DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/24/1693
The Barn, West Chiltington Lane, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9DP

DESCRIPTION:

Erection of a two-storey rear extension.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

None Relevant.

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 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles

Billingshurst Neighbourhood Plan
BILL 1: Billingshurst Built-Up Area Boundary
BILL 2: Housing Design and Character

Billingshurst Parish Design Statement

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):
Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
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:

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.

Place Services: No Objection

The Bat Emergence Survey and related reports have been reviewed, and the full extent of the extension works has been assessed. The non-licensed Precautionary Method Statement for bats is supported and should be included as a condition for consent. The site lies within the Wider Conservation Area for the Sussex Bat SAC, but there are no records of Barbastelle bats nearby. However, there are records of other bat species within 2km of the site. The development will not impact bat flightlines or habitat connectivity, and no adverse effects on bat SACs are expected. A project-level Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report should be prepared for the LPA.

No objections are raised regarding other protected species, except for Great Crested Newts, which will be addressed by the NatureSpace Partnership. Mitigation measures identified in the Bat Emergence Survey and Phase 1 Roost Assessment should be secured by condition. A Wildlife Friendly Lighting Strategy is recommended to prevent impacts on bats and should be submitted before occupation.

The proposed biodiversity enhancements for protected and priority species are supported. A separate Biodiversity Enhancement Layout should be secured to ensure compliance with biodiversity duties and contribute to biodiversity net gain. In summary, the development can be considered acceptable with the appropriate mitigation measures, enhancement strategies, and conditions for ecological protection, particularly for bats.

Southern Water: No Objection

Following the weekly list sent on 21st November, Southern Water has determined that the flow rate for the above site will remain consistent, so capacity is not an issue and no Southern Water assets will be affected. Therefore, Southern Water has no objections to this proposal.

Parish Comments:

Neither support nor object to the application

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 supplied by the agent. These details were considered sufficient to allow the application to be properly considered and determined.

Character and Appearance

The proposed alterations and extensions have been designed to align with the policies of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) and the Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan, ensuring that the development is both sympathetic to the rural character of the area and enhances the visual quality of the existing property.

Policy 28 of the HDPF states that extensions in the countryside should not be disproportionate to the size of the existing dwelling and must be in keeping with its scale and character. The proposed two-storey rear extension and alterations have been designed to respect the form and proportion of the original dwelling while maintaining a subservient appearance to ensure the building retains its rural character.

Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF emphasise high-quality design that protects and enhances locally distinctive character. The proposed extension adopts a traditional barn-style form with timber cladding, a brick plinth, and a clay tiled roof, ensuring continuity with the original dwelling. The use of natural materials will ensure that the extension integrates seamlessly into its surroundings. The massing and scale have been carefully considered to avoid any adverse impact on the skyline or key views while ensuring that the development relates sympathetically to the surrounding built environment, landscape, and open spaces.

Policy BILL2 of the Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan requires that development respects the local vernacular, using materials that harmonize with the surrounding area. The proposed alterations follow this principle by preserving the traditional rural aesthetic of the property while introducing contemporary glazing elements that improve natural light and connectivity between indoor and outdoor spaces.

It is recognised that the proposed extension would result in a large addition to the dwelling, however it is considered that the addition would sit well within the context of the existing curtilage. The design of the proposal has sought to appropriately reflect the built features of the host dwelling. The overall impact on the character of the area is expected to be minimal due to the screening provided by mature trees and hedging, which ensures that the extension remains largely concealed from public view.

The proposal would be a reasonably subservient addition, and is considered to be of a design, form, and scale appropriate to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling. It would not harm the character or appearance of the wider area, thus maintaining the rural character of the site and its surroundings. The proposed development complies with relevant planning policies by enhancing the appearance of the dwelling while preserving the overall character of the area. Consequently, the visual impact of the proposal is deemed acceptable and in accordance with the applicable 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 proposed extension and the resulting relationship with adjoining properties would be sufficient to prevent any unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity.

Ecology

Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) emphasizes the need to conserve and enhance biodiversity, requiring developments to protect and restore habitats and species, particularly those that are protected or of particular local importance. The policy also stresses the importance of

mitigating any negative impacts on biodiversity and ensuring that developments provide net gains where possible.

In line with Policy 31, the Bat Emergence Survey and related reports have been reviewed, with the full extent of the extension works now assessed. The non-licensed Precautionary Method Statement for bats is supported and would be secured by condition. The site lies within the Wider Conservation Area for the Sussex Bat SAC, though there are no records of Barbastelle bats nearby. However, there are records of other bat species within 2km of the site. Importantly, the development will not impact bat flightlines or habitat connectivity, and no adverse effects on bat SACs are anticipated.

Mitigation measures identified in the Bat Emergence Survey and Phase 1 Roost Assessment would be secured by condition, with a wildlife friendly lighting scheme also secured. The proposed biodiversity enhancements for protected and priority species are supported, and a separate Biodiversity Enhancement Layout would be secured by condition to ensure compliance with biodiversity duties and contribute to biodiversity net gain.

Subject to conditions, the development can be considered acceptable, provided that the appropriate mitigation measures, enhancement strategies, and conditions for ecological protection, particularly for bats, are implemented. This aligns with the requirements of Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework.

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 180 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 **Pre-Commencement (Slab Level) Condition**: No development above ground floor slab level of any part of the development hereby permitted shall take place until a Biodiversity Enhancement Layout for the biodiversity enhancements listed in the Bat Emergence Survey Report (MBM Ecology, revised 21 January 2025) 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) 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).

4 **Regulatory Condition**: All mitigation and enhancement measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Bat Emergence Survey Report (MBM Ecology, revised 21 January 2025) and Phase 1 Preliminary Roost Assessment (MBM Ecology, May 2024), as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

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 and enhance 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).

5 **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).

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/24/1693
(The approved plans will form Condition 1 on the Decision Notice of all Permitted applications)

Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Supporting Statement	Bat Emergence Survey Report by July 2024	NONE	22.01.2025
Supporting Docs	Phase 1 Preliminary Roost Assessment dated Sept 2023 & May 2024	NONE	30.10.2024
Supporting Statement	Ecosystems Services Statement dated 28.10.2024	688-604 Rev A	30.10.2024

Site plan	Existing Site Plan	688-096 Rev D	30.10.2024
Site plan	Proposed Site Plan	688-101 Rev E	30.10.2024
Floor plan	Existing Ground Floor	688-097 Rev D	30.10.2024
Floor plan	Proposed Ground Floor	688-102 Rev E	30.10.2024
Floor plan	Existing First Floor & Roof Plan	688-098 Rev D	30.10.2024
Floor plan	Proposed First & Roof Plans	688-103 Rev E	30.10.2024
Elevation plan	Existing Elevations	688-099 Rev D	30.10.2024
Elevation plan	Proposed Elevations	688-104 Rev E	30.10.2024
Section plan	Proposed Sections	688-105 Rev E	30.10.2024
Location & Block plan	Proposed Block & Location Plan	688-100 Rev E	30.10.2024

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Shazia Penne Date: 13.02.2025

Authorising Officer sign/initial Tamara Dale Date: 13.02.2025