



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/0378

Sussex Topiary, Naldretts Lane, Rudgwick, West Sussex, RH12 3BU

DESCRIPTION:

Notice of intention to open a campsite for 60 days under permitted development rights

ASSESSMENT

Class BC of Part 4 within Schedule 2 of the Town and Country General Permitted Development (England) Order 2015, as amended, ('the GPDO') relates to permitted development rights consisting of:-

- (a) the use of land as a recreational campsite for not more than 60 days in total in any calendar year; and
- (b) the provision on such land of-
 - (i) not more than 50 pitches
 - (ii) any moveable structure reasonably necessary for the purposes of the permitted use.

BC.2.(a) specifies that development is permitted by Class BC subject to the developer making on-site provision for users of the campsite of toilet and waste disposal facilities.

BC.2.(b) requires the developer to notify the local planning authority in writing before commencement of development in each calendar year. This notification must be accompanied by a copy of the site plan (which must include particulars of toilet and waste disposal facilities) and the dates on which the site will be in use.

The Notification outlines that it is proposed to use the site for 60 days listed as follows:

- April - 10th, 11th, 17th, 18th, 24th, 25th,
- May - 1st, 2nd, 8th, 9th, 15th, 16th, 22nd, 23rd, 29th, 30th,
- June - 5th, 6th, 12th, 13th, 19th, 20th, 26th, 27th,
- July - 3rd, 4th, 10th, 11th, 17th, 18th, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 30th, 31st,
- Aug - 1st, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 20th, 22nd, 23rd, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th,
- Sept - 4th, 5th, 11th, 12th, 25th, 26th,

A Location Plan, has been submitted which indicates that the site would comprise of 2 no. camping fields, an area referred to as "Sussex Topiary Campsite" has been excluded from the red outline of the site. A shower block, bin area, and waste water block are shown on the plans, and it is noted that these are proposed to be located within existing buildings on the site.

The site is located outside of a designated Flood Zone.

The supporting notification statement draws attention to recently approved planning permission reference DC/24/1502 for "Change of use to four pitch settled gypsy site along with the formation of hardstanding and utility/day room buildings," which includes an area of land, referenced as Camping Field 3, that is subject to this prior notification application. It is acknowledged that 2 no. conditions included within this permission are of relevance, namely:

12. **Regulatory Condition:** *This permission does not authorise use of the land as a caravan site by any persons other than Gypsies and Travellers, as defined in Annex 1 of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (Department for Communities and Local Government 2024).*
16. **Regulatory Condition:** *There shall be no more than 4 pitches on the site with no more than 4 mobile home/static caravan (as defined in the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and the Caravan Sites Act 1968) stationed on the pitch at any time. There shall be no more than 1 touring caravan per pitch stationed on site at any time and these shall not be occupied by any person at any time whilst stationed on the application site."*

The supporting notification statement explains that planning permission DC/24/1502 has not been fully implemented. Therefore, the above restrictive conditions attached to this permission are not operative in this present time.

During the course of this application amended location plan has been provided which excludes Camping Field 1, that is subject to planning permission DC/25/0369. That permission contains restrictive conditions 11 and 12 that restricts the use and occupation of that parcel of land labelled as Camping Field 1. The updated red outline of the application site now excludes such restrictions.

Although, as previously identified in application reference DC/25/0369, the buildings annotated as shower block, bins and wastewater block on the Location Plan also appear to be permanent buildings that have been on-site for a number of years. It is unclear from the submission whether these are to be permanently converted for the annotated purposes, which if the case, would require planning permission as a material change of use.

Other Matters

Water Neutrality

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.

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.

Conclusion

The Notification has been accompanied by the specific dates within the calendar year that the proposed recreational campsite would operate. This would amount to less than 60 days across the calendar year.

The revised location plan now excludes Camping Field 1 that is subject to planning permission reference DC/19/1362 which contains restrictive conditions 11 and 12 that restricts the use and occupation of the land. Consequently, the temporary use of the updated application site as a campsite does not require the approval of the LPA. The submitted details are sufficient to indicate the temporary use of the updated site as a campsite in the manner outlined would accord with the GPDO. It is therefore recommended that no objection be raised to the notification.

Recommendation: NO OBJECTION to Notification

DELEGATED

Authorising Officer sign/initial

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Guy Everest

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Date: 16.09.2026