

MAIN STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

Appeal Reference: *To be assigned by PINS*

LPA Reference: DC/26/0253

Appellant: Miss White

Site Address: West Chiltington House, Harbolets Road, West Chiltington, West Sussex, RH20 2LG

1. Introduction

This Statement of Common Ground is jointly prepared by the Appellant and Horsham District Council. It sets out agreed factual information relevant to the appeal concerning:

Appeal Description

Demolition of the existing residential dwelling and erection of **5 terraced houses** (2 × 2-bed and 3 × 3-bed).

Reasons for Refusal (full text)

As issued in the Decision Notice (23 April 2026) (and repeated in the Council's refusal response letter (16 June 2026)):

- 1 The development would be located beyond a defined built-up area on a site not located within the Development Plan and would not be essential to this countryside location. The development would therefore be contrary to the overarching spatial strategy and hierarchy approach of concentrating development within defined settlements and advocating a planned approach to settlement expansion, contrary to policies 1, 2, 3 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015). Notwithstanding the absence of a five-year land housing supply, and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) at paragraph 11(d), it is not considered that there are any material considerations which would outweigh harm arising from conflict with the above policies.
- 2 The development would be of a poor design and visual quality, where the proposal would appear as a prominent feature within the landscape. The limited visual relief and stark elevations would exaggerate the overall massing and bulk of the built form, and the proposal would fail to reflect the built character and architectural features of the wider locality. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would be contrary to Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).
- 3 Insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that the development would have no adverse impact on protected species and its habitat, and to establish how the development will contribute to measurable Biodiversity Net Gain, contrary to Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Paragraph 193 of the NPPF.

2. The Appeal Site

Site Characteristics (Agreed Facts)

- The site is **outside any built-up area boundary**, therefore “located within the countryside in policy terms.”
- Existing building: a **detached two-storey dwelling**, centrally located, **extensively fire-damaged**.
- Vegetation: hedging along the northern boundary; mature trees along the southern boundary.
- Access: existing access to the north-east, considered **lawful by virtue of time** (in place since at least March 2022).
- Surroundings: sporadic residential development, enclosed agricultural fields, woodland belts.
- No pavements, footways or public rights of way along Harbolets Road.

3. The Local Area

- Rural road with dispersed residential plots and traveller sites.
- Nearest settlement: West Chilton (Medium Village), approx. 3.3km away.
- No street lighting, pavements, or public transport along Harbolets Road.
- The Council confirms the site is **not “isolated” in the NPPF sense**, citing Braintree judgment principles.

4. Planning History

- **DC/20/1342** – Certificate of Lawful Development granted for ancillary outbuilding (27.11.2020).
- **DC/23/0349** – Refusal for new driveway/entrance and orangery replacement (30.04.2024).
- No previous appeals on the site.

5. The Appeal Proposal

Description

Full planning permission for demolition of the existing dwelling and erection of **5 terraced dwellings**.

Key Characteristics

- Two storeys
- Half-hipped roof, height 8.9m
- Windows/doors only on north and south elevations
- Private amenity space to south-west
- 8 parking spaces to north-west
- Access path between dwellings and Harbolets Road

Plans Considered

All plans submitted were labelled “NONE” in the LPA’s schedule due to applicant-submitted PDFs.

Determination Timeline

- Submission: Feb 2026
- Officer Recommendation: 20 April 2026
- Decision issued: 23 April 2026
- Intent to Appeal Letter submitted to Council: 14 June 2026
- Council’s Response to Intent to Appeal Letter: 16 June 2026

6. Development Plan (Adopted & Emerging)

Adopted Development Plan

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) Relevant policies include: 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 15, 16, 24, 25, 26, 28, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41.

Most Important Policies (Tilted Balance)

Due to **1.7-year housing land supply**, Policies **2, 4, 15, 26** carry **moderate weight**. All other HDPF policies remain consistent with NPPF and carry **significant weight**.

Neighbourhood Plan

West Chiltington Neighbourhood Plan (2023–2031) Examiner recommends it proceed to referendum (11 Feb 2026). Relevant policies: H1–H4, EH1–EH3, EH8, GA3.

Emerging Local Plan (Reg. 19)

Relevant strategic policies: 1–20, 24, 37–41, 45. Carries **limited weight**.

Supplementary Guidance

- CIL Charging Schedule (2017)
- *Shaping Development in Horsham District* (Planning Advice Note)

7. National Policy & Other Guidance

Relevant NPPF paragraphs cited by LPA:

- **11(d)** – Tilted balance
- **12** – Primacy of development plan
- **73** – Windfall sites
- **83–84** – Rural housing
- **115–117** – Highways safety
- **125** – Brownfield land
- **193** – Biodiversity Net Gain

Other guidance:

- Natural England Water Neutrality Standing Advice (10 Nov 2025)
- Manual for Streets (implicitly relevant)

8. Areas of Agreement

A. Site & Location

- The site is **previously developed land** (PDL).
- The site lies **outside the built-up area boundary**.
- The existing access is **lawful**.
- The site is **not isolated** in the truest sense and NPPF paragraph 84 does not apply.

B. Highways

WSCC Highways confirm:

“There appears to be no apparent visibility issue... no recorded injury accidents... no evidence to suggest the existing access is operating unsafely.”

WSCC raises **no objection** on safety or capacity grounds.

C. Residential Amenity

The proposal would not cause unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity.

D. Water Neutrality

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.

Accordingly, the Council's Appropriate Assessment concludes 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.**E. Biodiversity Net Gain**

The development is **exempt** from mandatory 10% BNG as **self-build/custom housing**.

9. Areas of Disagreement

Reason for Refusal 1 – Principle of Development

Appellant's Position:

- The site is PDL and not isolated.
- The Council's 1.7-year housing supply triggers NPPF 11(d).
- Distances to nearby settlements (2.3–3.3 miles) demonstrate accessibility.
- Cycling is viable (WSCC confirms no safety issues).
- The proposal supports HDPF 2015 Policies 1, 2, 3, 8, 11, 12, 13, 25, 26, 32 and 33.

Council's Position:

- The site does not adjoin a settlement edge.
- It is not allocated in the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan.
- It is not essential to its countryside location.
- Walking/cycling/public transport are not attractive alternatives.

- The site is not in a sustainable location.
- The proposed development is contrary to Policies 1, 2, 3, and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and there are no material considerations which outweigh the harm arising from conflict with these policies.

Reason for Refusal 2 – Design & Landscape Impact

Appellant's Position:

- The design is modest, replicable, affordable, and not visible from public viewpoints.
- The area contains highly varied building forms including a traveller site, directly adjacent to the site
- The proposal does not harm landscape character.

Council's Position:

- The design lacks detailing, visual relief and interest.
- It appears stark, bulky, and dominant feature within the surroundings.
- The parking area creates excessive hardstanding with limited landscape features to offset or reduce the visual presence and impact of this.
- In totality, the proposal is of a poor design and visual quality, with the limited visual relief and stark elevations considered to overexaggerate the overall massing and bulk of the built form, failing to reflect the built character and architectural features of the wider locality.
- The proposed development would be contrary to Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

Reason for Refusal 3 – Ecology

Appellant's Position:

- The site is already developed; the Council acknowledges it is a redevelopment.
- The Council did not request an ecological appraisal before refusing.
- The appellant is willing to provide one.

Council's Position:

- No ecological information was submitted.
- The proposed development has not demonstrated that it would have no adverse impact on protected species and habitat, and it has not been established how the

development will contribute to measurable biodiversity net gain, contrary to Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

10. Schedule of Conditions & Draft S106

No S106 obligations are currently proposed.

11. Signatures

Miss Limara White

Appella 

Ms Tamara Dale 

10.08.2026

Horsham District Council