 0.5ha**, 35% of homes are required to be affordable.

In the Officer report for the previous application (ref. DC/26/0262) the relevance of the Shaping Development in Horsham District PAN (SDPAN) was discussed, as this removed the requirement for

developments of <10 dwellings to provide affordable housing in line with NPPF (2024) paragraph 65. The SDPAN did not refer to affordable housing being still required for sites over 0.5ha when providing fewer than 10 homes. Consequently no affordable housing was sought despite the application site being some 0.87ha in size.

The 2026 revisions to the NPPF have replaced paragraph 65 with policy HO8 (Providing affordable homes) which states that development proposals should meet up-to-date development plan requirements for affordable homes. In addition, Policy 39 of the eLP requires residential developments of more than 0.5ha to deliver 35% affordable housing reflecting HDPF Policy 16 in this regard. eLP policy 39 now carries significant weight given the eLP has passed through examination. As stated, the application site is 0.87ha and, in line with both HDPF Policy 16 and eLP policy 39, is required to provide 35% affordable housing despite providing fewer than 10 homes. In the case of the proposed development, 3 homes should therefore be provided as affordable and this should be secured via a s106 agreement.

When considering the housing need as set out in the Northern West Sussex Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2019), the proposal should aim to achieve the following mix as far as practicable:

1-bed (5%) = 0.45 dwellings
2-bed (30%) = 2.7 dwellings
3-bed (40%) = 3.6 dwellings
4+ bed (25%) = 2.25 dwellings

The indicative housing mix proposed by the applicant comprises 7 x 3-bed dwellings and 2 x 4-bed dwellings, resulting in solely large family homes being provided. While it is recognised that the application is at outline stage and therefore the housing mix is not fixed, the applicant should demonstrate that they have tried to meet the required housing mix as closely as possible. It is therefore recommended that, should the application be permitted, further consideration of housing mix is made at reserved matters stage.

Indicative Layout:

Matters relating to appearance, landscaping, layout and scale have been reserved for later consideration. However, the applicant has provided an indicative layout plan (drawing no. 2510LA_R5_002) which sets out how nine homes could be accommodated on the site. No parameter plans have been provided for consideration.

Policy 32 of the HDPF (2015) states that good design is a key element in sustainable development and seeks to ensure that development promotes a high standard of urban design, architecture and landscape. Policy 33 states that development proposals should make efficient use of land, integrate effectively with the character of the surrounding area, use high quality and appropriate materials, retain landscaping where feasible (mitigating loss where necessary) and ensure no conflict with the character of the surrounding town or landscape.

The submitted indicative layout proposes the creation of what would effectively be two separate cul-de-sacs set back from the B2135, with five dwellings to the north and four to the south of the site. As currently shown, there is no internal road or pathways linking the two which results in a fragmented design that could feel incoherent to residents. Whilst it is appreciated that this layout has been informed by the flood risk issues at the site, it is queried whether a more joined up development could be achieved that reflects the existing linear pattern of development along the B2135.

Though not yet adopted, it is important to note that Policy 40 of the emerging Horsham District Local Plan requires all new dwellings to meet the Optional Standards for Accessible and Adaptable dwellings as set out in the Building Regulations Approved Document (M4(2)). Floor plans for each dwelling have not been submitted at this stage and so it is recommended that the applicant ensures this requirement is accounted for when preparing the detailed Reserved Matters.

Trees and Landscaping:

Policy 33 of the HDPF (2015) sets a presumption in favour of the retention of existing landscape and natural features including trees, while Policy 26 sets the expectation that development is appropriate to its respective setting and maintains the pattern of woodlands, hedgerows and trees. An initial evaluation of the site has found no areas of ancient woodland in close proximity; no tree preservation orders and no ancient trees.

The Council's Arboricultural Officer was consulted on the application, noting that no built development is proposed within the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of retained trees. However, in their view it is likely that sections of the roadside hedge would require removal to facilitate the proposed accesses to the north and south. Should the application be permitted, further detail would be required to be submitted at Reserved Matters stage regarding the extent of hedgerow removal necessary to facilitate the proposed accesses and any compensatory planting. In addition, it is noted that the removal of some of group G2 would be required to allow for the drainage system to be installed which would need to also be considered at Reserved Matters stage.

Heritage and Archaeology:

Policy 34 of the HDPF states that the Council will sustain and enhance its historic environment through positive management of development affecting heritage assets, stating that development will only be permitted if the proposal would preserve or enhance those heritage assets.

The site is in close proximity to Medway House; a Grade II listed building located on the opposite side of Jolesfield (B2135). The applicant has submitted a Heritage Statement which evaluates the impact of the proposal on Medway House and sets out any mitigation measures required. This is the same statement as submitted under the previous application (ref. DC/26/0262) and concludes that the proposal would lead to a minor level of harm to the significance of Medway House, correlating to 'less than substantial' harm in NPPF terms. It is worth noting that the revised NPPF removes reference to 'less than substantial harm' and instead refers to harm, substantial harm or total loss (Policy HE6 – Proposals affecting designated heritage assets).

The Council's Conservation Officer was consulted on the application but did not return a response. However, they did provide comment on the Heritage Statement under application DC/26/0262 agreeing with the conclusions drawn. Therefore, in line with Policy HE6 the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against the public benefit resulting from the proposal. This will be considered as part of the planning balance within the conclusion section of this report.

Residential Amenity:

Policy 33(2) of the HDPF (2015) requires development to ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land through loss of privacy, outlook, light, noise, or general disturbance.

Neighbouring Amenity

The closest neighbouring dwelling (1 Jolesfield Cottages) is located immediately adjacent to the southern access point and is the first in a row of semi-detached dwellings heading towards Partridge Green. The proposed development indicatively consists of two areas of built development, with four dwellings proposed in the southern part of the site. The distance between the existing and proposed dwellings is such that there is unlikely to be a significant loss of outlook or light, and the orientation of the proposed dwellings is considered sufficient to prevent concerns around loss of privacy.

Amenity of Future Occupiers
The proposal as shown on drawing no. 2510LA_R5 accommodates nine dwellings across the site in two separate cul-de-sac areas. The siting and orientation of the dwellings is such that no concerns are raised around the amenity of future occupiers at this stage of planning with regard to loss of privacy,

light and outlook and the relationship between the dwellings is considered to be typical of this type of development.

Construction Impacts

It is acknowledged that there may be temporary impacts relating to noise and/or general disturbance as a result of construction activity at the site. It is however considered that this can be appropriately managed via condition and will not lead to an unacceptable impact upon residential amenity.

Conclusion

Further information will be submitted at reserved matters stage (i.e. floor plans, elevations etc.) to enable a more complete assessment of residential amenity, however it is the opinion of Officers that there is sufficient space on site to accommodate the proposed number of dwellings without compromising the amenity of either existing neighbouring or future occupants. The proposal is therefore considered to conform with Policy 33 of the HDPF (2015).

Highways Impacts:

Policy 40 of the HDPF (2015) seeks to manage the anticipated growth in demand for travel by encouraging a shift to non-car modes of transport and requires development to provide safe and suitable access for all modes of transport. Policy 41 sets out expectations with respect to parking provision in new development, including for cycles, EV charging and mobility vehicles. Policy TR6 of the NPPF (2026) states that development proposals should only be refused if they would have a severe adverse effect on the transport network or an unacceptable impact on highways safety (when accounting for mitigation measures).

The applicant has proposed to utilise the two existing access points from the B2135 to access the site, one to the north of the site and the other to the south. There is a speed limit change midway between these two access points, with speeds increasing from 40mph to 60mph as one travels north from Partridge Green. Concerns have been raised within representations around the increased risk of vehicular accidents as a result of the new accesses in an area where motorists are already increasing their speed. Further information was also requested by the Local Highways Authority (LHA) under the previous application at the site, including results from an automatic speed survey and scaled visibility drawings for the accesses. To support this application, an Access Arrangement Technical Note (ref. 2026/9469/TN01) has been submitted to address the LHA's previous comments.

The LHA has reviewed the submitted information and advised that they are satisfied that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on highways safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highways network. They have noted that adequate car and cycle parking spaces should be demonstrated at Reserved Matters stage.

It should also be noted that a Public Right of Way (PRoW) (ref. 1839) runs along the south of the site with users utilising the proposed southern access point to access the route. The Proposed Block Plan (ref. 2510LA_R5_002) demonstrates how the PRoW would be incorporated into the layout of the proposed development while the Planning, Design and Access Statement (August 2026) confirms that access will be maintained at all times, unless a temporary diversion is applied for. WSCC PRoW Officers have reviewed the submitted information and advised that they have no objection to the proposal. They have however recommended a series of informatives which will be included in the event the Council decides to grant planning consent.

Ecology:

Policy 25 of the HDPF (2015) seeks to protect existing biodiversity and green infrastructure in the District by ensuring no net loss, while Policy 31 looks to encourage the provision and enhancement of new habitats as well as outlining requirements for areas of particular importance (SPAs, SACs, SSSIs etc.).

The applicant has submitted a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (December 2025) based upon a site walkover undertaken in October 2025, which found an array of habitats onsite. Biological records highlighted several protected species and features outside of the development footprint were identified to be suitable for roosting and foraging bat. As the identified features are to be retained, the appraisal concludes that no further bat surveys are required. The PEA also puts forward several mitigation measures, including:

- Vegetation clearance to be undertaken outside of bird nesting season, unless preceded by an ecologist's check.
- Buffer zones of 10m to woodland and 5m to hedgerows and scrub.
- Lighting to comply with BCT (2023) guidance.

In addition to the PEA, the applicant has also submitted a Dormouse Method of Works (Sylvatica Ecology, May 2026) following comments from the Council's Ecology Consultant on the previous application relating to an area of mixed scrub being removed. Both the PEA and Dormouse MoW has been reviewed by the Council's Ecology Consultant, who has advised that they are satisfied with the information provided at this stage. They have however recommended that the following details be submitted at Reserved Matters stage:

- An updated site walkover to confirm absence of protected species.
- An updated Dormouse MoW which includes a plan of where habitat removal is being undertaken and where it should be restricted.
- Submission of a Reptile Mitigation Strategy.

Conditions will be attached to any permission given to secure both the above, the measures set out in the PEA and a wildlife friendly lighting design.

<u>Great Crested Newt (GCN)</u>

The site is located within the red impact risk zone for GCN and there is a high likelihood of the species being present. Given the risk of impact from the development upon GCN, the applicant applied for a District Level Licence under the previous application. The applicant advised Officers that the documentation was to be transferred over to this application and confirmation was received from NatureSpace that the administrative payment had been made and the transfer process started. The documentation had not been received at the time the application was determined however it was not considered necessary to wait, given the application was to be refused on matters of principle. There is however no reason to doubt that the documentation would be transferred and the absence of it has therefore not been added as a reason for refusal.

Drainage and Flood Risk:

Policy F4 (Assessing flood risk for decision-making) of the NPPF requires site-specific Flood Risk Assessments for all development proposals in Flood Zone 1 involving land identified in the Flood Map for Planning as being at risk of flooding from any source, whether now or in the future. The majority of the application site lies within Flood Zone 1, which is land defined by the Planning Practice Guidance for the NPPF for Flood Risk and Coastal Change as having a low probability of flooding. However, the central part of the application site surrounding the pond is listed by the Environment Agency as Flood Zone 2/3 and is also subject to medium and high-risk of surface water flooding.

Policy F5 (The sequential test) of the NPPF aims to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding from any source by applying the sequential test. This test should be used except where a site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates clearly that:

No built development within the site boundary, including access or escape routes, land raising or other potentially vulnerable elements, would be located on an area that would be at risk of flooding from any source, now and in the future (having regard to potential changes in flood risk).

The applicant has submitted a Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy (January 2025) which highlights that the proposed residential dwellings and access points are located on land identified to be wholly within Flood Zone 1 and outside of the areas of surface water flood risk. As such, the above statement applies and the sequential test does not need to be followed.

The submitted Surface Water Drainage Strategy proposes a drainage arrangement of swales, attenuation tanks and permeable paving to manage surface water flows at the site before they are discharged to the existing pond or ditch/watercourse within the site boundary. It is stated within the strategy that sufficient treatment is provided within the swales and permeable paving to mitigate against any potential risk from the access roads, driveways and dwellings.

The Council's Drainage Officer has been consulted on the proposal stating that the applicant has provided an in-depth report with a suitable level of detail for an outline application. They have however recommended that a condition be applied requiring a full drainage strategy to be submitted which includes a plan juxtaposing pluvial **and** fluvial flood zones on top of the proposed development and drainage strategy, as well as detail pertaining to foul drainage. They have also asked for a condition requiring an assessment of the flood risk at the site in the event of a blockage of the pond outfall and a maintenance schedule to prevent this occurring. Should the application be permitted, both of these conditions will be applied.

At the request of the Council's Drainage Officer, the Environment Agency was consulted on the application however they were unable to respond prior to determination. Given that the application was to be refused on matters of principle, it was not considered necessary to await their response.

Other Matters:

Climate Change:

Policies 35, 36 and 37 require that development mitigates to the impacts of climate change through measures including improved energy efficiency, reducing flood risk, reducing water consumption, improving biodiversity and promoting sustainable transport modes. These policies reflect the requirements of Chapter 14 of the NPPF that local plans and decisions seek to reduce the impact of development on climate change. The proposed development includes the following measures to build resilience to climate change and reduce carbon emissions:

- Dedicated refuse and recycling storage capacity
- Opportunities for biodiversity gain
- Cycle parking facilities
- 9 electric vehicle charging points

In addition to these measures, conditions are attached to secure the following:

- Water consumption limited to 110litres per person per day
- Requirement to provide full fibre broadband site connectivity
- Biodiversity mitigation and enhancement

Subject to these conditions the application will suitably reduce the impact of the development on climate change in accordance with local and national policy.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):

Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) mandates that every development must achieve at least a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG (unless the development qualifies as exempt under the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024) and that every planning permission granted for the development of land in England shall be deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that development must not be begun unless a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority and the planning authority has approved the Plan.

The Biodiversity Gain Plan must show how the development will achieve the required minimum 10% BNG using the statutory biodiversity metric tool, and must demonstrate how the habitats will be managed and maintained for 30 years, starting from the date the development is completed. Off-site gains (on unregistered sites) and significant on-site enhancements will be secured over this period by way of a Legal Agreement.

The Applicant has submitted a Small Sites Metric which demonstrates that the development will have a +10.62% net gain (+0.41 units) in area habitats and a +10.03% net gain (+0.07 units) in hedgerows. The gain will be achieved on-site but is not considered significant in line with the Council's criteria and therefore a legal agreement will not be required. The Council's Ecology Officer has reviewed the submitted information and flagged issues pertaining to the baseline, post-development habitats and HMMP. Given the stage of the application, only the baseline issues were required to be addressed at this time.

Following comments from the Councils Ecology Officer, the applicant submitted an updated Small Sites Metric and Biodiversity Net Gain Feasibility Assessment addressing all comments, aside from the HMMP which will be submitted at the relevant stage. The revised metric demonstrates an on-site net gain of 0.3549 (+8.38%) in area habitats and a +0.1252 (+10.26%) in hedgerows (non-significant). It is acknowledged that this falls short in achieving the required 10% gain in area habitats on-site, with the remaining 0.0687 units to be purchased from an off-site habitat bank. As per HDC guidance, no s106 agreement is required to secure this provision, with details of the units to be provided via the discharge of the deemed BNG condition.

Conclusions:

It has been acknowledged elsewhere in this report that the proposal would lead to a minor level of harm to the Grade II listed Medway House and therefore the harm should be weighed against the public benefit of the proposal (NPPF Policy HE6). The proposal would provide 9 dwellings in an area that cannot currently demonstrate a full 5-year housing land supply, constituting a notable public benefit. Given the impact upon Medway House is deemed to be at the lowest end of the scale, it is considered that the public benefit of 9 additional homes (and associated economic benefits) outweighs the limited harm to the designated heritage asset.

Revisions made to the NPPF in 2026 resulted in the removal of paragraph 11d which previously required Council's that could not demonstrate a full 5-year housing land supply to grant permission, unless the adverse effects of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal. Instead, Policy S3 implements a blanket presumption in favour of sustainable development to be applied, with development outside settlements determined in line with Policy S5. As discussed in the principle section above, the proposal is not considered to meet any of the criteria set out in point 1(a-j) of Policy S5 and, in line with point 4, should only be approved in exceptional circumstances, where the benefits of the proposal would substantially outweigh adverse effects.

The provision of 9 dwellings in an area without a full 5-year housing land supply provides a modest benefit in terms of housing provision as well as the economic benefits associated with construction. The proposal would also lead to the required uplift in biodiversity net gain, though it is noted that not all of this will be achieved on-site thus reducing the benefit to the immediate locality. As discussed in the report, the scheme does not relate well to the existing settlement of Jolesfield and instead introduces an uncharacteristic form of development that is significant in scale when compared to the existing level of development in Jolesfield. Furthermore, the development would lead to erosion of the Local Gap designated by Policy 1 of the WGNP to maintain the open space between Jolesfield, Littleworth and Partridge Green, leading to a reduction in the rural character, particularly for users of the adjacent PRoW. Officers therefore do not consider the benefits of the scheme to outweigh its adverse effects and recommend the application for refusal.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

Horsham District Council has adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule which took effect on 1st October 2017. **This development constitutes CIL liable development.**

In the case of outline applications, the CIL charge will be calculated at the relevant reserved matters stage.

Recommendation: Application Refused

Reason(s) for Refusal:

1. The development would be located beyond a defined built-up area not allocated within the adopted Development Plan and would not be essential to its countryside location. The development would therefore be contrary to the overarching spatial strategy and hierarchical approach of concentrating development within defined settlements and advocating a planned approach to settlement expansion, contrary to policies 1, 2, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), policies 2, 3 and 14 of the emerging Horsham District Local Plan and Policy 1 of the West Grinstead Neigbourhood Plan (2021). The development would also be contrary to Policy S5 of the National Planning Policy Framework, without the required exceptional circumstances to grant permission.

2. The proposed development has not been accompanied by a completed s106 Legal Agreement, thereby not securing the units required to be provided as affordable housing units. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy 16 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policy 39 of the emerging Horsham District Local Plan.

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/26/1311
(The approved plans will form Condition 1 on the Decision Notice of all Permitted applications)

Schedule of plans/documents **not approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Location plan	Existing	2510LA_R5_003	13.08.2026
Block plan	Proposed	2510LA_R5_002	13.08.2026
Location plan	Existing	2510LA_R5_000	13.08.2026
Block plan	with existing and proposed topographical survey	2510LA_R5_001	13.08.2026
Tree plan	Protection	NONE	13.08.2026
Plans	Existing and Proposed Topographical Survey and Block Plan	2510LA_R5_001	13.08.2026
Plans	Surface Water Drainage Layout	AEG8979-DR03	23.10.2026
Plans	Surface Water Drainage Layout	AEG8979-DR02	23.10.2026
Plans	Surface Water Drainage Layout	AEG8979-DR01	23.10.2026
Plans	Surface Water Drainage Layout	AEG8979-DR04	23.10.2026

Supporting Statement	Access Arrangement	2026/9469/TN01	13.08.2026
Supporting Statement	Dormouse Method of Works	NONE	13.08.2026
Supporting Statement	Heritage Statement	NONE	13.08.2026
Supporting Statement		NONE	13.08.2026
Supporting Statement	Preliminary Ecological Assessment	NONE	13.08.2026
Supporting Statement	Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy	AEG8979_RH13_Southwater_07	13.08.2026
Supporting Statement	BNG Metric	NONE	22.10.2026
Supporting Statement	Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (v1.4)	NONE	22.10.2026
Supporting Statement	Planning, Design and Access Statement (v2)	NONE	20.08.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Sophie Moore Date: 29/10/2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial Adrian Smith Date: 29/10/2026