



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/0918

Nut Knowle Cottages , Brighton Road, Woodmancote, West Sussex, BN5 9SS

DESCRIPTION:

Installation of acoustic fencing with pedestrian and access gates to replace the existing picket fence.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/25/1105	Erection of a 55sqm 8.8kWp ground-mounted solar array PV system within the garden.	Application Permitted on 01.10.2025
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RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):

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

Woodmancote Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2031

Policy 3 - Design

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

Policy 19: Development Quality

Policy 20: Development Principles

Policy 45: Replacement Dwellings and House Extensions in the Countryside

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:

Arboricultural Officer: No Objection

Landscape Architect: No objection

Newt Officer: It is considered that the proposed development would present a low risk to great crested newts and/or their habitats. However, as the development is within the red Impact Risk Zone, as modelled by district licence mapping, I recommend that the following informative should be attached to planning consent.

Parish Comments:

None received

Representations:
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:

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 obtained during site visit. These details were considered sufficient to allow the application to be properly considered and determined.

Character and Appearance

Policy 28 of the HDPF relates to house extensions and outbuildings in the countryside, stating that extensions should not be disproportionate to the size of the existing dwelling, and should be in keeping with the scale and character of the existing dwelling. The policy also states that the cumulative impact of existing extensions will be taken into account.

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 3 of the Woodmancote Parish Neighbourhood Plan states that the scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and materials of all development proposals, including alterations to existing buildings, will be required to reflect the architectural and historic character and scale of the surrounding buildings, and is appropriate to the plot size.

The proposal seeks planning permission for the installation of acoustic fencing with pedestrian and access gates to replace the existing picket fence. During the course of this application amendments were negotiated to bring the proposal to an acceptable standard for approval. The revised scheme now comprises of the proposed fence being set back a total of 2 metres from the edge of the roadside. Also, a mixed native species hedgerow will be planted between the proposed fence and the road to soften the visual impact. The repositioned fence with the installation of native hedgerow in front would now assist in reducing the visual effects of the proposed acoustic fence along the A281. The revised design approach retains the rural character and landscape qualities of the area. It is noted that the neighbouring property on the opposite side of the road have successfully implemented this similar approach which provides an effective means of improving the amenity. The applicant is recommended that the proposed hedgerow should be the sizes of 60-90cm for more instant impact, as well as the inclusion of 1 additional species, such as Hornbeam or Spindle, for it to be species rich.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal would integrate with the prevailing character of the street scene consisting of similar form of boundary treatment. The development would be consistent with the

characteristic of the area with the resulting visual impact considered acceptable and in accordance 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.

It is considered that the siting and layout of the proposal and the resulting relationship with adjacent properties would be sufficient to prevent any unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity.

Tree Impact

Policy 26 seeks to maintain that development in the countryside protect, conserve and enhance the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area in which it is located including the pattern of woodlands, fields, hedgerows, trees, waterbodies and other features.

The application is not accompanied by any supporting information in respect of the potential impact on adjacent trees of public amenity value.

Following consultation with the Council's Arboricultural Officer, the main consideration as to the suitability of this proposal in regard to trees is the position of the proposed new fence on the boundary of the property, and what effect this may have on the mature trees that straddle the property, in particular the mature oak at the property, at junction of Blackstone Lane. Although the new fence would pass through the Root Protection Area (RPA) of the tree, the principle of placing it within the RPA of the tree altogether is not found to be unacceptable. If installed with care and in line with the current guidance as advised in BS 5837 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations' [2012]. This proposal should not have a detrimental impact on the tree, however, to ensure best practice is followed; the Arboricultural Officer's recommendation on the way the works are undertaken near the Oak tree has been secured by condition.

The amended location of the fence and the provision of new mixed native species hedge in front would appear a more sensitive approach. The revised scheme would ensure the fence is appropriately integrated within its setting from a landscape perspective.

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 NPPF N6.

Biodiversity Net Gain

In accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, as amended, developments of sites of 0.2 hectare or less are 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:** No part of the fence or the fence posts should touch or be attached to the tree, nor should they be located within the root plate area. No above or below ground roots should be severed to allow for the fence to be built; where above-ground roots are found, the fence should go over or around the roots, and any post holes within the root protection area (RPA) should be dug in a manner that ensures any disruption to the roots of the tree is kept to a minimum. The following principle should be adhered to during the course of the works:
- Any excavations within the RPA should be undertaken carefully, using hand-held tools.
 - If any roots are exposed during the work these, should immediately be wrapped or covered to prevent desiccation and to protect them from rapid temperature changes. Any wrapping should be removed prior to backfilling, which should take place as soon as possible.
 - Prior to backfilling, and retained roots should be surrounded with topsoil or uncompacted sharp sand (builders' sand should not be used because of its high salt content, which is toxic to tree roots), or other loose inert granular fill, before the soil or another suitable material is replaced. This material should be free of contaminants and other foreign objects potentially injurious to tree roots.
 - The post holes should be lined with a non-permeable material or sheath i.e. a plastic membrane, to protect the soil and any adjacent roots from the potentially toxic effects of uncured concrete.

Reason: To ensure the protection and retention of important trees and hedgerows in the interests of amenity, biodiversity, and environmental sustainability, in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 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 approved landscaping scheme shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details set out in the application form within the first planting season following the installation of the approved acoustic fencing. Unless otherwise agreed as part of the approved landscaping, no trees or hedges on the site shall be wilfully damaged or uprooted, felled/removed, topped or lopped without the previous written consent of the Local Planning Authority until 5 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. The approved hedgerow shall be maintained at the height of the approved acoustic fence.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory development that is sympathetic to the landscape and townscape character and built form of the surroundings, and in the interests of visual amenity 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/26/0918

Schedule of plans/documents **approved:**

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Block plan	Proposed	TQRQM26214113 436822	11.08.2026
Supporting Docs	Application form	NONE	08.06.2026
Location & Block plan		MPD-A-000	08.06.2026
Site plan	Existing	MPD-A-001	08.06.2026
Elevation plan	Existing and Proposed	MPD-A-003	08.06.2026
Location plan		NONE	08.06.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Halima Chowdhury Date: 13.08.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 28.08.2026