Horsham District Council

# DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/25/0689
8 Lakers Meadow, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9NP

DESCRIPTION:
Conversion of loft into habitable living space, the installation of a rear dormer and 1no. front rooflight.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

None relevant to this application

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 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets

The Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019 – 2031
Policy 2 – Housing Design and Character

**Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19)**:
Policy 9: Water Neutrality
Policy 19: Development Quality
Policy 20: Development Principles
Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment

**Parish Design Statement**:
Design Statement for the Parish of Billingshurst

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.

**Conservation Officer**: *I am satisfied the proposed roof alterations and extensions will not harm the character of the conservation area.*

Parish Comments:
At the Planning and Environment committee meeting of 3rd June 2025, the committee resolved to an OBJECTION to this application due to the following:

- The committee resolved that the design of the rear dormer was overbearing, not in keeping with the area and out of scale for the property.

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**

Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework 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.

Furthermore, policy 34 of the HDPF states that proposed development should make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the area, and ensuring that development in conservation areas is consistent with the special character of those areas

Policy Bill 2 of the Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan aims to maintain that where practical development should incorporate features as appropriate to the scale and nature to the overall design of the development.

The proposal relates to the conversion of the loft into habitable living space with the installation of a rear dormer and 1no. front rooflight. The proposed rooflight would be of an appropriate size and suitable positioned within the front roof slope. The proposed rear dormer window would comprise of

pitched roof design with the window proportionate in size to the existing windows. Though the proposed dormer would sit within and on top of the existing half dormer to the first floor, resulting is a somewhat awkward arrangement, its overall size and form would be proportionate to the dwelling- furthermore, the dormer would be sited to the rear roofslope thus would remain mostly out of view from a public vantage point. In addition, following consultation with the Council's Conservation Officer it is judged that the proposed roof alterations and extensions would not harm the character of the conservation area.

Therefore, the proposal is on balance considered to be of a design, form and scale which is appropriate to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling. The development would not harm the character or appearance of the Billingshurst Conservation area. It is therefore considered that the visual impact of the proposal is acceptable and would 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.

Though the additional dormer to the roof of the dwelling would present an additional opportunity of overlooking to the rear and oblique views to the site, this would be no more harmful that the existing arrangement from the first floor. It is therefore 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.

**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 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**: The materials and finishes of all new external walls, windows and roofs of the development hereby permitted shall match in type, colour and texture those of the existing building.

Reason: 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.

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**Plans list for: DC/25/0689**

Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

| Plan Type | Description | Drawing Number | Received Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| Location & Site plan | | A03 REV P1 | 25.04.2025 |
| Elevation & Floor plan | Existing | A01 REV P1 | 25.04.2025 |
| Elevation & Floor plan | Proposed | A02 REV P1 | 25.04.2025 |
| Supporting Statement | Design, Access and Heritage | PSD/2025/663 | 25.04.2025 |

**DELEGATED**

Case Officer sign/initial Halima Chowdhury Date: 05.06.2025

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 20.06.2025