

Horsham District Council

Our Ref: SDNP/26/02797/ADJAUT
Contact Officer: Jenny Fawn-Telford
Tel. No.: 01730 819 398

24th July 2026

Dear Sir/Madam,

Neighbouring Authority Consultation

Applicant: Horsham District Council
Proposal: Adjoining Authority Consultation - Horsham District Council (DC/26/0870) - Permission in Principle for the erection of 1 no. replacement detached two-storey dwelling following demolition of existing residential annexe.
Location: The Little House, Shoreham Road, Small Dole, Henfield,

Thank you for your correspondence received 9 July 2026, consulting us as a neighbouring authority on the above noted development proposals.

Although the application site is located outside of the National Park, the Council has a statutory duty to consider the Purposes of the National Park when making its determination.

The two statutory purposes of the SDNP designation are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage,
- To promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of their areas.

If there is a conflict between these two purposes, conservation takes precedence. There is also a duty to foster the economic and social wellbeing of the local community in pursuit of these purposes.

Section 245 of the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (S.245 duty) amends and strengthens the Section 11A (2) duty of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 upon relevant authorities, which includes the National Park Authority itself, to 'seek to further the specified purposes of Protected Landscapes'.

The National Park's comments on the development are as follows:

Thank you for consulting the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) on the above application. The SDNPA makes no comment on the principle of development. The red line is on the border of the National Park. The proposed development for a dwelling would be located in an area where there is pre-existing residential development, and as such the development would likely result in minor impacts on the setting of the National Park.

Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 strengthens the Section 11A (2) duty of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and requires all relevant authorities including neighbouring Local Planning Authorities to "seek to further the specified purposes of Protected Landscapes." The Government's 'Guidance for relevant authorities on seeking to further the purposes of

South Downs National Park Authority, South Downs Centre, Midhurst, GU29 9DH
Tel: 01730 819361 Email: planning@southdowns.gov.uk

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Protected Landscapes', published 16 December 2024, sets out that this duty is active not passive and that, as far as is reasonably practicable, 'relevant authorities should seek to avoid harm and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty, special qualities, and key characteristics of Protected Landscapes.' It is therefore incumbent on the Local Planning Authority, to give significant weight to the S.245 duty when determining applications.

Development within the setting of a national park should be consistent with the section 245 duty, and Paragraph 189 of the NPPF, which includes specific reference to the setting of National Parks:

"Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, **while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.**"

It is therefore important to consider direct and indirect effects upon the National Park designated landscape and its setting as well as its special qualities. To the west and south of the red line is a protected area of trees (TPO/1466) and to the south and east, Woods Mill Nature Reserve. The LPA officers will therefore need to assess any impacts upon the National Park and these protected features in order to address the above statutory duty.

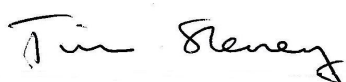
The SDNPA would advise that any development within the setting of the National Park should positively contribute to ecosystem services and to biodiversity net gain. New planting should all be native and locally characteristic in order to offer meaningful benefits to wildlife and positively contribute to landscape character. Avoid planting which is overly ornamental and may not have significant ecological or landscape benefits.

It is recommended that consideration also be given to dark night skies, which are a special quality of the National Park. The South Downs National Park is a designated International Dark Sky Reserve and dark skies and tranquillity are both special qualities that need to be protected. Paragraph 198(c) of the NPPF outlines that development should limit the impact of light pollution on intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation. Whilst there is likely to be pre-existing lighting associated with the residential properties in the locality, the SDNPA would encourage any new development to have a sensitive approach to lighting which conforms to the Institute of Lighting Professionals for lighting in environmental zones guidance and tries to achieve zero upwards light spill in all respects. The use of timed black out blinds and/or low transmission glazing should be secured via condition for proposed rooflights.

Further information/advice on sensitive lighting can be found in the SDNPA's Dark Skies Technical Advice Note which is available via the following link:

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/DNS-TAN-2021-Main-Documents-External-Lighting.pdf>

Yours faithfully



TIM SLANEY
Director of Placemaking
South Downs National Park Authority

Contact Officer
Jenny Fawn-Telford
jenny.fawn-telford@southdowns.gov.uk