



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/0862

Birchwood Cottages, Shaws Lane, Southwater, West Sussex,

DESCRIPTION:

Erection of a single storey extension.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/13/0873	Retrospective application for construction of replacement barn	Application Permitted on 05.09.2013
DC/15/0153	Conversion of existing partly built barn and change of use of the barn to holiday accommodation	Application Permitted on 31.07.2015
DC/16/0247	Variation of condition 1 of application DC/15/0153 (Conversion of existing partly built barn and change of use of the barn to holiday accommodation) to allow for the addition of a single storey side extension to facilitate a plant room and log store.	Application Permitted on 01.04.2016
DC/20/2533	Installation of a dormer window and balcony to south elevation with projecting beam, winch and trap door to balcony floor below and installation of a dormer window to north elevation of holiday accommodation unit.	Application Refused on 16.02.2021. Appeal Allowed.
DC/20/1216	Variation of Condition 1 of previously approved application DC/15/0153 (Conversion of existing partly built barn and change of use of the barn to holiday accommodation) relating to the elevations plan.	Application Refused on 10.09.2020
DC/25/1488	Erection of a single storey extension, together with the extension of the approved holiday let accommodation curtilage.	Application Permitted on 27.01.2026

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site relates to an oak framed building located to the east of Shaws Lane, and north east of Birchwood Cottages. The site is approximately 400metres west of the Built-Up Area Boundary of Southwater and is therefore within the countryside, for planning purposes. The building itself sits within a small cluster of residential and agricultural buildings. Public Right of Ways, run along both the west boundary (2929) and the northern boundary (1887). The site is not within a conservation area, nor are there any statutory or locally listed buildings in the vicinity.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a single-storey extension to the approved holiday let accommodation. The proposal represents an alternative scheme to that previously approved under application DC/25/1488.

Planning permission under DC/25/1488 was granted for an extension, together with an extension of the approved holiday let curtilage to incorporate the area where the extension was proposed, as this area previously lay outside the application red line boundary.

The extension approved under DC/25/1488 measures 4.7 metres in width, a depth of 9.2 metres and an overall height to the ridgeline of 4.3 metres, sitting approximately 1.3 metres below the ridgeline of the host building.

This currently proposed scheme measures 4.7 metres in width, a depth of 11 metres and an overall height to the ridgeline of 4.3 metres, which will sit approximately 1.3 metres below the ridgeline of the host building. Whilst reflecting that of the approved extension under DC/25/1488, this proposed extension now incorporates a catslide roof, with the depth of the extension increased by 2 metres to allow this.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):

Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development

Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development

Policy 11 - Tourism and Cultural Facilities

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 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change

Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport

Policy 41 - Parking

Southwater Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031

Policy 1: Core Principles

Policy 16: Design

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

Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development

Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change

Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction

Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality

Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character

Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection

Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality

Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles

Policy 25: Parking

Southwater Parish Design Statement

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:

WSCC Rights of Way: No Objection.

Southern Water: There are no public sewers recorded within the site boundary. However, the relevant requirements, conditions and application associated with the build-over/close-to a public sewer are available at Southern Water's Get Connected service. Please note, surface water should not be disposed of into a public foul sewer and must comply with the Hierarchy of H3 of the Building

Regulations. Any new connections to the public sewerage system will require a New Sewer Connection application (also known as a Section 106) to be submitted and approved by Southern Water.

Representations:

None received

Parish Comments:

None received.

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

Principle of Development:

Policies 2, 3 and 4 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015), seek to promote development within defined built-up areas, further advocating a planned approach to settlement expansion to satisfy demand for housing growth. The policies seek to ensure that new development is supported by, and mutually supportive of, existing services and amenities while further preserving the existing rural character and settlement hierarchy of the district.

Policy 7 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) states that sustainable employment development in Horsham District will be achieved by promotion of the district as an attractive place to stay and visit to increase the value of the tourism economy. Policy 10 of the HDPF supports sustainable rural economic development and enterprise where it maintains the quality and character of the area and contributes to the wider rural economy or recreational use of the countryside. The policy encourages countryside-based enterprises to be accommodated within suitably located buildings where possible and supports the conversion of rural buildings to business and commercial uses in preference to residential use.

Policy 11 of the HDPF supports measures that promote tourism and enhance cultural and recreational facilities, including rural diversification, provided development is of a scale and type appropriate to its location and improves the quality or range of accommodation, attractions or visitor experiences. The policy particularly supports proposals that reinforce local distinctiveness, improve existing facilities, contribute to the rural economy, support farm diversification, and respect the relationship between settlements and the surrounding countryside.

In this instance the application site falls outside of a Built-Up Area and lies within the Countryside. Policy 26 of the HDPF is relevant and requires development outside the Built-Up Area boundaries to be essential to its countryside location to protect the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside against inappropriate development. In addition, it must meet one of the following criteria:

1. Support the needs of agriculture or forestry;
2. Enable the extraction of minerals or the disposal of waste;
3. Provide for quiet informal recreational use; or
4. Enable the sustainable development of rural areas.

Furthermore, this policy requires that development be of a scale that is appropriate to its countryside character and location and should not lead either individually or cumulatively to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside and protects and/or conserves, and/or enhances the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area.

The proposed development comprises an alternative scheme to that approved under DC/25/1488 for the erection of an extension of the already approved holiday let accommodation, originally granted permission under DC/15/0153. The previous scheme detailed that the extension would provide an additional living room to serve the accommodation, which is to accommodate a minimum of six occupants. The surrounding land would remain in agricultural use, and the proposal would provide suitable facilities for future occupants while allowing for holiday let accommodation of differing scales within the district. As such, the proposal is considered acceptable in principle, subject to the consideration of all other material planning considerations.

Design and Appearance:

Policy 25 of the HDPF seeks to protect the district's natural environment and landscape character from inappropriate development, supporting proposals that conserve and enhance landscape character, respect settlement identity, and maintain settlement separation. Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF require development to be of high quality and inclusive design, informed by an understanding of the local context, and to integrate successfully with its surroundings, make efficient use of land, protect amenity, use appropriate materials, and respect the character of the surrounding townscape or landscape.

Policy SNP16 of the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan requires development to be of high-quality design, using locally appropriate materials, responding positively to surrounding buildings, and reflecting local vernacular character in order to achieve contextually appropriate and well-integrated development.

The proposed extension would have a width of 4.7 metres, a depth of 9.2 metres and an overall height to the ridgeline of 4.3 metres, which will sit approximately 1.3 metres below the ridgeline of the host building. Whilst reflecting that of the approved extension under DC/25/1488, this proposed extension now incorporates a catslide roof, with the depth of the extension increased by 2 metres to allow this. The proposed materials would match those of the existing host building, comprising timber-clad walls and clay tiles. A suitable condition is recommended to secure the use of matching materials to ensure the extension blends sympathetically with the existing property.

Whilst the building is visible from Public Rights of Way to the north and west, with limited mature screening interrupting views from the public realm, the proposal would be a subservient addition to the host dwelling and would not appear overly dominant. As such, the visual impact of the proposal is not considered to result in a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the host building or the wider surrounding area.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to relate sympathetically to the built characteristics and character of the locality, and is considered to be of a scale, proportion, and finish that would sit comfortably within the context. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the above policies. It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with Policies 28, 32 and 33 of the HDPF and SNP16 of the SNP.

Residential Amenity:

Policy 33 of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.

It is noted that no letters of representation objecting to the proposal have been received. The nearest residential dwelling is located approximately 25 metres to the south-west of the site; however, given that the lawful use of the site is residential holiday let accommodation and that the buildings are located within a small cluster of residential properties, the siting of the proposed extension to the east would be appropriate. Having regard to the siting, scale and layout of the extension, it is considered that the proposal would not give rise to unacceptable impacts in terms of overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of

light or overbearing effects. Furthermore, the proposal would not result in an intensification of the use of the site. As such, it is considered that the development would not result in unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity and would accord with Policy 33 of the HDPF.

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.

The proposal seeks planning permission for the erection of a single storey extension to the existing holiday let accommodation, amending a previously approved scheme. The agent previously confirmed the use of the extension will be as a living room and not as an additional bedroom. As such, it would not give rise to any additional likely significant effects on the protected Arun Valley SAC, SPA or Ramsar sites, either alone or in combination. The proposal can therefore be screened out at HRA Stage 1 and does not require progression to Appropriate Assessment. On this basis, the development is considered acceptable in ecological terms and compliant with Policy 31 of the HDPF and relevant national policy.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):

Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) mandates that every development must achieve at least a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) (unless the development qualifies as exempt under the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024) and that every planning permission granted for the development of land in England shall be deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that development must not be begun unless a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority and the planning authority has approved the Plan.

The Biodiversity Gain Plan must show how the development will achieve the required minimum 10% BNG using the statutory biodiversity metric tool, and must demonstrate how the habitats will be managed and maintained for 30 years, starting from the date the development is completed. Off-site gains (on unregistered sites) and significant on-site enhancements will be secured over this period by way of a Legal Agreement.

The Applicant has demonstrated that the development is exempt from the requirement to achieve a minimum 10% BNG by reason of:

- The development qualifies as 'de minimis' under Regulation 4 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024

Conclusions:

The proposed extension of an already approved holiday let accommodation is considered acceptable within the wider context of the site and would not result in demonstrable harm. The proposal therefore accords with Policies 10, 11, 25, 26, 32 and 33 of the HDPF.

Recommendation: Application Permitted

Conditions:

- 2 **Standard Time Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

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

- 3 **Regulatory Condition:** The materials and finishes of all new external walls, windows and roofs of the development hereby permitted shall match in type, colour and texture those of the existing building.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 4 **Regulatory Condition:** The residential accommodation hereby permitted shall, when occupied as holiday accommodation be managed in accordance with the following:

- (a) The accommodation shall be occupied for holiday and short-term let purposes only;
- (b) The accommodation shall not be occupied as a person's sole, or main place of residence;
- (c) The accommodation shall not be occupied by any one person for a period exceeding 28 days in any calendar year;
- (d) The accommodation shall at all times be managed and supervised by 1 Birchwood Cottages
- (e) The owners / operators shall maintain an up-to-date register of the names of all owners / occupiers of the accommodation on the site, and of their main home addresses, and shall make this information available to the Local Planning Authority upon request.

Reason: To maintain the availability of the site as short term holiday tourist accommodation in accordance with Policies 10, 11 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

NOTE TO APPLICANT

The applicant is advised that condition 3 of planning permission ref: DC/25/1488 requires the submission of details for the approval of the Local Planning Authority. To approve these details, you will need to submit an "Application for approval of details reserved by condition" with an application form and pay the appropriate fee. Guidance and the forms can be found at www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/applications/paperforms.

NOTE TO APPLICANT

The applicant is reminded that, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to (amongst other

things): deliberately capture, disturb, injure, or kill great crested newts; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place.

Planning permission for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. Should great crested newts be found at any stage of the development works, then all works should cease, and a professional and/or suitably qualified and experienced ecologist (or Natural England) should be contacted for advice on any special precautions before continuing, including the need for a licence.

Additionally, all works shall be carried out in accordance with the following measures:

- Any demolition materials should be stored in skips or similar containers rather than in piles on ground
- Any trenches left overnight should be covered or provided with ramps to prevent great crested newts from becoming trapped.
- Any building materials such as bricks, stone etc. should be stored on pallets to discourage great crested newts from using them as shelter.

If at any point during construction works any great crested newts are identified, then the following instructions must be strictly adhered to:

- Stop all works immediately and leave the area
- Inform an ecologist immediately who will provide further guidance / instructions
- Do not resume construction works until advised it is safe to do so by an ecologist

Biodiversity Net Gain Condition

Based on the information submitted in the planning application documents, the Planning Authority considers that this permission is exempt from biodiversity net gain, and as such does not require approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun.

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/26/0862

(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	Existing and Proposed and Roof and Floor Plans	129/2026/3	18.05.2026
Elevation plan	Existing Elevations	129/2026/3	18.05.2026
Location & Site plan	Site and Location Plan	129/2026/1	18.05.2026
Elevation plan	Proposed Elevations	129/2026/4	18.05.2026
Supporting Statement	Planning Statement	129/2026	01.07.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Sam Nye Date: 15/09/2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial Guy Everest Date: 16.09.2026