



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/25/1693

22 Underwood Road, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9FE

DESCRIPTION:

Installation of metal fence along the front boundary. (Retrospective).

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/15/1382	Erection of 45 dwellings, associated landscaping and parking, amended access to Billingshurst Doctor's Surgery	Application 27.06.2016	Permitted
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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 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development

Policy 33 - Development Principles

Policy 41 - Parking

Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019 – 2031

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 19: Development Quality

Policy 20: Development Principles

Policy 25: Parking

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:

Billingshurst Parish Council: Objection

'At the Planning and Environment committee meeting of 13th January 2026, the committee resolved to an OBJECTION to this application due to safety concerns surrounding the material and design of the fence; that being a low height metal fence with pointed features along a narrow bending path giving a potential cause for injury in the case of a fall.'

Representations:

2 representations have been received from 2 separate addresses, objecting to the application for the following reasons:

- Unsafe and potential injury
- Encroachment on footpath
- Poorly installed

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:

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.

Retrospective planning permission is sought for installation of a metal fence along front boundaries of the site. The low boundary metal railing-style fence has been erected in breach of condition 7 of DC/15/1382 which states that no additional screen walls or fences over and above those approved shall be erected at any time.

This part of the Underwood Close is characterised by detached and attached dwellings of a similar design set within a cul-de-sac location with front curtilages of various size but all of limited size and with open plan design. The proposed fencing to the front curtilage however is of low height and adjacent shrubs provide a softening of the visual impact such that the impact to the open plan design of the development in the area is very limited and is considered would not be sufficiently inappropriate to the character and appearance of the existing development to warrant refusal, and which would similarly 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 not 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.

The fence is low-level in height, thus would not result in adverse harm to neighbouring amenity by way of overshadowing and is not of a scale that would result in adverse overbearing.

Officers acknowledge concerns relating to safety to users of the adjacent footpath, mainly relating to the height of the proposed fencing and the pointed finials on the railings. However, this is not an arrangement that would be unexpected in a built-up area, thus the creation of the boundary as built is not considered harmful to the users of the footpath.

Overall, it is considered that the siting and layout of the proposed metal fencing in this case and the resulting relationship with neighbouring amenity would not result in relevant harm to neighbouring amenity in planning terms, and safety concerns regarding the metal material and fence design do not warrant a planning reason for refusal in this case.

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 low height metal fencing to the front curtilage in this case is considered would not impact the open plan design of the development in the area. The visual impact is not considered significantly inappropriate to the character and appearance of the existing development or resulting in harm to the character or appearance of the wider area, nor would result in significant harm to neighbouring amenity to be in conflict with policies 32 and 32 of the HDPF and to warrant refusal.

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

Recommendation: Application Permitted

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/25/1693

Schedule of plans/documents **approved:**

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Supporting Statement	Certificate B	NONE	05.12.2025
Block plan		MDP-01 249750	14.11.2025
Elevation plan	Existing and Proposed and Fence details	PL/1200	09.12.2025
Photos	x 3 and 2 x screen shots	NONE	21.10.2025
Location plan		MDP-01 2497 5 1	25.11.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Steve Astles Date: 03.02.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 03.02.2026