



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/1046

Crofters , Rock Road, Washington, West Sussex, RH20 3BQ

DESCRIPTION:

Removal of Condition 3 of previously approved application DC/23/1397 (Conversion of outbuilding to self contained annexe. Erection of a single storey side extension and re-roofing of building) relating to water neutrality.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/22/0570	Application to confirm the continuous use of the existing dwellinghouse for Use Class C3 purposes in breach of agricultural condition for a period in excess of ten years prior to the date of this application (Lawful Development Certificate - Existing).	Application 15.06.2022	Permitted	on
DC/23/1397	Conversion of outbuilding to self contained annexe. Erection of a single storey side extension and re-roofing of building.	Application 31.05.2024	Permitted	on
DC/22/1849	Removal of Condition 2 of previously approved application WS/21/63 (Two detached bungalows, Bucks Place Farm, Rock Road, Washington) to allow for removal of the Agricultural Occupancy condition.	Application 25.11.2022	Permitted	on

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The site consists of an existing bungalow serving a small holding West of Rock Road, with an outbuilding (subject to this application) located to the north-western side of the existing dwelling. The application site is within open countryside. The main dwelling is approached by a shared drive also serving the immediate neighbour Ceres directly to the north of the site boundary. The main dwelling is served by an open porch on a raised platform to the rear. The boundary treatment is occupied by mature hedging and vegetation on the periphery of the site. The host dwelling is located abutting the northern boundary where it meets the shared boundary south of the neighbouring dwelling – Ceres. The site is part residential and part agriculture in nature with land occupying the southern area of the site with the ancillary structure, paddock, and buildings to the rear and west of the main dwelling.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

Application for the removal of Condition 3 of planning permission DC/23/1397, which relates to water neutrality measures, associated with conversion of outbuilding to self-contained annexe. Erection of a single storey side extension and re-roofing of building.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):

Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 28 - Replacement Dwellings and House Extensions in the Countryside
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking

Neighbourhood Plan:

Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2031

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (2017)
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (2017)

Parish Design Statement:

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:

None Received

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

Removal of Condition 3

The application seeks the removal of Condition 3 attached to planning permission DC/23/1397, which required the development to demonstrate water neutrality in accordance with Natural England's Position Statement of September 2021. That condition was imposed to ensure compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, given uncertainty at that time regarding the potential effects of increased groundwater abstraction on the Arun Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar sites.

Since the granting of the original permission, the policy and evidential context have materially changed. On 31 October 2025, Natural England formally withdrew its September 2021 Position Statement following the completion and scrutiny of Southern Water's Hardham Basin Environmental Study. Natural England confirmed that a package of agreed measures, including a reduction in the Hardham groundwater abstraction licence and additional ecological resilience measures, provides sufficient certainty that new development within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone will not have a likely significant effect on the Arun Valley designated sites. As a consequence, Natural England has advised that local planning authorities are no longer required to undertake Appropriate Assessment or secure water neutrality mitigation for new development on the basis of water scarcity alone.

Notwithstanding the forthcoming licence modification, Horsham District Council, as competent authority, has continued to apply a precautionary approach pending formal implementation of the licence changes. In agreement with Natural England, the Council is utilising verified water savings achieved by Southern Water during 2024/25 through leakage reduction and related measures. These savings amount to approximately 1,447,244 litres per day and can be attributed to new development without increasing abstraction pressure on the Arun Valley sites. Natural England's standing advice dated 10 November 2025 confirms that reliance on these savings raises no objection and constitutes Natural England's formal response under Regulation 63(3) of the Habitats Regulations.

In this case, Officers have undertaken an Appropriate Assessment which demonstrates that the additional water demand arising from the development permitted under DC/23/1397, when considered alone and in combination with other permissions granted since 31 October 2025, would not exceed the available Southern Water savings. It is therefore concluded that the development will not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC, SPA or Ramsar sites.

Given the withdrawal of Natural England's 2021 Position Statement, the availability of confirmed water savings, and the conclusions of the Appropriate Assessment, it is considered that Condition 3 are no longer necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. The condition no longer meets the tests set out in paragraph 56 of the NPPF, as it is not required to mitigate any identified harm. Its removal would not conflict with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework or the Council's duties under Regulations 63 and 70 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Accordingly, the removal of Condition 3 are considered acceptable, and the development permitted under DC/23/1397 can proceed without further water neutrality restrictions, without giving rise to harm to protected European sites.

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 **Not Used**

- 4 **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).

- 5 **Regulatory Condition:** The annexe hereby permitted shall be occupied solely for purposes ancillary to the occupation and enjoyment of Crofters, Rock Road, Washington (as identified on the approved plans) and shall not be used as a separate unit of accommodation.

Reason: The establishment of an additional independent unit of accommodation would give rise to an over-intensive use of the site and lead to an unsatisfactory relationship between independent units of living accommodation contrary to 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/26/1046

Schedule of plans/documents **approved:**

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Supporting Statement	Planning Statement	NONE	30.06.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Shazia Penne Date: 25.08.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 25.08.2026