



**DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET**

**APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:**

DC/26/0665

33 Saddlers Close, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9GL

**DESCRIPTION:**

Conversion of garage into habitable living space

**RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:**

None.

**RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES**

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

**Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):**

Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development

Policy 33 - Development Principles

Policy 41 - Parking

**Billingshurst Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031**

Policy Bill 1 - Billingshurst built-up area boundary

Policy Bill 2 - Housing design and character

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

Policy 19: Development Quality

Policy 20: Development Principles

Policy 25: Parking

**Parish Design Statement:**

Design Statement for the Parish of Billingshurst

**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](http://www.horsham.gov.uk).

**Consultations:**

**Natural England: Standing Advice:-**

It cannot be concluded that existing abstraction within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone is not having an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC/SPA/Ramsar sites. Developments within Sussex North must therefore must not add to this impact and one way of achieving this is to

demonstrate water neutrality. The definition of water neutrality is the use of water in the supply area before the development is the same or lower after the development is in place.

To achieve this Natural England is working in partnership with all the relevant authorities to secure water neutrality collectively through a water neutrality strategy. Whilst the strategy is evolving, Natural England advises that decisions on planning applications should await its completion. However, if there are applications which a planning authority deems critical to proceed in the absence of the strategy, then Natural England advises that any application needs to demonstrate water neutrality.

**WSCC Highways: Advice**

The Highway Authority raises no objection to the proposal. The existing garage is below the recommended size for a standard parking space and would not normally be relied upon for parking provision. Whilst the conversion may result in an additional vehicle parking on-street, one off-street parking space would be retained, and no highway safety concerns are identified. Therefore, the proposal is considered acceptable in highway terms.

**Representations:**

None received

**Parish Comments: Objection**

Concerns raised around the loss of a parking space within a small dead-end cul-de-sac. The small plot would be overdeveloped and lead to further street parking to the detriment of neighbours or future owners of the property.

**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:**

The application has been assessed on the basis of the submitted details, together with the planning history of the site and adjoining properties, available images and photographs supplied by the agent. These details were considered sufficient to allow the application to be properly considered and determined.

**Character and Appearance**

Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF seek to ensure that development promotes a high standard and quality of design in order to enhance and protect locally distinctive characters. The policies also seek to ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of development relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the skyline and important views.

Policy Bill 2 of the Billingshurst Neighbourhood Plan states that development proposals should be guided by the Billingshurst Parish Design Statement and should reflect the scale and local vernacular of the surrounding buildings, and use materials that are in keeping with those used in existing buildings in the immediate locality.

Saddlers Close comprises a mix of dwellings of a similar scale and appearance, with associated off-street parking and garages. The property lies within the built-up area boundary of Billingshurst where domestic alterations and extensions are common features.

The proposal seeks permission for the conversion of the existing garage into habitable living accommodation, including the replacement of the existing garage door with a window on the front elevation. No extension to the building is proposed, and the works are limited to alterations within the existing built form. Given the modest nature of the proposal and the use of matching materials, the development would not appear incongruous within the street scene and would preserve the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider area.

The proposal would be a clearly subservient addition and is considered to be of a design, form and scale which is appropriate to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, and which would not harm the character or appearance of the wider area. It is therefore considered that the visual impact of the proposal is acceptable and would accord with the above policies.

### **Impact on Neighbouring Amenity**

Policy 33 of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.

As the development does not introduce any new first-floor accommodation or side-facing windows, there would be no additional opportunities for overlooking or loss of privacy. Furthermore, the proposal would not result in any loss of light, outlook or increased sense of enclosure to neighbouring occupiers. It is also noted that there are similar garage conversions within the surrounding area, indicating that such alterations are a common feature of the local residential environment. The development is therefore considered to have a neutral impact on the residential amenity of surrounding properties and is acceptable in this regard.

### **Impact on Parking**

Policy 41 of the HDPF states that development which involves the loss of existing parking spaces will only be allowed if suitable alternative provision has been secured elsewhere, or the need for the development overrides the loss of parking and where necessary measures are in place to mitigate against the impact.

The proposal would result in the loss of an existing garage parking space, and the existing space on the driveway would be retained. Officers note that the garage's size is not suitable for the parking of a modern car, and therefore its loss would not result in a real-world loss of parking serving the dwelling. Given that the garage would be converted to habitable accommodation and that off-street parking would remain available within the curtilage of the site and suitable on-street parking nearby, the proposal is not considered likely to result in unacceptable parking stress or highway safety concerns.

The Highway Authority raises no objection to the proposal. It notes that the existing garage is below the recommended size for a standard parking space and would not normally be relied upon for parking provision. Whilst the conversion may result in an additional vehicle parking on-street, one off-street parking space would be retained and no highway safety concerns have been identified.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to provide a satisfactory level of parking provision and would not have a detrimental impact on the safe operation of the local highway network.

### **Water Neutrality**

There is no clear or compelling evidence to suggest the nature and scale of the proposed development would result in a more intensive occupation of the dwelling necessitating an increased consumption of water that would result in a significant impact on the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The grant of planning permission would not therefore adversely affect the integrity of these sites or otherwise conflict with policy 31 of the HDPF,

NPPF paragraph 193 and the Council's obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

## Biodiversity Net Gain

In accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, all householder applications are current exempt from the statutory requirement to demonstrate a 10% net gain in biodiversity.

## Conclusion

The proposal is considered to comply with relevant local and national planning policies and is therefore recommended for approval.

## **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     **Regulatory Condition:** The materials and finishes of all new external walls, windows and roofs of the development hereby permitted shall match in type, colour and texture those of the existing building.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and 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.

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### **Plans list for: DC/26/0665**

Schedule of plans/documents **approved:**

| Plan Type              | Description | Drawing Number          | Received Date |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Block plan             |             | TQRQM26137201<br>745042 | 18.05.2026    |
| Elevation & Floor plan | Existing    | NONE                    | 27.05.2026    |
| Elevation & Floor plan | Proposed    | NONE                    | 27.05.2026    |
| Location plan          |             | NONE                    | 28.07.2026    |

**DELEGATED**

Case Officer sign/initial      Meg Bayliss      Date: 18/08/2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial      RHERMITAGE      Date: 21.08.2026