



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/1409

Dragons Hollow, Valewood Lane, Barns Green, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 0QJ

DESCRIPTION:

Variation of condition 1 of previously approved application reference DC/21/1679 (Demolition of existing single storey garage and erection of a 1.5 storey building providing 2-bedroom ancillary accommodation) for amendments to design and layout. Removal of Conditions 3 and 4 relating to Water Neutrality.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/21/1679	Demolition of existing single storey garage and erection of a 1.5 storey building providing 2-bedroom ancillary accommodation.	Application Permitted on 24.05.2024
------------	--	-------------------------------------

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

Barns Green & Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan:

Policy 12 – Design of Housing

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

Policy 20: Development Principles

Policy 45: Replacement Dwellings and House Extensions in the Countryside

Policy 46: Ancillary Accommodation

Parish Design Statement:

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:

Parish Comments:

No Objection, however non-separation condition should be stipulated.

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

Policy 28 of the HDPF relates to house extensions and outbuildings in the countryside, stating that ancillary accommodation and garaging must demonstrate that the need for additional space cannot be met from an existing dwelling or buildings suitable of conversion on the site, with new outbuildings sited to have regard to the dwelling they serve and be grouped with the house. The policy also states that the use of ancillary accommodation as a separate dwelling will not be supported.

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 12 of the Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan states that as appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals will be supported where they are of a high quality design and layout, respect the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape, and positively response to the local vernacular character of the parish.

Planning permission was previously granted in May 2024 for the demolition of existing single storey garage and erection of a 1.5 storey building providing 2-bedroom ancillary accommodation under application DC/21/1679. This current application seeks to vary the approved plans for amendments to design and layout.

The proposal would alter the appearance, footprint and overall design of the approved development, albeit it is recognised that the nature of the accommodation would remain as previously approved. There would be no increase in the number of bedrooms or level of facilities provided within the accommodation, with the proposal seeking to alter the overall design and appearance. The resulting development would remain proportionate to the host dwelling and would utilise design features and form that would adequately reflect the character and visual amenity of the site and surroundings. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in accordance with the above policies.

Water Neutrality:

The application seeks to remove conditions 3 and 4 of planning permission reference DC/21/1679 which relate to water neutrality.

Condition 3 and 4 state:-

Condition 3

Pre-commencement (slab level) Condition: No development above ground floor slab level shall commence until full details of the water efficiency measures and rainwater/greywater harvesting system required by the approved water neutrality strategy (received 13.04.2023) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The rainwater harvesting system shall include suitable storage tanks to provide a minimum 35 days storage capacity.

Reason: To ensure the development is water neutral 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), Paragraphs 179 and 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

Condition 4

Pre-Occupation Condition: The development hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until evidence has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority that the approved water neutrality strategy has been implemented in full. The evidence shall include the specification of fittings and appliances used, evidence of their installation, details of the rainwater harvesting system installed including a minimum 35 days storage capacity, and completion of the as built Part G water calculator or equivalent. The installed measures shall be retained as such thereafter.

Reason: To ensure the development is water neutral 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), Paragraphs 179 and 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

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 1,518,234 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 1,518,234 litres per day.

Accordingly, Officers consider by removing conditions 3 and 4 of the approved planning permission DC/21/1679 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 Policy N6 of the NPPF.

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 adjoining properties would be sufficient to prevent any unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity.

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

Accordingly, the removal of Conditions 3 and 4 are considered acceptable, and the development permitted under DC/21/1679 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 must be commenced by the 24/05/2027.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 3 **Not Used**

- 4 **Not Used**

- 5 **Regulatory Condition:** The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall strictly accord with those indicated on the approved plans unless detail of alternative materials have been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to development above ground floor slab level commencing.

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).

- 6 **Regulatory Condition:** The accommodation hereby permitted shall be occupied solely for purposes ancillary to the occupation and enjoyment of Dragons Hollow, Valewood Lane (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/or lead to an unsatisfactory relationship between independent units of living accommodation contrary to Policies 28 and 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/26/1409

(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
Location & Block plan	Site Location & Block Plan	DE1427/01 REVISION P2	18.08.2026
Elevation & Floor plan	Existing Plans & Elevations	DE1427/02 REVISION P2	18.08.2026
Floor plan	Proposed Plans	DE1427/03 REVISION P2	18.08.2026
Elevation plan	Proposed Elevations	DE1427/04 REVISION P2	18.08.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Marie Riggs Date: 06.10.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial Tamara Dale Date: 12.10.2026