

DMA BUILDING DESIGNS

PLANNING STATEMENT

VARIATION OF CONDITION 1 & REMOVAL OF CONDITIONS 3 & 4

Dragons Hollow, Valewood Lane, Barns Green, West Sussex, RH13



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1. Introduction

This application is submitted under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) seeking to vary Condition 1 and the removal of Conditions 3 and 4 which were incorporated into planning permission granted under reference DC/21/1679.

These conditions require the submission, implementation and verification of a water neutrality strategy, including rainwater harvesting and water efficiency measures. The conditions were imposed solely to address the former requirement for development within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone to demonstrate water neutrality.

Since planning permission was granted, there has been a fundamental change in the planning and environmental policy context. The requirement for developments within Horsham District to demonstrate water neutrality has now been withdrawn and no longer forms part of the Council's decision-making process.

2. Design Amendments

The principle of an ancillary annexe has already been established through extant permission. The proposal retains the approved use and general siting of the building whilst introducing amendments to its design and layout to better meet the needs of the current owners.

Proposed amendments include a reduction in the overall width of the building, retention of the approved one-and-a-half storey form, a revised internal arrangement, enlargement of the single-storey rear element and a modest increase in footprint from approximately 70sqm to 75sqm.

The reduced width creates a less visually dominant building when viewed from the roadside and improves access to the rear garden and existing storage buildings. Although the footprint is marginally increased, the proposal is considered to reduce the overall visual impact of the approved scheme.

The annexe will remain ancillary to Dragons Hollow and shall continue to be occupied solely in connection with the host dwelling. No material changes are proposed to the approved use of the building.

The revised proposal does not result in any unacceptable impacts on neighbouring amenities through overlooking, overshadowing, loss of privacy or overbearing effects. The relationship with surrounding properties remains materially unchanged from that already approved.

3. Change in Circumstances

On 31 October 2025, Natural England formally withdrew its Water Neutrality Position Statement for the Sussex North Water Supply Zone following agreement between Natural England, the Environment Agency and Southern Water regarding abstraction licence changes and long-term mitigation measures. Horsham District Council.

Horsham District Council has subsequently confirmed that:

- development within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone is no longer required to demonstrate water neutrality;
- bespoke water neutrality conditions and Section 106 obligations are no longer required;
- no payments into offsetting schemes are required; and
- water neutrality measures are no longer necessary to make development acceptable in planning terms.

Furthermore, reports to Horsham District Council's Planning Committee confirm that, following the withdrawal of Natural England's Position Statement, new development is no longer required to demonstrate water neutrality and there is no policy basis requiring previously secured water neutrality measures to be retained.

4. Assessment of the Existing Conditions

Conditions 3 and 4 were imposed solely to secure compliance with water neutrality.

The reasons for each condition explicitly state that they are imposed:

"To ensure the development is water neutral to avoid an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SAC/SPA and Ramsar sites..."

No separate planning purpose is identified.

As the underlying requirement for water neutrality has now been removed, these conditions no longer serve any planning purpose.

5. Planning Considerations

Paragraph 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework confirms that planning conditions should only be imposed where they are:

- necessary;
- relevant to planning;
- relevant to the development;
- enforceable;
- precise; and
- reasonable in all other respects.

The Government's Planning Practice Guidance similarly advises that planning conditions should not be retained where they are no longer necessary.

Given the withdrawal of the water neutrality requirement, Conditions 3 and 4 no longer satisfy these policy tests because:

- they are no longer necessary to make the development acceptable;
- they no longer address an identified planning harm;
- they impose unnecessary technical and financial obligations upon the development; and
- they are unsupported by the current planning policy position adopted by Horsham District Council.

The proposed removal of these conditions would not alter the approved development, increase its environmental impacts or conflict with any current development plan policy.

6. Conclusion

Overall, the proposal represents a modest amendment to an already approved scheme. The development remains acceptable in planning terms, provides a reduced visual impact from the public realm and improves the functionality of the site. Approval is respectfully requested and conditions 3 & 4 removed.