



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/0357

Land North of West Wantley Barn, Fryern Road, Storrington, West Sussex, RH20 4BJ

DESCRIPTION:

Conversion, change of use and alterations and extensions to existing building to form 1no. detached self-build dwelling and associated works.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DISC/25/0390	Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 1 to approved application DC/25/0434.	Application Permitted on 02.02.2026
HRA/25/0017	Application under Regulation 77 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 relating to Prior Approval consent DC/25/0434	Application Permitted on 21.11.2025
DC/25/0434	Prior Notification for Change of Use of an Agricultural Building with erection of a single storey rear extension to 1no dwellinghouse (C3 Use Class).	Prior Approval Required and PERMITTED on 12.06.2025
DC/24/1810	Prior Notification for Change of Use of an Agricultural Building with erection of a single storey rear extension to 1no dwellinghouses (C3 Use Class).	Prior Approval Required and REFUSED on 15.01.2025
DC/24/1153	Prior Notification for Change of Use of Agricultural Building to a single dwellinghouse (C3 Use class).	Prior Approval Required and PERMITTED on 13.09.2024
DC/19/2433	Conversion of existing barn to a detached dwelling with associated parking and erection of a single storey rear extension	Application Refused on 30.01.2020

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The site lies to the east of Fryern Road within a rural area characterised by farms and individually designed dwellings. The site is within the countryside in policy terms. The application site comprises an agricultural former piggery building, with the surrounding area predominantly rural in character with open aspects to the north and west. The site is accessed via a single track and public right of way (PROW). There are a number of residential dwellings that the track serves. An area of Ancient Woodland lies directly to the east of the site. The building is screened by mature boundary trees and hedging.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

Planning permission is sought for the conversion and change of use of an existing barn to form a 3-bed detached singles-storey self-build dwelling. The proposal incorporates external alterations to the building to facilitate the proposed conversion, including a rear extension. The application site benefits from a Class Q Prior Approval (DC/25/0434), which granted the change of use of the building into detached dwelling. The permitted prior approval scheme has a gross internal floor area (GIA) of 147.2sqm and the proposed dwelling would have a GIA of 194.10 sqm.

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 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 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding

Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport

Policy 41 - Parking

Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan (2018-2031):

Policy 8: Countryside Protection

Policy 9: Green Gap

Policy 14: Design

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF requires that all development plans complete their reviews no later than 5 years from their adoption. 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 must be considered as to whether they are 'out of date' (NPPF paragraph 11d). This includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, whether the Council can demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites (NPPF footnote 8).

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 Paragraph 11d) of the NPPF therefore applies in the consideration of all applications for housing development within the District (unless footnote 7 or Paragraph 14 applies to relevant applications), with Policies 2, 4, 15 and 26 now carrying only moderate weight in decision making.

All other policies within the HDPF as itemised above have been assessed against the NPPF and are considered to be consistent such that they continue to attract significant weight in decision making.

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):

Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development

Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change

Strategic Policy 10: Flooding

Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character

Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection

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

Policy 32: Conversion of Agricultural and Rural Buildings to Commercial, Community and Residential Uses

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (2017)

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (2017)

Planning Advice Notes:

Facilitating Appropriate Development

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:

HDC Arboriculture: Objection [Summary]

The proposed development is partially within the minimum buffer that is required around an area of designated Ancient Woodland (AW).

The application should be withdrawn or substantially amended so that if acceptable in other planning terms the siting of new habitable buildings and associated habitable curtilage respect the minimum national requirements in this respect.

Recommend refusal on basis of foreseeable indirect impacts on the AW resource from intensification of residential development close to its boundaries.

HDC Environmental Health: Comment

The Preliminary Contamination Risk Assessment Report submitted to discharge of DISC/25/0390 recommended that intrusive investigations are undertaken at the to fully characterise the potential risk to future occupiers. In addition the Asbestos survey has confirmed the presence of asbestos containing materials, including fragments of asbestos roofing. Due to the conditions of this material, asbestos free fibre may be present in site soils

The applicant been has advised that a further approval of details application will be required in respect of Condition 1 b), c) and d) of DC/25/0434, once it is confirmed that further intrusive surveys have been undertaken, and no contamination has been identified. This should be completed prior to the first occupation of the development.

These works remain outstanding and therefore condition 1 of DC/25/0434 should be attached to the permission if consent is granted.

Ecology Consultant: Further information required / holding objection [Summary]

We are not satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available for determination of this application and recommend that additional information with regard to ancient and semi-natural woodland (irreplaceable habitat) is provided prior to determination.

The site lies within the 15m buffer zone for ancient and semi-natural woodland (irreplaceable habitat) which is located approximately 8m to the east of the site.

To fully assess the impacts of the proposal, the LPA therefore needs additional ecological information for the site, particularly to demonstrate appropriate protection for the adjacent ancient woodland.

This information is required to provide the LPA with certainty of impacts on legally protected habitats and be able to secure appropriate mitigation. This will enable the LPA to demonstrate compliance with its statutory duties, including its biodiversity duty under s40 NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and prevent wildlife crime under s17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Ecology Consultant: No Objection subject to conditions [Summary]

We agree that no further surveys are required for bats.

We understand from the submitted documents that the site of approximately 0.08ha comprises an access track, a disused agricultural barn and hard standing with ruderal species, a native species hedgerow and a small area of other neutral grassland. Ancient and semi-natural woodland lies approximately 8m to the east of the site. Native trees will be planted in the wider area and hedgerows will be planted around the site boundaries.

We are now satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available to support determination of this application.

Southern Water: Comment [Summary]

Insufficient information provided. No soakaways should be connected to the public surface water sewer.

WSCC Highways: Comment [Summary]

The application is made in the alternative to application reference DC/25/0434 which granted Prior Approval for the change of use of the host building into a detached dwelling. The LHA was consulted on DC/25/0434 and raised no highway safety concerns.

No alterations to the existing site access are proposed. Visibility at the access onto Fryern Road appears sufficient in this location. The plans indicate that two parking spaces will be provided on site for the proposed dwelling. The WSCC car parking demand calculator would anticipate that three parking spaces would be required for a dwelling of this size and location. There appears to be space on site to accommodate a third parking space, however this would remove the ability for vehicles to turn on site. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that vehicles would be able to turn within the private access lane to exit onto the public highway in a forward gear.

The site is rurally located, and as such, residents of the proposed dwelling are likely to be reliant upon the private car in this location. Cycling is a viable option within the vicinity and details of secure and covered cycle storage can be secured via condition.

The LHA does 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 (paragraph 116), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:**Representations:**

None received.

Parish Comments:

None received.

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

Principle of Development:

Spatial and Countryside Planning Policy

Policy 2 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015) defines the strategic spatial strategy of the development plan. HDPF Policy 2 confirms that the development plan will seek to satisfy community needs by way of sustainable growth which maintains suitable access to services and local employment while maintaining the unique rural character of the District. In realising these strategic aspirations, Policy 2 confirms that the spatial approach of the development plan is, *inter alia*, to focus development around the main settlement of Horsham, allow growth in the remainder of the District in accordance with a defined settlement hierarchy, bring forward strategic housing for housing and employment development to meet identified needs, support the sustainable development of settlements and manage development around the edges of settlements to prevent the merging of settlements and to protect rural characters.

Policy 3 of the HDPF defines the settlement hierarchy of the District and establishes that development will be permitted within towns and villages which possess defined built-up areas. Ashington is classified within the settlement hierarchy as a 'medium village', generally described as a settlement which benefits from a moderate level of services, amenities and community infrastructure together with some access to public transport. These settlements are often capable of meeting some day-to-day needs of residents but rely on larger settlements to satisfy a full range of employment, educational and amenity needs. Outside of a defined built-up area boundary, the accompanying text to Policy 3 at paragraph 4.7 confirms that land is to constitute a 'countryside' location where development is to be more strictly controlled.

Policy 26 of the HDPF addresses countryside protection and establishes that outside of defined built-up area boundaries, the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside will be protected against inappropriate development. Any proposal must be essential to its countryside location and, in addition, meet one or more additional criteria. Those additional criteria defined by HDPF Policy 26 are that development supports the needs of agriculture or forestry, enables the extraction of minerals or the disposal of waste, provides for quiet informal recreational use or enable the sustainable development of rural areas.

Policy 26 of the HDPF, in addition, provides that development must be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location, protects and/or enhances the key features of its respective landscape character area and avoids a significant increase, individually or cumulatively, in activity in the countryside.

The site is located outside of the built-up area and is not allocated within Horsham's Development Plan, which comprises the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) and Shipley's Neighbourhood Plan. As a result, residential development in this location would conflict with the requirements of Policies 2 and 4 of the HDPF. In addition, the proposed development is not considered to be essential to the countryside location and would be in conflict with Policy 26 of the HDPF.

Planning History and Alternative 'Fallback Position'

The proposal follows a recent prior approval decision (ref: DC/25/0434) for the change of use of agricultural building to 1no dwellinghouse. The application is made in the alternative to the application (DC/25/0434) in relation to the same building and the same location. The prior approval does represent a viable fallback for development, as the pre-commencement conditions have been discharged (DISC/25/0390). Consequently, there are no barriers to the extant prior approval consent being carried out. This represents a viable fallback to the current application proposal.

The presence of a viable fallback position for the change of use to 1no. dwellinghouse is a significant material consideration and establishes the principle of housing on this site. The permitted prior approval scheme has a gross internal floor area (GIA) of 147.2sqm and the proposed dwelling would have a GIA of 194.10 sqm. The proposed footprint would therefore be an increase in built form;

however, this would be sufficiently contained within the existing site boundaries, and not significantly larger in scale, compared to what was approved. It is therefore considered that a refusal of the current application would not prevent residential development being delivered on the site. It is therefore considered that the principle of the development on the site for 1no dwellinghouse has been established.

Housing Land Supply Position:

The Council's latest Authority Monitoring Report (April 2025) confirms a housing land supply position of 1.7 years against its objectively assessed need. The Authority, therefore, is unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing land. As a consequence of this position, the weight which can be assigned to the policies of the development plan which constrain the availability of housing land, comprising HDPF Policies 2, 3, 4 and 26 in addition to Policy Thakeham1 of the TNP is diminished.

Consideration, further, must be given to the provisions of the Framework at Paragraph 11(d), and the 'tilted balance' which this provision engages. This will be addressed within the concluding section of this report.

The Council has published the Shaping Development in the Horsham District document which acknowledges the Council's housing supply position and suggests an interim approach that the Council will pursue in relation to development prior to the adoption of the emerging HDLP. It is, though, considered that the proposed development does not accord with the provisions of the document, noting that Paragraph 5.12 in the document requires development to, *inter alia*, adjoin an existing settlement edge as defined by a corresponding built-up area boundary.

Green Gap

Policy 27 of the HDPF states that landscapes will be protected from development which would result in the coalescence of settlements. Development between settlements will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that:

1. There is no significant reduction in the openness and 'break' between settlements.
2. It does not generate urbanising effects within the settlement gap, including artificial lighting, development along key road corridors, and traffic movements.
3. Redevelopment of existing sites that seek to reduce the existing urbanised character and appearance of an area between settlements, particularly along road corridors, will be supported.
4. Proposals contribute to the conservation, enhancement and amenity of the countryside, including where appropriate enhancements to the Green Infrastructure network or provide opportunities for quiet informal recreation.

Policy 9 of the Storrington, Sullington & Washington 'made' Neighbouring Plan relates to the Green Gap and states that development between Storrington and West Chiltington will be resisted in line with Policy 27 of the Horsham District Planning Framework which seeks to prevent the coalescence of rural settlements.

The site is located within the green gap as designated within the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan and lies between the built-up area boundaries of Storrington to the south and West Chiltington Common to the north. Policy 9 of the Neighbourhood Plan and Policy 27 of the HDPF seek to maintain the openness and visual break between the two settlements of Storrington and West Chiltington.

The application building currently comprises an open sided agricultural building located on the northern periphery of the farmstead. As the building comprises an existing structure its position alone would not reduce the sense of openness which is partly characterised by the open fields extending to the north. It is considered that the previous scheme to convert the building to a dwellinghouse (DC/19/2433) was refused partly due to the increase of urban form within the green gap between the settlements of Storrington and West Chiltington, conflicting with Policy 27 of the HDPF and Policy 9 of the Neighbourhood Plan. However, as this application benefits from a prior approval fallback to convert the building (DC/25/0434) it is considered that sense of openness can be reduced without the requirement for planning permission. Furthermore, the design of the proposed development, appears more

agricultural in character, compared to the overly domestic design of the refused scheme, which would have had an urbanising effect within the green gap. Therefore, due to the presence of the fallback and the more appropriately designed proposal, it is considered that the proposal would not have an impact on the green gap between the settlements of Storrington and West Chiltington.

Conclusions on Matters of Principle

The provision of market housing within this countryside location is considered to conflict with the provisions of development plan policy HDPF Policies 2, 3, 4 and 26. Similar conflict is considered to arise in relation to the provisions of the emerging local plan at Policies 1, 2, 3 and 14, acknowledging the similarity of emerging policy provisions to existing policy.

The degree of weight which can be accorded to conflict with the spatial and countryside protection provisions of the development plan, though, is diminished by reason of the Council's inability to demonstrate a deliverable 5-year land housing supply.

Conflict with the provisions of the emerging HDLP, further, would also be considered to attract only limited weight owing to the early stage of preparedness of the HDLP, which has yet to be adopted, and the extent of unresolved objections against individual policies as part of the examination, including those identified above, pursuant to the provisions of NPPF Paragraph 48 in this regard.

The fallback position established by ref: DC/25/0434 for 1 no dwellinghouse is considered viable and likely to be implemented in the event that planning permission were not granted in this instance. It is therefore, considered that this fallback position attracts significant weight. The proposed development would create 1 dwellinghouse, as established by the fallback position, therefore resulting in no greater intensification in use of the use than that arising from extant permissions, where the permissions have established the principle of residential development on the site. In considering all relevant material considerations, it is therefore considered that the principle of development is acceptable in this instance.

Design and Appearance:

Policies 25 and 26 of the HDPF seek to protect the natural environment and landscape character of the District, including the landform, development pattern, together with protected landscapes and habitats. Development will be required to protect, conserve and enhance landscape and townscape character, taking account of areas or features identified as being of landscape importance, individual settlement characteristics and settlement separation. Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF stipulate that new development should be of a high standard of design and layout, with regard to natural and built surroundings, in terms of its scale, density, massing, siting, orientation, views, character, materials and space between buildings.

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

The existing agricultural building is of no particular design merit, being constructed to a scale/height suitable for the needs of agriculture. The building is of an agricultural form and character, with the presence in a rural location neither unusual or unexpected.

The proposal seeks to convert and change the use through alterations and extensions to the existing building to form a detached single-storey dwelling. Therefore, the existing building would be retained in some capacity. It is acknowledged that there was a previous application at the site to convert the building into a dwelling (ref: DC/19/2433). The application was refused due to the principle of a dwellinghouse in the countryside, the design being overly domestic in character and the urban form, which would not relate sympathetically to the rural character and impact the green gap between Storrington and West Chiltington. The application was dismissed at appeal, with the Planning Inspector concluding that the development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area and

would be contrary to policy. It is noted that the application (DC/19/2433) did not benefit from the presence of a prior approval fallback which could be implemented.

The proposed dwelling has therefore been designed to address the previous reasons for refusal, designed to resemble a typical rural building, taking design cues from buildings in the surrounding area. The proposal incorporates a multi-pitched roof design to keep the overall height down and minimise the impact on the setting and surroundings. The materials will be stained timber cladding and brick to the walls, with a slate tiled roof and aluminium/timber framed windows, to create a rural appearance through the use of natural materials. It is considered that the overall footprint and form will be retained and there is appropriate separation from neighbouring properties, with the provision of a good level of accommodation occupiers. Window and door openings have been kept to a minimum, and the proposed building appears agricultural in character, to reduce any potential urbanising impact. Furthermore, modest provision of hardstanding and patio areas to serve the dwelling are proposed, these areas are already hard surfaces, and the proposed footprint would not encroach beyond the footprint of the existing building and rear extension as approved under DC/25/0434. Given the presence of a fallback to convert the building into a residential dwelling, it is considered that the proposed design would be an improvement and of a higher quality compared to the previous scheme (DC/19/2433).

Overall, it is considered that the extent, scale and layout of the proposed development would be proportionate to the application site. It is acknowledged that there is a level of landscape harm due to new residential dwellings on site which would urbanise the rural context of the site, however, this is considered an improvement over and above the existing site layout and the alternative 'fallback' position. The design and appearance are therefore considered to be acceptable.

Trees and Landscaping:

Paragraph 193(c) of the NPPF states that *development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons, and a suitable compensation strategy exists.*

The proposal is located within 15m of the Ancient Woodland (AW) to the east of the application site. The Arboricultural Officer noted that the species present are typical of the native woodlands remaining within the local landscape with oak predominating over coppiced hazel with associated understorey that includes wild garlic and bluebells. The proposed development is a change of use within the minimum buffer to native AW, of 15m. The Arboricultural Officer concluded that the impact of foreseeable residential and recreational pressures associated with intensification of development near AW has been afforded increased weight and the proposal is in conflict with the NPPF and its ethos of protecting irreplaceable landscape resource from intensification of residential development around it.

However, while this is acknowledged, and the presence of Ancient Woodland close to the site is a significant consideration, of greater consideration is the presence of a realistic prior approval fallback. As the building is existing, and the proposal seeks to convert and extend the existing built footprint, there would be no further encroachment into the Ancient Woodland buffer zone. The site is previously developed, so it is considered that any damage to the AW may have already been done. The conversion of the existing building on the existing footprint could also be implemented without planning permission, as the site benefits from a prior approval fallback for the conversion and 4m extension to the rear. The presence of a valid fallback forms a material consideration in the assessment of the application, with this implementable without the need to consider potential impacts on the AW. However, it is the Council's view that due to there being no further encroachment into the Ancient Woodland Buffer Zone, that the proposal would not result in any additional harm to the AW.

It is also noted that there is an agricultural track that runs between the application site and the AW, separating the two. While it is acknowledged that this track would be utilised in order to get to and from the site, a residential use of this track is not considered to be more intensive than an agricultural use of the track which would arguably involve larger and heavier vehicles moving to and from the site. There is not considered to be an intensification of the site, and the previous use would arguably be more detrimental to the AW than the proposed usage.

While the proposal may potentially conflict with NPPF 193(c), the fallback position significantly reduces the weight that can reasonably be given to this conflict, and the proposal does not result in any additional encroachment or intensification at the expense of the Ancient Woodland. On balance, the harm does not justify refusal.

Residential Amenity:

Policy 32 of the HDPF states that development will be expected to provide an attractive, functional, accessible, safe, and adaptable environment that contribute a sense of place both in the buildings and spaces themselves. Policy 33 continues that development shall be required to ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land.

The proposal is not considered to give rise to any unacceptable neighbour amenity issues due to the distance between the development to the nearest residential neighbours. The building is existing, and would be a conversion, as opposed to a new building, so the original footprint would be retained. The proposed dwelling maintains a comparable height and footprint to the existing building. Additionally, it is considered that no part of the built form would result in unacceptable outlook. Furthermore, the proposed amenity space for the future occupants of the dwelling, is an improvement over the Class Q prior notification (ref: DC/25/0434), which provided no external amenity space. It is therefore not considered that the proposal would result in unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity, or a negative impact on future occupiers, in accordance with Policy 33 of the HDPF.

Highways Impacts:

Policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF promote development that provides safe and adequate access, suitable for all users.

The proposal would utilise an existing access track and access point. The existing access road is utilised by a number of other residential dwellings close to the site. WSCC Highways highlighted that visibility at the access onto Fryern Road is sufficient at this location. The proposed site plan indicates that two parking spaces will be provided at the site. WSCC car parking demand calculator anticipates that three parking spaces would be required for a dwelling of this size and location. However, there appears to be space on site for an additional parking space, if necessary. WSCC Highways did not consider that the proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network. It is therefore considered that the proposal would be acceptable in accordance with the above policies.

Ecology:

Policy 31 of the HDPF states that development will be supported where it demonstrates that it maintains or enhances the existing network of green infrastructure. Development proposals will be required to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity and should create and manage new habitats where appropriate.

The site lies approximately 14.5km southeast of Ebernoe Common Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and therefore lies outside the 12.0km Wider Conservation Area for this SAC. The site also lies approximately 3.4km east of Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar site.

Ecology raised no objections to the information submitted relating to bats and other species. The proposed biodiversity enhancement measures should be implemented in full and secured by condition. However, concerns were raised regarding the site being within the Ancient Woodland 15m buffer zone, with concerns that there was not sufficient ecological information to confirm that there would not be any additional harm to the adjacent Ancient Woodland. Following the submission of the requested additional information by the applicant, Ecology raised no objections to the proposal.

As already highlighted above, in the 'Trees and Landscaping' Section of the report, the application site has already been developed within the 15m buffer zone of the Ancient Woodland. The proposal seeks to convert and alter the existing building to ensure that there is no additional harm to the Ancient Woodland, over and above what has already been done. It is considered that the agricultural building

could be converted into a residential dwelling under the fallback position of the Class Q prior approval (ref: DC/25/0434) and that this forms a significant material consideration. The decision is taken, on balance, that the realistic fallback position significantly reduces the weight that can be given to the policy conflict, and that there being no additional encroachment or intensification would not justify a refusal due to harm to the Ancient Woodland.

Water Neutrality:

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. As a consequence, 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.

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.

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.

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 31st October 2025, will not exceed 3,240,000 litres per day.

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 paragraph 193 of the NPPF.

Drainage and Flood Risk:

The application is not within an area at risk of flooding, and the application form details that surface water will be disposed of through soakaways. It is considered that further drainage information can be secured via a suitably worded condition.

Other Matters:

Contaminated Land:

Given the sites historic use, there is potential for contamination for agricultural activities. This matter was addressed through the discharge of Condition 1 of the Class Q prior approval (ref: DISC/25/0390), which required a site investigation. The Preliminary Contamination Risk Assessment Report submitted recommended intrusive investigations are undertaken at the site to fully characterise the potential risk to future occupiers. While the preliminary works have taken place, further works are required in respect

of Condition 1 b)-d) of DC/25/0434. As these works are required prior to first occupation and remain outstanding, Environmental Health advised that a condition should be attached to permission.

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:

- Water consumption limited to 110litres per person per day
- Requirement to provide full fibre broadband site connectivity
- Dedicated refuse and recycling storage capacity
- Electric vehicle charging points

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 demonstrated that the development is exempt from the requirement to achieve a minimum 10% BNG by reason of:

- The development qualifies as 'self-build or custom housing' under Regulation 8 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024

Conclusions:

The application site benefits from an extant Prior Approval (DC/25/0434) for the change of use of the existing building to 1no. dwellinghouse. This extant permission is considered to represent a realistic fallback which establishes the principle of residential development on site. The proposed development would improve the quality of accommodation and would offer improvements in design and sustainability. The proposal is considered to relate sympathetically to the character and built form of the wider surroundings.

The proposal would not result in adverse harm to the amenities of nearby residential properties and would not have detrimental impact on the safety and function of the public highway network. For these reasons, the development is recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

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
District Wide (Zone 1)	194m3	160m2	34m2
	Total Gain		34m2
	Total Demolition		0m2

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.

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

Conditions:

- 2 **Standard Time Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall begin 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:** No development shall commence until a drainage strategy detailing the proposed means of foul and surface water disposal has been 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).

- 4 **Pre-Commencement (Slab Level) Condition:** A Biodiversity Enhancement Layout for biodiversity enhancements listed in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., April 2026) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Layout shall include the following:

- a) detailed designs or product descriptions for biodiversity enhancements; and
- b) locations, orientations and heights for biodiversity enhancements on appropriate drawings.

The enhancement measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation and all features shall be retained in that manner thereafter."

Reason: To enhance protected and Priority species & habitats and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under paragraph 187d of the NPPF 2024 and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

- 5 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until the following components of a scheme to deal with the risks associated with contamination, (including asbestos contamination), of the site has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the local planning authority:

- a) An intrusive site investigation scheme to provide information for a detailed risk assessment to the degree and nature of the risk posed by any contamination to all receptors that may be affected, including those off site.
- b) Full details of the remediation measures required and how they are to be undertaken based on the results of an intrusive site investigation and an options appraisal.
- c) A verification plan providing details of the data that will be collected in order to demonstrate that the works set out in (a) are complete and identifying any requirements for longer-term monitoring of pollutant linkages, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action where required.

The scheme shall be implemented as approved. Any changes to these components require the consent of the local planning authority.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to ensure that no unacceptable risks are caused to humans, controlled waters, or the wider environment during and following the development works and to ensure that any pollution is dealt with in accordance with Policies 24 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 6 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** Prior to the first occupation of the 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).

- 7 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until a scheme for the provision of electrical vehicle charging points has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be installed prior to first occupation of the development and shall thereafter remain as such.

Reason: To provide electric vehicle car charging space for the use in accordance with Policies 35 and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and the WSCC Parking Standards (2019).

- 8 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until the cycle parking facilities serving it have been provided within the side or rear garden of the dwelling. The facilities shall thereafter be retained for use at all times. The cycle parking facilities shall thereafter be retained as such for their designated use.

Reason: To ensure that there is adequate provision for the parking of cycles in accordance with Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 9 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until the parking, turning and access facilities necessary to serve that dwelling have been implemented in accordance with the approved details as shown on the approved block plan [25090L_R4_001 dated 26.02.2026] and shall be thereafter retained as such.

Reason: To ensure adequate parking, turning and access facilities are available to serve the development in accordance with Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 10 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until provision for the storage of refuse and recycling has been provided within the garage or side or rear garden for that dwelling. The facilities shall thereafter be retained for use at all times.

Reason: To ensure the adequate provision of refuse and recycling facilities in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 11 **Regulatory Condition:** All mitigation measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., April 2026) as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

This may 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 LPA 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).

- 12 **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).

- 13 **Regulatory Condition:** The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall strictly accord with those indicated on the application form and approved plans.

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).

- 14 **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) the dwelling hereby permitted shall not be enlarged under Class A, AA or B of Part 1 within Schedule 2 of the Order without express planning consent from the Local Planning Authority first being obtained.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity and due to the constraints of the site in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 15 **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).

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/26/0357Schedule of plans/documents **approved:**

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Location plan		25090L_R4_000	26.02.2026
Block plan	EXISTING AND PROPOSED	25090L_R4_001	26.02.2026
Elevation & Floor plan	APPROVED	25090L_R4_100	26.02.2026
Elevation & Floor plan	EXISTING	25090L_R4_102	26.02.2026
Elevation & Floor plan	PROPOSED AND ROOF	25090L_R4_200	26.02.2026
Supporting Docs	PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL AND ROOST ASSESSMENT V1.2	NONE	14.04.2026
Supporting Statement	PLANNING STATEMENT	NONE	26.02.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Bethan Tinning Date: 01.05.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 01.05.2026