



PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

TO: Planning Committee

BY: Head of Development and Building Control

DATE: 08th September 2026

DEVELOPMENT: Demolition of existing detached chalet bungalow and 2 no outbuildings, and erection of 1 pair of semi-detached dwellings fronting Littleworth Lane with car ports and associated parking to the rear.

SITE: 1 Littleworth Lane Partridge Green West Sussex RH13 8JF

WARD: Cowfold, Shermanbury and West Grinstead

APPLICATION: DC/26/0741

APPLICANT: **Name:** Ms Sharon Awcock **Address:** C/O Agent - NJA Town Planning Ltd, The Beehive, City Place, Gatwick RH6 0PA

REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA: Development represents a departure from the development plan.

RECOMMENDATION: To approve planning permission subject to appropriate conditions.

1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

1.1. To consider the planning application.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

1.2. The application seeks permission for the demolition of the existing dwelling and 2no outbuildings and the erection of 2 semi-detached dwellings and car ports to the rear of the site. Vehicular access would be provided via the existing access point on Littleworth Lane with pedestrian access gained via a new path which utilises an existing gap in the hedgerow. Amenity space would be provided to the rear of each dwelling.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

1.3. The application site currently consists of one detached chalet bungalow (1.5 storeys) situated on the western side of Littleworth Lane. The dwelling comprises stock brick facing to all elevations, with a clay tiled roof, front and rear facing open gables and side facing box dormers. Two outbuildings are located within the red line boundary of this application. The site is located outside of the defined Built-up Area Boundary on a street with existing residential development that abuts countryside within the Local Gap as defined in the West Grinstead Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019 – 2031 (2021).

2. INTRODUCTION

STATUTORY BACKGROUND

2.1. The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The following Policies are relevant to the assessment of this application:

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF Aug 2026)

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 27 - Settlement Coalescence
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 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
Policy 9 – Car Parking

Horsham District Council is currently in the process of reviewing its development plan however at this stage the emerging policies carry only limited weight in decision making. As the HDPF is now over 5 years old, the most important policies for the determination of this application are 'out of date' as the Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, with the supply currently calculated as being 1.7 years. The presumption in favour of development within the NPPF therefore applies in the consideration of all applications for housing development within the district.

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 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection
Strategic Policy 15: Settlement Coalescence
Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality
Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles
Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
Policy 25: Parking
Strategic Policy 37: Housing Provision
Strategic Policy 38: Meeting Local Housing Needs

2.2. **Supplementary Planning Guidance:**

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (2017)

2.3. **Planning Advice Notes:**

Shaping Development in Horsham District (SDPAN)
Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

PLANNING HISTORY AND RELEVANT APPLICATIONS

DC/24/1084	Demolition of existing bungalow and outbuildings and erection of 1no. pair of semi-detached dwellings and 1no. three bedroom and 2no. four bedroom detached dwellings with associated landscaping and off-street parking utilising existing access.	Refused 13.11.2024
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3. **OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS**

- 3.1. Where consultation responses and representations 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 horsham.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications/view-and-comment-on-planning-applications.

INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

3.2. **HDC Drainage Engineer:** Advice

[Summary] On review of submitted drainage information, satisfied remaining outstanding information can be provided at conditions stage.

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

3.3. **Ecology Consultant:** No Objection subject to conditions

[Summary] Reviewed Update Bat Emergence Survey Report and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and now satisfied sufficient ecological information to support determination of application. Impacts will be minimised such that the proposal is acceptable, subject to conditions.

3.4. **Southern Water:** Advice

[Summary] Advice and recommendations on landscaping and rainwater harvesting.

3.5. **WSCC Highways:** Advice

[Summary] This proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on operation of highway network, therefore not contrary to NPPF (paragraph 116). No transport grounds to resist.

3.6. **NatureSpace (Newt Officer):** Advice

[Summary] Recommend condition to ensure proposed measures complied with.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

3.7. Representations

6 letters of Objection received from 3 addresses, objecting to application on the following grounds:

- Loss of an acceptable existing property.
- Concerns around highways safety.
- Proposed layout constitutes overdevelopment of the site.
- Concerns that space is being deliberately reserved for further development to the rear.
- Design not in keeping with the street scene.
- Loss of privacy and increase in noise/light pollution.
- Flood risk and drainage issues.

3.8. Parish Comments:

West Grinstead Parish Council: Support

WGPC's recommendation is that HDC should give permission for this application. The Council welcome this modest development, which provides much needed small-scale accommodation for the village and fits well with the village vernacular.

4. HOW THE PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION WILL PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS

- 4.1. 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.
- 4.2. 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.

5. HOW THE PROPOSAL WILL HELP TO REDUCE CRIME AND DISORDER

- 5.1. It is not considered that the development would be likely to have any significant impact on crime and disorder.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENTS

Background:

- 6.1. The application site was the subject of planning application DC/24/1084 for a larger development of 5no. dwellings, which included the 1no. pair of semi-detached dwellings proposed under this current application. This development was refused by the Council for the following reasons:
1. The development would be contrary to the overarching spatial strategy outlined in the adopted development plan.

2. The proposal would result in the loss of the open rural character to the rear of the application site and appear visually incongruous with surrounding dwellings in the locality.
 3. Insufficient information was provided to demonstrate an adverse effect on the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar site could be ruled out.
- 6.2. The subsequent appeal (APP/Z3825/W/25/3364869) was dismissed, though the Council's third refusal reason was withdrawn due to the changed circumstance of water neutrality. This current application seeks to address the visual harms to rural character previously identified in the second reason for refusal, by substantial reduction in the quantum and scale of the proposed development.
 - 6.3. Though raised by third party representations to this application, it should be noted that Officers have not considered the potential for land outside of the red line boundary to be developed in future as this is not applied for; any such proposal would require a separate planning application to be judged on its own merits.

Appeal Decision

- 6.4. The Inspector's appeal decision is a highly relevant material planning consideration and needs to be taken into account when determining this current subsequent application for permission, to ensure cases are decided in a like manner so that there is consistency in decision-making.
- 6.5. It is important to note that the Inspector raised no explicit concerns to the pair of semi-detached dwellings at the front of the site previously applied for, in terms of their effect on the character and appearance of the area; at paragraphs 15–17 of the appeal decision, his reasoned concerns were limited to the three detached dwellings to the rear, which do not form part of this current subsequent application.
- 6.6. Also to note, the Inspector did not raise concern with matters of highway safety, drainage, ecology, and residential amenity in his reasoning on the merit of the appeal proposal.

Principle of Development:

- 6.7. Policies 2 (Strategic Development), 3 (Development Hierarchy), and 4 (Settlement Expansion) of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF, 2015) as well as Policy 1 (Local Gap) of the West Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan (WGNP, 2021), collectively seek to ensure that development is appropriately sited to retain the district's distinctive settlement pattern and rural landscape character.
- 6.8. Policy 3 designates a series of built-up area boundaries (BUAB) where development is accepted in principle, with development on land outside of these boundaries more strictly controlled. In addition, Policy 1 (Local Gap) of the WGNP defines land between the settlements of Partridge Green, Jolesfield and Littleworth, as not supportive of development proposals unless unacceptable reduction in the openness and break between settlements is avoided and, where appropriate, landscape character is conserved and enhanced; and residential amenities of neighbouring properties safeguarded.
- 6.9. The proposal is not located within an existing BUAB and therefore Policy 4 is relevant. Policy 4 outlines the circumstances where development outside of a BUAB will be supported, however as the site is not allocated in the Local or Neighbourhood Plan, the requirements of this policy are not met. As the proposed development would also not adjoin a settlement edge, it would equally not satisfy the facilitation of sustainable

development, as allowed by the 'Shaping Development in Horsham Planning Advice Note' (SDPAN) in the circumstance of the dated development plan.

- 6.10. HDPF Policy 26 does make allowances for a certain level of development in the countryside so long as it is essential to its location, for example it supports rural enterprise or provides recreational use. The proposal does not meet any of the criteria stated.
- 6.11. Considering the above, the proposal directly conflicts with the overarching hierarchy and locational strategy of the development plan. Whether this conflict with Policies 2, 4 and 26 of the HDPF and Policy 1 of the WGNP is outweighed by other material planning considerations is discussed in the Planning Balance at the end of this report.

Landscape Character and Visual Impact: Design and Appearance

- 6.12. HDPF Policies 32 and 33 require all development in the district to be of high quality and complimentary to locally distinctive character. The policies also seek to ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of new development is appropriate as well as that a high standard of building materials, finishes and landscaping are used. In addition, HDPF Policy 25 seeks to protect the natural environment and landscape character of the district, taking account of locally distinctive features. WGNP Policy 4 does similar in relation to green infrastructure.
- 6.13. The application site sits within Littleworth, a lived in locality that has developed over time on either side of Littleworth Lane, similarly to most intermittent residential built form along Littleworth Lane, in a linear fashion, with the majority of dwellinghouses oriented to front onto the road within west-east plots. There is variation in actual building design and appearance, with a mix of detached and semi-detached properties of varying sizes and architectural form. There is a range of materials used; with brickwork, rendering and wood/PVC cladding all present. Immediately to the north of the application site are two sets of paired Victorian villas, largely symmetrical with two-storey bays, which form an architectural grouping, due to their unifying character, scale and form and set back in the street, but also exhibit some individualising features (i.e. driveways, rear/side extensions, rooflights etc.). The age and design quality of this group of buildings and their prominence in the street scene affords them a positive contribution to the immediate street character.
- 6.14. The existing chalet bungalow at 1 Littleworth Lane is located immediately south of this group (comprising Langland, Fairview Cottage, Ferncote, and Fernhill), on a larger plot set back from the road. The bungalow has been extended previously, with newer construction noticeable to the east of the property and box dormer windows installed on the roof. In addition to the main bungalow, there are two outbuildings within the red line boundary. As such it exhibits an overly large footprint of form and overall scale untypical of this building type, sitting in an uncharacteristically large and wide plot, and as such is somewhat of 'of its own' in the street scene.
- 6.15. Conversely, the proposal to subdivide the application site will result in two linear dwelling plot sizes and (depth and width) that would be characteristic of the adjacent architectural grouping, with a pair of semis of west-east orientation, fronting the street. The building footprint of the two paired semis would be comparable to the existing oversized bungalow. Although their usable rear gardens would be smaller than those to the north, this reflects the presence of car ports at the rear of the new dwellings for off-street parking via a shared drive, whilst also ensuring the new building spacing on the respective plots and set back from the street is comparable to the existing grouping. It also achieves traditionally proportioned front gardens to the new dwellings as opposed to frontage parking.

- 6.16. Whilst the design of the proposed new dwellings would not be slavishly identical to the existing grouping to the north, the new design sufficiently references similarity in scale, matching building widths and ridge heights, and overall similarities and symmetries in building form proportions (pitched roof, with the ridge running parallel to the road, with two-storey front bays with gabled roofs), with similar external materials and finishes.

Settlement Coalescence and Local Gap

- 6.17. Because the additional dwelling would be achieved by a sympathetic plan form with subdivision of the existing plot confines and involving a replacement building of appropriate scale and form and position on the site, the development would not represent a physical or visual incursion into wider countryside within the local gap (the new building's footprint and plot spacing being similar to the existing oversized bungalow). For the same reasons it would not result in significant reduction in the openness and break between settlements within the local gap, and it would negate resultant landscape character and visual harm to the wider rural locality by avoiding the generation of urbanising effects within the settlement along a key road corridor (as required by HDPF Policy 27 and WGNP Policy 1). The establishment of front gardens and landscaping strip along the drive at the southern end of the site presents opportunity to enhance landscape character and, in that sense, satisfies criteria 4 of HDPF Policy 27 as it represents enhancement of green infrastructure whilst avoiding resultant settlement coalescence.
- 6.18. Overall, for these reasons, the proposal as submitted is considered to improve upon this existing street scene by removal of a dwelling building of unremarkable design qualities that itself is somewhat of an anomaly, replaced with a built form that makes for a positive contribution to the street scene without giving rise to unduly harmful urbanising effect in the local gap countryside, whilst also offering opportunities for green infrastructure enhancement (as required by HDPF Policies 25 and 26 and 27 and WGNP Policies 1 and 4). For these reasons, it is also concluded that the proposal would conform with HDPF Policies 32 and 33.

Residential Amenity:

- 6.19. HDPF Policy 33 seeks to ensure that new development is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land, for example from overlooking, noise, loss of privacy, odour or general disturbance. In addition, the NPPF requires a high standard of amenity for both existing and future users of development.
- 6.20. Given the proximity of existing neighbouring dwellings north and the east of the application site, to minimise likely impacts during the construction phase (increased noise and/or general disturbance) to within tolerance, it is necessary to restrict construction working hours by condition to Mon-Fri 08:00 – 18:00; Sat 08:00 – 13:00; and at no time on Sundays/Bank Holidays.
- 6.21. Once the development is complete, the site will remain in a residential use without significant intensification. It is noted the site subdivision is laid out so the shared access drive serving the new dwellings would be situated away from the existing neighbour to the north, for example. It is acknowledged the proposed building will be larger in scale and form than the existing bungalow. However, taken together, the separation distance, and orientation and positioning of the new building and neighbour dwellinghouses, negates the potential for adverse overbearing and overshadowing. Equally, for the same reasons, and with no north first floor side windows to the new building, notwithstanding an increased propensity for overlooking, the views afforded would be oblique and indirect onto neighbour's

gardens rather than intrusive into their internal habitable space, so unacceptable loss of privacy is avoided.

Highways Impacts:

- 6.22. HDPF Policies 39, 40 and 41 seek to ensure that both sufficient capacity in the existing infrastructure network exists prior to the release of land for development and that adequate parking facilities are provided to meet the needs of anticipated users. Where development will have an unacceptable impact upon highway safety or a severe impact on the road network (following mitigation), development should be refused in line with the NPPF.
- 6.23. The proposal would utilise an existing access point on Littleworth Lane, a C-classified road subject to a 40mph speed limit. Parking would be provided to the rear of the dwellings on areas of existing hardstanding with sufficient space available to park to the required West Sussex County Council (Local Highways Authority, LHA) standards and turn on site for entry/exit in forward gear. The LHA advises that there is no evidence that the existing access is operating unsafely or any existing safety concern would be exacerbated by the impact of an additional 2 cars using it. It is acknowledged that concerns have been raised within representations around this, however this is not considered to be a significant intensification of use. Overall, the LHA has concluded that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact upon highways safety or a severe impact on the road network.
- 6.24. Conditions will be applied to secure both the proposed parking areas and suitable cycle parking on site. It is considered that the proposal conforms with both local and national policy regarding highways.

Ecology:

- 6.25. HDPF Policy 31 encourages the provision of new and/or enhancement of existing biodiversity, while also outlining requirements for Protected and Priority Habitats and Species of particular importance. This is in line with the NPPF.
- 6.26. The applicant's Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA, April 2026) identifies the presence of bats on site; three bat roosts confirmed in Building B1 (existing dwelling to be demolished) during the 2024 surveys undertaken for the previous application, so a Natural England licence will be required. In addition to this, supporting habitat was identified for nesting birds, hedgehogs and other mammals.
- 6.27. The applicant has subsequently provided an updated Bat Emergency Survey Report dated 22nd July 2026 which concludes that the mitigation measures and licensing requirements identified in the PEA are still appropriate and should be implemented in full. The Council's Ecologist advises that sufficient ecological information had been provided and recommends conditions to ensure impacts to bat species such as roost disturbance and increased light spill are minimised to an acceptable level, as well as to secure biodiversity enhancements.
- 6.28. The application site is within a red impact risk zone for Great Crested Newts (GCN). The PEA identifies 8 no. ponds within 0.5km of the development boundary but no suitable breeding habitat within the development boundary, and only small areas of sub-optimal habitat in the main development footprint. The Council's NatureSpace Newt Officer agrees with the PEA conclusions that the probability of GCN being encountered is low and recommends securing the PEA recommendations/measures by condition.

Water Neutrality:

- 6.29. A 2021 Position Statement from Natural England identified that it could not be concluded with the required degree of certainty that new development in the Sussex North Water Supply Zone would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites. Therefore, and to comply with the legal duties set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (known as the Habitat Regulations), all new development since has been required to demonstrate water neutrality.
- 6.30. On 31st October 2025 Natural England formally withdrew the 2021 Position Statement, citing a package of measures that they were satisfied would safeguard the Arun Valley sites. Principal amongst these measures is a reduction in the Southern Water abstraction licence 'by March 2026'. However, given the licence change has not yet taken place Horsham District Council, as competent authority under the Habitats Regulations, cannot yet be certain that new development will not result in adverse impacts on the Arun Valley sites.
- 6.31. To ensure development can come forward as water neutral in the meantime, the Council has agreed with Natural England to use the significant water savings made by Southern Water in 2024/25 through their programme of leakage reduction (amongst other measures). This has generated some 3,240,000 litres per day of water savings that can now be attributed to new development without increasing water abstraction in the Arun Valley beyond baseline. These savings were previously to be used to launch the Sussex North Water Certification Scheme (SNWCS), however following the withdrawal statement SNWCS will no longer be launching. Natural England standing advice dated 10 November 2025 raises no objection to using these savings to enable development to come forward. The standing advice clarifies that it functions as Natural England's formal response pursuant to Regulation 63(3) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 to all relevant planning applications which seek to achieve water neutrality using the above Southern Water savings.
- 6.32. Officers have undertaken an Appropriate Assessment which demonstrates that the anticipated increase in mains water consumption from this development, alongside all other development granted since the 31 October 2025, will not exceed 3,240,000 litres per day.
- 6.33. Accordingly, Officers consider that the proposed development will not have an Adverse Effect on the Integrity of the Arun Valley Site, either alone or in combination with other plan and projects, thereby complying with Regulations 63 and 70 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, HDPF Policy 31, and the NPPF.

Drainage and Flood Risk:

- 6.34. HDPF Policy 38 states that development should follow a sequential approach to flood risk management, giving priority to development with the lowest risk of flooding and making development safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere. In addition, the NPPF requires a site-specific flood risk assessment for development on land at risk of flooding, including surface water flooding, and where development would introduce a more vulnerable use.
- 6.35. Environment Agency flood risk mapping identifies that the site would fall entirely within Flood Zone 1 with parts of the site at low risk of surface water flooding (1 in 1000 annual likelihood), particularly when accounting for climate change. The Council's Drainage Officer is now satisfied with the submitted Drainage Strategy, which is to discharge foul into the existing foul water sewer within Littleworth Lane,

and deal with surface water runoff via a combination of permeable material for on-site infiltration, and discharge to nearby drainage ditch. Full details can be secured by condition.

Other Matters:

Climate Change:

- 6.36. HDPF Policies 35, 36 and 37 require 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. Recommended conditions secure measures proportionate to the development proposals, including water consumption limited to 110 litres per person per day; biodiversity mitigation and enhancement; and cycle parking. 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):

- 6.37. The Applicant has demonstrated the development is exempt from the requirement to achieve a minimum 10% BNG by reason it qualifying as 'de minimis' under Regulation 4 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024.

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.

Use Description	Proposed	Existing	Net Gain
Residential C3	374.6	202	172.6
		Total Gain	172.6
		Total Demolition	202

Please note that the above figures will be reviewed by the CIL Team prior to issuing a CIL Liability Notice and may therefore change. Exemptions and/or reliefs may be applied for up until the commencement of a chargeable development. If planning permission is granted, a CIL Liability Notice will be issued thereafter. CIL payments are payable on commencement of development.

Conclusions and Planning Balance:

- 6.38. The application seeks the introduction of a single dwelling outside the defined built-up area boundary, on a site which has not been allocated for development within the adopted development plan, and without an essential need for a countryside location. The development is, therefore, contrary to HDPF Policies 2, 4, and 26.
- 6.39. However, it is a material planning consideration of very significant weight that the Council is unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites and scores below 75% in the most recent Housing Delivery Test. Moreover, the West Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan is not afforded protections by updated national Policy S6 (of the National Planning Policy Framework August 2026) as it does not contain allocations to meet its identified housing requirement.

- 6.40. In such circumstance, updated national policy in the NPPF (Aug 2026) instructs decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Policy S3) including outside of settlements, where that development would address an evidenced unmet need (including the provision of housing) and where the development be physically well-related to an existing settlement and of scale which can be accommodated taking into account of infrastructure (Policy S5(1)(j)). It is recognised by Officers that Littleworth is not a settlement by NPPF definition (and it is uncategorised in the current and emerging development plans), so this proposal does not met category (1)(j) of Policy S5.
- 6.41. Policy S5(4) does however, go on to allow for circumstance were development proposals which do not fall within the categories of development that should be approved outside of settlements, could be approved; in circumstance where the benefits of the proposal would substantially outweigh the adverse effects including to the character of the countryside. As set out in preceding paragraphs, and detailed below, your Officers judge this proposal, based on its own individual merits, would bring about substantial benefits to street scene character to outweigh the conflict with a dated development plan, which is subject of out-of-date policies that constrain housing supply. The emerging local plan has not reach adoption and so the district will remain with such policies devised on a deficit housing requirement figure for some time yet; therefore, the weight to be afforded to the proposal's conflict with those policies that constrain housing supply is diminished.
- 6.42. On matters relating to water neutrality, flood risk, highways, ecology and neighbour amenity, what impacts may arise are evidenced to be mitigated, so these matters are weighted neutral in the balance. The scale of impact on infrastructure arising from occupation of one additional dwelling is judged commensurate with existing infrastructure provision in the locality.
- 6.43. The application site sits amongst other built development (the entire lived in area of Littleworth being in countryside). In this context, the addition of a single dwelling to the area, would be delivered by means of a sensitive site subdivision in a comparable plot layout to its neighbours, positioned on which would be a building of a design and scale and form that responds to existing character without visual or landscape character harms arising, and nor does intrusion into local gap countryside occur – indeed the new building is judged an enhancement of street character compared to what already exists, which is itself a planning benefit.
- 6.44. The proposal would also contribute, albeit minimally, to the district's much needed housing supply of family homes, as identified by the Appeal Inspector in the previous appeal decision (an important material consideration). These are judged substantial benefits that are considered to outweigh the limited harm derived from, in this instance, non-compliance with the spatial strategy of a dated development plan when applying the NPPF presumption in favour of sustainable development outside of settlement (Policy S5). The application is therefore recommended by Officers for approval.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1. To approve planning permission, subject to the conditions listed below.

Conditions:

- 1 Approved Plans
- 2 **Regulatory (Time) Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

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

- 3 **Pre-Commencement Condition:** Any works which will impact the breeding / resting place of bats, shall not in any circumstances commence unless the local planning authority has been provided with either:

- a) a licence issued by Natural England pursuant to Regulation 55 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) authorising the specified activity/development to go ahead; or
- b) evidence of site registration supplied by an individual registered to use a Bat Mitigation or Earned Recognition Class Licence; or
- c) a statement in writing from Natural England to the effect that it does not consider that the specified activity/development will require a licence.

Reason: To conserve protected species and allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998.

- 4 **Pre-Commencement Condition:** Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the proposed foul and surface water drainage system, including details of all underground garden rainwater harvesting system tank, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to ensure that the development is properly drained and to comply with Policy 38 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 5 **Pre-Commencement (Slab Level) Condition:** No development shall commence until a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for Protected and Priority species has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy shall include the following:

- (a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;
- (b) Detailed designs to achieve stated objectives;
- (c) Locations of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans;
- (d) Persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures;
- (e) Details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).

The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: As these matters are fundamental to safeguard the ecology and biodiversity of the area in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), and to enhance Protected and Priority Species/habitats and allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

- 6 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** Prior to occupation, a 'lighting design strategy for biodiversity' in accordance with Guidance Note 08/23 (Institute of Lighting Professionals) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

- a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and
- b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through provision of lighting layout plans, luminaire specifications, mounting heights, aiming angles, shielding measures and lighting control strategies) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the scheme and maintained thereafter in accordance with the scheme. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

Reason: To allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

- 7 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No dwellinghouse hereby permitted shall be occupied until the car parking spaces/car ports and cycle parking facilities (within either car port or rear garden for each dwelling) necessary to serve that dwellinghouse have been constructed and made available for use in accordance with approved drawing number VBMC001/P2 - 03 REV P01 and VBMC001/P2- 07 REV P1. The car ports and cycle parking so provided shall thereafter be retained as such for their designated use.

Reason: To provide car-parking space for the use in accordance with Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 8 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** Prior to the first occupation of each dwelling, the necessary in-building physical infrastructure and external site-wide infrastructure to enable superfast broadband speeds of 30 megabits per second through full fibre broadband connection shall be provided to the premises.

Reason: To ensure a sustainable development that meets the needs of future occupiers in accordance with Policy 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policy 6 of West Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan (2021).

- 9 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until details of all boundary walls and/or fences shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No dwelling hereby permitted shall be occupied (or use hereby permitted commenced) until the boundary treatments associated with that dwelling (or use) have been implemented as approved. The boundary treatments shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of visual and residential amenity and to secure enhancement of street scene character features as well as a high standard of design in accordance with Policies 27 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policies 1 and 4 of West Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan.

- 10 **Regulatory Condition:** All mitigation measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in Section 6 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Arun Ecology Ltd., April 2026).

This will include the appointment of an appropriately competent person (e.g. an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) to provide on-site ecological expertise during construction. The appointed person shall undertake all activities, and works shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To conserve protected and Priority species and allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

- 11 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** Notwithstanding the submitted drawings, no part of the development hereby permitted shall be first occupied until full details of all hard and soft

landscaping works shall have been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include plans and measures addressing the design of the front gardens and associated boundaries and entrances and the shared driveway, and the following across the entire site:

- (a) Details of all existing trees and planting to be removed and retained
- (b) Details of all proposed trees and planting, including schedules specifying species, planting size, densities and plant numbers and tree pit details.
- (c) Details of all hard surfacing materials and finishes

The approved landscaping scheme shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details within the first planting season following the first occupation of any part of the development. Unless otherwise agreed as part of the approved landscaping, no trees or hedges on the site (other than those within private gardens) shall be wilfully damaged or uprooted, felled/removed, topped or lopped without the previous written consent of the Local Planning Authority until 30 years after completion of the development. Any proposed or retained planting outside of private gardens, which dies, is removed, or becomes seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory development that is sympathetic to the landscape character of the surroundings, and in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies 27 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policies 1 and 4 of West Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan

- 12 **Regulatory Condition:** The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall strictly accord with those indicated on the application form and approved Proposed Elevations Plan (ref. VBM001/P2-04 REV P1) unless details of alternative materials have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to development above ground floor slab level commencing.

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

- 13 **Regulatory Condition:** No works for the implementation of the development hereby approved shall take place outside of 08:00 hours to 18:00 hours Mondays to Fridays and 08:00 hours to 13:00 hours on Saturdays nor at any time on Sundays, Bank or public Holidays

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of adjacent occupiers in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 14 **Regulatory Condition:** The dwellings hereby permitted shall meet the optional requirement of building regulation G2 to limit the water usage of each dwelling to no more than 110 litres per person per day. The subsequently installed water limiting measures shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: To limit water use in order to improve the sustainability of the development in accordance with Policy 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), and to avoid an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SACSPA and Ramsar sites in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), and to allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

- 15 **Regulatory Condition:** Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (and/or any Order revoking and/or

re-enacting that Order no development falling within Class F of Part 1 of Schedule 2 (amend classes and schedule as necessary) of the order shall be erected, constructed or placed within the curtilages of the development forward of the dwellinghouses hereby permitted without express planning consent from the Local Planning Authority first being obtained.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity and to secure enhancement of street scene character features as well as a high standard of design in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policy 1 of West Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan.

8. USE OF AI

8.1. This report has not been prepared with the support of artificial intelligence tools.

Background Papers: DC/26/0741