



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/0449

Butlers Ghyll Farm, Pollards Way, Southwater, West Sussex, RH13 9AQ

DESCRIPTION:

Removal of Condition 4 of previously approved application reference DC/24/0836 (Alterations to existing building to create new offices) relating to water neutrality.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/24/0836	Alterations to existing building to create new offices	Application Permitted on 05.08.2024
------------	--	--

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):

Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
Policy 7 - Strategic Policy: Economic Growth
Policy 9 - Employment Development
Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 – Parking

Southwater Neighbourhood Development Plan (2019-2031):

SNP14 – Adequate provision of car parking
SNP16 – Design

Southwater Parish Design Statement

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

Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Policy 2: Development Hierarchy
Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 14: Countryside Protection
Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 19: Development Quality
Policy 20: Development Principles
Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
Policy 25: Parking
Policy 30: Enhancing Existing Employment
Policy 31: Rural Economic Development

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:

None received.

Representations:

None received.

Parish Comments:

Southwater Parish Council: No Objection

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

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. This was delivered by condition 4 of DC/24/0836.

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 paragraph 193 of the NPPF.

Conclusions

The application 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 must be commenced by 05.08.2027.

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

- 3 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** Notwithstanding the information submitted, no part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until a detailed lighting scheme shall has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The lighting scheme shall be in accordance with the Institute of Lighting Professional's Guidance notes for the reduction of obstructive light and shall have been designed by a suitably qualified person in accordance with the recommendations. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme and thereafter retained as such.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the site and surrounds in accordance with Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 4 **NOT USED**

- 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).

- 6 **Regulatory Condition:** No works for the implementation of the development hereby approved shall take place outside of 08:00 hours to 18:00 hours Mondays to Fridays and 08:00 hours to 13:00 hours on Saturdays nor at any time on Sundays, Bank, or public Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of adjacent occupiers 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/26/0449

(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
Floor plan	Proposed Ground and First	2.05	05.06.2024
Location & Block plan		2.01 REV A	30.05.2024
Floor plan	Existing Ground and First	1.01	05.06.2024
Elevation plan	Existing	1.02	10.06.2024
Elevation plan	Proposed	2.04 REV A	30.05.2024
Supporting Statement	Biodiversity Net Gain	24001	30.05.2024
Design & Access Statement		NONE	30.05.2024
Supporting Docs	Application Form	NONE	30.05.2024
Supporting Statement	PLANNING	NONE	11.03.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Bethan Tinning Date: 22.04.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial Guy Everest Date: 06.05.2026