NATIONAL SCHEME OF DELEGATION:

The proposal constitutes Schedule 1 development which is not eligible for referral to Planning Committee. The application is therefore delegated to Officers for determination.

## DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/0734
Downsview Nurseries, New Hall Lane, Small Dole, West Sussex,

DESCRIPTION:

Permission in Principle for the erection of 1no. dwelling and associated development.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

No relevant planning history

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site relates to Downsview Nurseries, a plot located to the south of New Hall Lane, Small Dole and measuring approximately 0.2hectares. The plot is served by an existing access that leads to the plot, which is currently within a storage use, comprising a number of existing buildings, hardstanding and several vehicles currently being stored on the land. Immediately to the west of the site is a small parcel of agricultural land also under the ownership of the applicant, that up until recently, was being used for horticulture.

Whilst the site is within a countryside location, it is located immediately adjacent to the Built-Up Area Boundary of Small Dole. The site is not in a Conservation Area, however, the Grade II Listed building, New Hall, is located to the west of the site.

Boundary treatment around the site consists of mature hedging and trees along the east and west boundaries, metal fencing along the southern boundary, and timber fencing with hedging along the northern boundary. The surrounding area consists of residential dwellings along New Hall Lane, which vary in age, size, form, design and plot patterns. Notwithstanding this, the surrounding area is a mixture of enclosed agricultural and equestrian fields.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

The application seeks Permission in Principle for the erection of one dwelling and associated development, at Downsview Nurseries. Matters of layout, access, design and landscaping are reserved for a later Technical Details Consent stage should Permission in Principle be granted.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

**The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

**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 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
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 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
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

**Henfield Neighbourhood Plan (2021):**
Policy 1 - A Spatial Plan for the Parish
Policy 2 - Housing Site Allocations
Policy 4 - Transport, Access and Car Parking
Policy 8 - Broadband Infrastructure
Policy 10 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 12 - Design Standards for New Development

**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 11: Environmental Protection
Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection
Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Strategic Policy 23: Infrastructure Provision
Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
Policy 25: Parking
Strategic Policy 37: Housing Provision
Strategic Policy 38: Meeting Local Housing Needs
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)

**Henfield Parish Design Statement**

**Planning Advice Notes**:
Shaping Development in Horsham District
Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

The Local Plan is currently at examination, where the Inspector's letter dated 30.10.2026 concludes that the plan is sound, subject to the proposed main modifications and the limited number of further changes discussed within the letter. The final report from the Inspector is anticipated to be received in January 2027, where changes to the draft Schedule of Main Modifications will need to be published for consultation. Given this letter and the status of the Local Plan, the policies contained within the Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040 (HDLP) are considered to be of significant weight.

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 Environmental Health**: Comment

The application proposes a dwelling in close proximity to a yard and large outbuildings that remain in agricultural or commercial use. As there is no restriction preventing these buildings from being used more intensively in the future, there is potential for increased noise and disturbance that could adversely affect the amenity of future occupiers. Further information is therefore required to demonstrate that the use of these buildings and associated activities would not result in unacceptable amenity impacts.

Agricultural and commercial buildings can also present contamination risks associated with their use, construction, and the storage of machinery, fuels, chemicals and other hazardous materials, including within made ground, yards and hardstanding. In accordance with the Planning Practice Guidance, a Preliminary Risk Assessment, including a site walkover, is required to ensure the site can be made safe and suitable for development.

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

**Southern Water**: No Objection

Southern Water has no objections to this proposal in principle but are unable to comment further until full details of foul and surface water have been submitted for review.

**WSCC Highways**: Advice

The site is served by an existing vehicular access point on New Hall Lane, in which access to the maintained highway network is at the existing access point on Henfield Road. From inspection of WSCC mapping, there are no apparent visibility concerns with the existing point of access on to Henfield Road. The LHA has reviewed data supplied to WSCC by Sussex Police over a period of the last five years, and this shows that there have been no recorded collisions attributed to road layout within the vicinity of the site. As such, there is no evidence to suggest that the access points have been operating unsafely, or that the proposals would exacerbate an existing safety concern.

No information has been provided regarding how many bedrooms will be provided within the proposed dwelling. At Technical Details Consent stage, the LHA would expect details to be provided regarding the scale of the proposed development (e.g. number of bedrooms), as well as demonstrating the proposed vehicular access arrangements to the site, sufficient space for parking and turning of vehicles in accordance with WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments. Sufficient secure and covered cycle storage should also be demonstrated, to encourage sustainable transport methods.

In principle, the LHA would not raise any objections to an application at this site, subject to the submission of sufficient information at Technical Details Stage.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Representations:

1 letter for Support have been received from 1address, supporting the application on the following grounds:

- Site is suitable for a family home.

Parish Comments:

**Henfield Parish Council**: Objection

Iinsufficient information on sewerage, hours of use, environment and lighting to make an informed decision other than objection. The committee deems the proposals are contrary to the following HDPF policies:

- Policy 1 - Not a strategic site in the Local Plan
- Policy 2 - Not nominated in the Neighbourhood Plan
- Policy 3 - Not within an existing built-up area
- Policy 4 - The site is not allocated in the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan, and does not adjoin an existing settlement edge
- Policy 10 - It does not demonstrate that adequate car parking can be accommodated
- Policy 23 - As the site does not provide safe and convenient access, essential services, adequate parking, or avoid unacceptable landscape impact
- Policy 26 - The site lies outside the built-up area and does not meet the policy exceptions for countryside development
- Policy 33.2 - It would result in loss of neighbouring amenity, and the design is not sensitive to surrounding buildings.
- Policy 33.3 - As the scale, massing and appearance are out of keeping with the surrounding area
- Policy 33.4 - As it fails to respect the character of the surrounding area and buildings
- Policy 39 - As it does not demonstrate sufficient infrastructure capacity or assess infrastructure requirements.
- Policy 41 - As it does not demonstrate adequate parking or highway safety.

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:**

The Permission in Principle consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for residential development. It separates the consideration of matters of “principle” for the proposed development, from the “technical details” of the development. As such, the Permission in Principle route has two stages: the first being the “Permission in Principle” stage (subject of this current

application), which establishes whether the site is suitable in-principle; and the second being the "Technical Details consent" stage which is when the detailed development proposals are assessed.

The scope of the Permission in Principle application (being the first stage) is limited to location, land use, and amount of development, as explained in Paragraph 012 of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (Permission in Principle):

*'The scope of permission in principle is limited to location, land use and amount of development. Issues relevant to these 'in principle' matters should be considered at the permission in principle stage. Other matters should be considered at the technical details consent stage. In addition, local authorities cannot list the information they require for applications for permission in principle in the same way they can for applications for planning permission.'*

The PPG 020 (Reference ID: 58-020-20180615) further states that:

*'It is not possible for conditions to be attached to a grant of permission in principle and its terms may only include the site location, the type of development and amount of development. Local planning authorities can inform applicants about what they expect to see at the technical details consent stage.'*

**Location**

The application site is located within a backland location to the south of New Hall Lane and west of Shoreham Road. The site lies outside of, but immediately adjacent to the built-up area boundary (BUAB) of Small Dole, which runs along the site's northern and partly eastern boundary. In policy terms, land outside the BUAB is designated as countryside, where development is ordinarily restricted unless it is considered essential or is otherwise supported by specific policies.

Policy 2 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) sets out the overarching growth strategy, focusing development within the District's main settlements. The adopted settlement hierarchy represents the most sustainable approach to accommodating growth, directing the majority of new housing to Horsham, Southwater and Billingshurst, with only limited development elsewhere, and only where it accords with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy 3 of the HDPF seeks to retain the existing settlement pattern and ensure that development takes place in the most sustainable locations possible. Policy 4 supports limited settlement expansion outside built-up area boundaries only where: the site is allocated in the Local Plan or a Neighbourhood Plan and adjoins an existing settlement edge; the scale of growth is appropriate to the settlement; the proposal meets identified local needs; and the development is contained within defensible boundaries that respect landscape character.

Policy 26 of the HDPF requires development outside built-up area boundaries to be essential to its countryside location and to meet one of the following criteria: -

1. Support the needs of agriculture or forestry;
2. Enable the extraction of minerals or the disposal of waste;
3. Provide for quiet informal recreational use; or
4. Enable the sustainable development of rural areas.

Policy 2 of the Horsham District Local Plan (HDLP) states development will be permitted within towns and villages that have defined built-up area boundaries, including on any suitable previously developed land. Any infilling and redevelopment will be required to demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale to maintain the characteristics and function of the settlement in accordance with the settlement hierarchy.

Policy 14 of the HDLP states outside built-up area boundaries, secondary settlements and development plan allocations, the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside will be protected against inappropriate development having regard to national policy. In addition, all proposals must be appropriately integrated within the landscape and be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location. Development will be considered acceptable where it does not lead, either

individually or cumulatively, to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside, and protects, conserves, and seeks to enhance, the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area in which it is located, including;

a) The development pattern of the area, its historical and ecological qualities, tranquillity and sensitivity to change;
b) The pattern of woodlands, fields, hedgerows, trees, waterbodies and other features;
c) The landform of the area; and
d) The protection of dark skies, in particular where it may impact on a designated International Dark Sky Reserve (IDSR), Neighbourhood Plan designations and High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives.

Policy 1 of the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan states outside the built-up area boundary of Henfield, development proposals will be supported where they conform, as appropriate to their location in the neighbourhood area, to national, HDPF policy in respect of development in the countryside.

The site is not within a settlement boundary and has not been identified for development in a Local Plan. The development would therefore be contrary to the above policies. In addition, it has not been demonstrated that there is an essential need for development in the countryside and is therefore contrary to Policy 26 of the HDPF. The appropriate degree of weight to be assigned to conflict with these policies is considered further in this report.

The Shaping Development in Horsham (SDPAN) document was endorsed at Full Council on 17th September 2025. The SDPAN recognises that the Council is likely to receive applications outside of defined Built Up Area Boundaries and on unallocated sites (such as this proposal) as it is unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. Given this position and the principles behind HDPF Policy 4, the SDPAN states that the Council will consider positively applications that meet all of the criteria:

- The site adjoins the existing settlement edge as defined by the BUAB;
- The level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement the proposal relates to;
- The proposal demonstrates that it meets local housing needs or will assist the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services;
- The impact of the development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long-term development; and
- The development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape character features are maintained and enhanced.

The above approach is intended to facilitate housing development in the most sustainable locations, with those being sites with a direct relationship to the edges of settlements. Whilst this proposal accords with points 1-4, the proposed development would not be contained within an existing defensible boundary. The site's southern boundary, whilst overgrown vegetation is present, predominately consists of a 1.8metre high metal fence. In dismissing an appeal at a site to the east, for the erection of 2 dwellings reference DC/24/1101, the Inspector concluded that the southern boundary, formed of a two-bar post and wire fence, was an insubstantial and arbitrary boundary across the field and concluded that this would not form a defensible boundary and would not comply with the FAD requirements on this ground. While this appeal is noted, the boundary of the application site forms a more substantive structure being 1.8m high and comprising metal structure. This is a clearly visible boundary treatment when compared with the less substantial wire fencing on the adjacent site. It is therefore considered that this would form a defensible boundary in respect of the SDPAN.

Policy S3 of the NPPF (2026) states decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means outside settlements, Policy S5 should be applied. It is acknowledged that the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply and this would trigger NPPF S5(1)(j) where the proposal would contribute towards addressing an evidenced unmet housing need. However, S5 (1)(j)(i) continues, that where development is proposed to address an unmet need, it must also be 'physically well-related to an existing settlement'. The application site

would adjoin the defined settlement edge of Small Dole and would therefore be considered to be physically well-related to the existing settlement in respect of S5(1)(j).

Policy CC2 of the NPPF states that in order to contribute to climate change mitigation and the transition to net zero, development proposals should, where relevant to the proposal, accord with Policies TR3 and TR4 so that sustainable patterns of movement are prioritised, opportunities are taken to improve walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport, and infrastructure is provided to support the transition to zero-emission vehicles. Development proposals should support good access to facilities in order to limit the need to travel, whether through the development's location, through development densities which improve catchment populations for local services, or by incorporating community facilities and premises to support local employment opportunities.

Policy TR3 of the NPPF states that so development is located where it can support sustainable patterns of movement, enable good accessibility for different users and make the most of existing and proposed transport infrastructure, development proposals should be situated in locations that are sustainable (or which can be made so, taking into account planned improvements, including any provided for as part of the development itself). This means the location should limit the need to travel, particularly by private car, and offer a genuine choice of transport modes for residents and users, unless the nature of the development would make this impractical.

In terms of sustainability, future occupants would be within a reasonable distance of the services and facilities that the locality offers. New Hall Lane is a Public Right of Way (2775), allowing future occupiers to utilise this PROW to access the two Bus Stops on Henfield Road/Shoreham Road, located at a distance of 0.4km, for onward journeys to large settlements. Services and facilities are also located at a distance of approximately 0.8km away, where these would be reachable by a dedicated footway.

The proposed development would be in conflict with Policies 2, 3, 4 of the HDPF, policies 2 and 14 of the HDLP, and Policy 1 of the HNP. Furthermore, it does not meet any of the exceptions as identified within Policy 26, nor comply with all the provisions of the SDPAN outlined above. However, it is established that the application site is well related to an existing settlement and therefore complies with Policy S5 (1)(j) of the NPPF (2026). The development would also be within walking distance of facilities, amenities and services within Small Dole, where occupiers could utilise the existing footway. Whether there are any material considerations that would outweigh the conflict as identified, will be discussed in the Planning Balance and Conclusions section below.

**Land Use**

The application would remove the existing dilapidated buildings within the site, which the agent has confirmed has been used for the storage of builder's and roofer's equipment and materials, equipment and vehicles for the last 15 years. As such, the application site would meet the definition of previously developed land, as set out in the NPPF. Whilst there are horticultural buildings located to the west of the site, it is confirmed these are now redundant and unused, regardless, these buildings are located outside of the application site to the west.

Policy S3 of the NPPF (2026) states decisions on development proposal should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means outside settlements, Policy S5 should be applied. Policy S5 (1)(d) relates to the redevelopment of previously development land, and it is therefore noted that this proposal would result in the re-use of previously developed land with a residential use consistent with the immediately adjoining settlement of Small Dole.

The site is located in proximity to a number of residential properties, including Downsview (20m), Downsview Paddock (6m) and Greensand (25m). However, as this application seeks Permission in Principle, the detailed siting, scale, design and layout of the dwelling are not under consideration at this stage. Having regard to the size of the site and the principle of a single dwelling, it is considered that the site is capable of accommodating a dwelling in a manner that would avoid unacceptable impacts on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers, including overlooking, loss of privacy, overshadowing and overbearing effects.

The Council's Environmental Health Team have commented as part of this application process, requesting further information relating to the uses of the buildings immediately adjacent to the west of the application site and their potential adverse impacts on the amenity of the future occupiers of the proposed dwelling. The applicant has confirmed that this part of the site remains within the applicant's ownership and control. Furthermore, the horticultural tenants of the site have since vacated and the structures, the greenhouse, polytunnel and wooden shed, have since been removed. It is also noted that the Council concluded there would be no harmful amenity impacts to the occupiers of the neighbouring gypsy accommodation, immediately to the north, reference DC/25/1996.

With this in mind, the same conclusion is drawn in this example, and the residential land use is considered acceptable.

**Amount of Development**

Policies 25 and 33 of the HDPF promote development that protects, conserves and enhances landscape character and ensures that proposals reflect the locally distinctive character of settlements. Policy 32 requires high quality design. Proposals should consider landscape characteristics, with development seeking to provide an attractive, functional and accessible environment that complements the locally distinctive character of the district. Buildings should contribute to a sense of place, and should be of a scale, massing and appearance that is of a high standard or design and layout which relates sympathetically to the landscape and built surroundings.

Policy 19 of the HDLP relates to development quality and seeks to ensure that all development is of a high-quality and inclusive design, informed by an understanding of the local context, in order to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment and deliver sustainable buildings and places. The Policy also seeks to ensure development makes efficient use of land, responds sympathetically to its surroundings, protects the amenity of existing and future occupiers, and provides safe, accessible environments that promote sustainable travel and reduce opportunities for crime and antisocial behaviour.

Policy 12 of the Henfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan states that as appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals will be supported where their design and detailing meet the relevant requirements in the Henfield Parish Design Statement. In addition, as appropriate to the site concerned, the scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and materials of all new development proposals are of a high quality and reflect the architectural and historic character and scale of the surrounding buildings and street scene/landscape.

The application form sets out that the application is seeking consent for a single dwelling. Having regard to the size of the plot, a single dwelling can be comfortably accommodated on the site and there would be no overly intensive form of development, particularly when accounting for a suitable sized garden, access, visitor parking, refuse storage and circulation requirements. Furthermore, the introduction of a single dwelling would maintain an appropriate relationship with neighbouring dwellings, as discussed within the '*Land Use'* section above. The site's established boundaries provide the opportunity for the retention and reinforcement of existing planting, and there are no reasons why a development of this scale could not be delivered, alongside the varied size, form and plot patterns of the surrounding residential development.

The proposed development would follow the established built pattern of development along New Hall Lane, remaining within the site's established boundaries and avoiding any unnecessary encroachment into the countryside. The site would be viewed in the context of the existing built form along the lane, comprising residential properties and agricultural buildings uses, rather than as an isolated form of development. Whilst the site adjoins open countryside to the south, a single dwelling would not result in unacceptable harm to the character of the surrounding landscape. This is due to the mature tree lines to the west of the site, the site's relationship with the adjoining development to the east, and its defined defensible boundary, also assist in containing the development with the existing settlement edge. It is also noted that planning permission has recently received support at Committee (ref. DC/25/1019), for 45 dwellings on the agricultural land to the southeast, further changing the context of the area.

The redevelopment of the existing yard presents a logical and efficient use of the land, avoiding unnecessary encroachment into open countryside and limiting landscape impacts by focusing development on an already developed site. The proposal therefore represents a modest form of development that would not constitute overdevelopment of the site or bring harm to the character of the surrounding area. As such, the amount of development is considered acceptable.

**Other Matters:**

**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.

A minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity value will be required to be demonstrated at the Technical Details Consent stage, through submission of a habitat baseline assessment and Biodiversity Metric calculation in accordance with the Environment Act 2021 and the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (General) Regulations 2024.

**Drainage and Flood Risk:**

The Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning identifies the entire application site as being located within Flood Zone 1, which represents land at the lowest probability of fluvial or tidal flooding. In addition, the updated Surface Water Flood Risk mapping confirms that the site is at very low risk of surface water flooding, with no identified flow paths or ponding areas affecting the developable area. Having regard to the flood risk policies contained within Chapter 18 of the NPPF (2026), the site is located within an area of lowest flood risk and no further flood risk assessment is required under Policy F4(2) of the NPPF (2026).

**Ecology**

Given the outline nature of this Permission in Principle application, detailed ecological information has not been submitted at this stage. Should the principle of development be supported, ecological survey work and appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures would be required at the Technical Details Consent stage to ensure compliance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), the NPPF (2026), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

**Conclusions**:

The proposed development comprises a development of one dwelling. In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017, only the location, land use and amount of development can be considered at this stage. All detailed matters, which includes design, layout, access, drainage, ecology and any other infrastructure, would be assessed at the Technical Details Consent (TDC) stage.

The application site lies outside of any defined built-up area boundary, has not been allocated for development, and the scheme is not essential to its countryside location. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies 1, 3, 4 and 26 of the HDPF, Policies 2 and 14 of the HDLP, Policy 1 of the HNP. As

detailed earlier in this report, the proposal also complies with the full criteria as set out within the provisions of the SDPAN.

The Council's most recent Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) confirms that the Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites. The latest AMR also confirms that the Council is not currently able to demonstrate a Housing Delivery Test score higher than 75%. The NPPF (2026) states that such shortfalls establish an "evidenced unmet need" for housing across the District (in accordance with Policy S5 and Annex D). S5(j)(i) goes on to state that where an unmet need is identified, development should be *'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'*. As per the preceding sections of the report, the site is physically well-related to an existing settlement. Therefore, a formal planning balance is required to weigh the benefits of housing delivery against any policy conflict and site-specific harms.

In the context of the Council's current five-year housing land supply position, the provision of housing as a general principle is a matter of significant weight. This proposal would provide a singular dwelling, making a modest but contribution still, towards recovering this shortfall. As such, the weight attributed to this specific scheme's housing delivery should be given moderate weight.

The proposal would provide socio-economic benefits, such as the creation of temporary jobs during the construction phase in the short-term, and local expenditure and contribution to the local economy in the medium to long-term arising from increase in occupancy. The application site, although in a countryside location, immediately adjoins the built-up area boundary of Small Dole and is adjoined by existing residential development to the south and east. The site is within a storage use, containing existing structures and represents previously developed land.

This application also bears resemblance to a similar proposal located at Brooklands, New Hall Lane, located 78 metres to the east of the site. As discussed previously in this report, under the 'Location' section, the Inspector concluded under the application DC/24/1101, that the post and wire fence was an insubstantial and arbitrary boundary, therefore not forming a defensible boundary. Under a further subsequent application on the site for a revised scheme, reference DC/25/1980, the Inspector concluded that the southern boundary was now formed of a hedge, which was substantial enough to provide a strong, defensible boundary, acting as a visual disconnect between the site and the surrounding countryside and the proposed erection of two dwellings, would not be a prominent or incongruous features within the context of the site and would not equate to an inappropriate form of development, especially when viewed amongst the existing outbuildings on neighbouring properties. In this instance, whilst hedging is present along part of the southern boundary, the context is similar to that of the above application, and the proposed development would also be viewed within the context of the surrounding built form.

Having regard to the size of the site, its relationship with the surrounding pattern of development, and its established boundaries, it is considered that a single dwelling could be accommodated in a manner that would be appropriate to this edge-of-settlement location. The site's established boundaries provide the opportunity for the retention and reinforcement of existing planting, most notably the southern boundary, and there are no reasons why a development of this scale could not be delivered alongside the varied size, form and plot patterns of the surrounding residential development. The proposed development would follow the established built pattern of development along New Hall Lane, remaining within the site's established boundaries and avoiding unnecessary encroachment into the wider countryside.

The site is physically well-related to the settlement of Small Dole and, for the reasons set out above, is considered capable of accommodating development of the scale proposed. As such, the proposal complies with the requirements of Policy S5(1)(j) of the NPPF. Furthermore, as the site comprises previously developed land containing existing structures, the proposal also accords with Policy S5(1)(d) of the NPPF. Future occupiers would also benefit from amenities, facilities and services within Small Dole, where the public right of way and dedicated footway would contribute to a sustainable pattern of movement, in accordance with Policies CC2 and TR3 of the NPPF.

Nevertheless, the proposal remains contrary to Policies 1, 3, 4 and 26 of the HDPF, Policy 1 of the HNP. Notwithstanding this conflict, the Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply or a Housing Delivery Test score in excess of 75%, giving rise to an evidenced unmet housing need. In this context, the proposal would provide an additional dwelling, making a positive contribution towards meeting housing needs within the District. The proposal would also deliver associated socio-economic benefits and would bring forward the redevelopment of previously developed land that is physically well-related to an existing settlement.

Taking all matters into account, it is considered that the benefits of the proposal, when assessed against the provisions of Policy S5 of the NPPF, outweigh the identified conflict with the development plan. Whilst the proposal does not accord with the development plan when read as a whole, the principle of residential development is considered acceptable on balance. The grant of Permission in Principle is therefore recommended.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

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

It is considered that this development constitutes CIL liable development.

In the case of Permission in Principle applications the CIL charge will be calculated at the relevant Technical Details stage. Please note that exemptions and/or reliefs may be applied for up until the commencement of a chargeable development. In the event that planning permission is granted, a CIL Liability Notice will be issued thereafter. CIL payments are payable on commencement of development.

**Recommendation: Application Permitted**

**NOTE TO APPLICANT - Amount of Development**
The applicant is advised that whilst permission in principle is granted, this decision is based solely on the proposed minimum and maximum amount of development (1x dwelling) being considered acceptable. In order to ensure that the subsequent technical details application is successful, the applicant is advised that any future proposal should be made in accordance with the proposed minimum amount of development (1x dwelling) and should be located within the red line as indicated on the approved location plan.

**NOTE TO APPLICANT - Technical Details Consent Requirements**
This Permission in Principle establishes only the location, land use and amount of development. All detailed matters, including access, layout, design, drainage, ecology, landscaping and infrastructure requirements, must be addressed through a subsequent Technical Details Consent (TDC) application.

**NOTE TO APPLICANT - Highways and Access**
The Local Highway Authority has raised no in-principal objection. However, full access details, parking layouts, and internal circulation arrangements will be required at the Technical Details Consent stage, supported by appropriate highway safety information.

**NOTE TO APPLICANT - Drainage Strategy**
A detailed surface water drainage strategy and foul drainage arrangements will be required at the TDC stage in accordance with the requirements of the LLFA and Southern Water.

**NOTE TO APPLICANT - Amenity and Design Quality**
The TDC submission must demonstrate that the proposed layout and design achieve high standards of residential amenity, including appropriate separation distances, garden sizes, outlook, daylight and privacy, and that the development meets the expectations of Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework.

**NOTE TO APPLICANT - Landscape and Visual Impact**
A Landscape and Visual Appraisal will be required at the Technical Details Consent stage, as advised by the Council's Landscape Consultant, to demonstrate that the detailed design responds positively to the rural edge setting, site topography and views from public vantage points.

**NOTE TO APPLICANT - Ecology**
The TDC submission should be supported by updated ecological information proportionate to the scale of development and the nature of the site. Details of any necessary mitigation and opportunities for measurable biodiversity enhancements should be clearly set out.

**NOTE TO APPLICANT - Contamination**
The Technical Details Consent submission should be supported by an up-to-date Preliminary Risk Assessment, including a site walkover, relating to the risks associated with contamination, ensuring the site can be made safe and suitable for the development.

**NOTE TO APPLICANT - Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)**
The applicant is advised that any subsequent Technical Details Consent application should include details of a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). This should include site logistics, hours of construction, delivery arrangements, and measures to control noise, dust and disturbance, in order to safeguard the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. Planning conditions are likely to be imposed to secure these details.

**NOTE TO APPLICANT - Biodiversity Net Gain**
Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that planning permission is deemed to be granted subject to the "Biodiversity Gain Condition", which would prevent development from commencing until a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

However, under Regulations 4, 5, 7 and 8 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, the statutory biodiversity gain condition does not apply to certain categories of development, including development which:

1) does not impact any onsite priority habitat (as defined under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and impacts less than 25sqm of onsite habitat with a biodiversity value above zero, and less than 5 metres of onsite linear habitat;
2) is the subject of a householder application;
3) developments of 0.2 hectares or below;
4) temporary developments;
5) sites created for off-site BNG gains.

Transitional arrangements also apply, under which the biodiversity gain condition does not attach to major development submitted before 12 February 2024 or to non-major development submitted before 2 April 2024.

Applicants are advised that statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements are set out at Paragraph 003 (Reference ID: 74-003-20240214) of the Planning Practice Guidance:
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain

Where onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat, as defined in the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024, additional requirements apply to the content and approval of any Biodiversity Gain 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.

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**Plans list for: DC/26/0734**
(The approved plans will form Condition 1 on the Decision Notice of all Permitted applications)

Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

| Plan Type | Description | Drawing Number | Received Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| Location plan | Location Plan | NONE | 29.04.2026 |
| Supporting Docs | Covering Letter | NONE | 29.04.2026 |

**DELEGATED**

Case Officer sign/initial Sam Nye Date: 19/10/2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial Tamara Dale Date: 26/11/2026