Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 September 2026

by Claire Coles MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 October 2026

Appeal Ref: 6011680
Land at High Chaparral, London Road, Washington, West Sussex RH20 3BP

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant permission in principle.
- The appeal is made by Mr S Page against the decision of Horsham District Council.
- The application Ref is DC/25/1300.
- The development proposed is permission in principle for the construction of 4no. two-storey dwellings.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for permission in principle for the construction of 4no. two-storey dwellings at Land at High Chaparral, London Road, Washington, West Sussex RH20 3BP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DC/25/1300.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposal is for permission in principle. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that this is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development. The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages: the first stage (or permission in principle stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle and the second ('technical details consent') stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed. This appeal relates to the first of these 2 stages.

3. The scope of the considerations for permission in principle is limited to location, land use and the amount of development permitted[1]. All other matters are considered as part of a subsequent Technical Details Consent application if permission in principle is granted. I have determined the appeal accordingly.

4. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was issued on 17 August 2026 and is a material consideration in this appeal. Both main parties have had the opportunity to comment on its implications for the appeal, and I have taken these additional representations into account.

5. I have been provided with appeal decision Ref: 6009593 for a single detached two-storey dwelling and associated landscaping together with the relocation of the existing stable building on a site very close to this appeal site. This is a material consideration in my decision.

[1] PPG Paragraph:012 Reference ID: 58-012-20180615

Main Issue

6. The main issue is whether the site is suitable for residential development, having regard to its location, the proposed land use and the amount of development.

Location and land use

7. The appeal site is paddock land situated to the south and east of High Chaparral, a bungalow. Another bungalow, Hilly Field, adjoins High Chaparral. The site is accessed via a single vehicle width private drive leading from Spring Gardens. The access in part is a public footpath. Spring Gardens is a cul de sac of around 20 houses and it and the site lie to the west of London Road (A24). Between the site's access and the A24 there are five further dwellings and to the north of Spring Gardens there are a number of large-scale commercial premises.

8. The site lies to the south of Ashington, which is a medium sized village for the purposes of the settlement hierarchy identified under Policy 3 of the Horsham District Planning Framework 2015 (HDPF). Washington is a smaller settlement that is around 1.5 Km to the south of the site and it is an unclassified settlement for the purposes of Policy 3. The site is therefore outside a built-up area boundary (BUAB) recognised by the HDPF. There are other groups of houses, a garden centre and other sporadic development strung out along the A24.

9. Policy 1 of the HDPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development, reflecting the wording in an earlier version of the Framework. Policy 2 of the HDPF sets out the broad spatial strategy for the district, and seeks to focus development in and around the key settlement of Horsham and allow for growth in the rest of the district in accordance with the identified settlement hierarchy, which is set out in HDPF Policy 3.

10. HDPF Policy 26 sets out that, outside BUAB's, any proposal must be essential to its countryside location, and in addition meet the criteria listed. There is no compelling evidence before me which indicates that the scheme would meet any of the criteria listed. Therefore, the proposal would not be supported under HDPF Policy 26.

11. HDPF Policy 4 sets out that, outside BUAB's, the expansion of settlements will be supported where the criteria listed are met. In terms of the criteria set out under this policy, the site is not allocated in the Local Plan or in a Neighbourhood Plan. Moreover, since the appeal site is outside, and distinctly detached from the nearest settlement, the proposed development would not be an acceptable settlement expansion as defined in Policy 4. Since the proposed development would fail to meet this criterion, the extent to which it would meet with the remaining criteria is of little consequence.

12. Policy 1 of the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan (NP) supports development proposals outside the built-up area of Washington on allocated sites and within the area within and around Montpelier Gardens/Luckings Yard or, if it results in the reuse of previously developed land on land outside the South Downs National Park provided the proposal accords with other policies in the Development Plan. The site is not previously developed land, an allocated site and I have not been provided with any evidence it lies within and around the Montpelier Gardens/Luckings Yard. The NP is now more than 5 years old and therefore Policy S6 of the Framework is disengaged.

13. The Council currently has a 1.7 year supply of housing, which represents a significant housing shortfall. As the Council has been unable to meet its housing land supply targets within the parameters of the existing development plan policies, the 'Shaping development in Horsham District' document sets out an approach to boosting the supply of housing. Unallocated sites outside but adjoining BUAB's can be supported, subject to meeting certain other criteria. This approach is intended to facilitate housing development in the most sustainable locations, with those being sites with a direct relationship to the edges of settlements. The site does not have any such relationship with a settlement boundary, being instead located amongst a loose cluster of development. The 'Shaping development in Horsham District' document does not lend support to the proposal.

14. National decision-making policies S3 to S5 of the Framework collectively define a revised presumption in favour of sustainable development. Policy S5 applies to development outside settlements and part 1 lists forms of development which should be approved, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the Framework. That list includes development which would address an evidenced unmet need.

15. There is no dispute that the Council currently has a significant shortfall in housing land supply, so Policy S5 part 1(j) is relevant. However, that requires that the development would be physically well-related to an existing settlement. As defined in the Framework, relevant settlements exclude hamlets and scattered groups of houses located outside predominantly built-up areas, where they are not specifically defined as a settlement in the development plan. The nearest settlements which would clearly fall within the Framework's definition are all some distance away, and the site is not physically well-related to them.

16. The Inspector for the previous appeal on this site[2] for a similar type of development confirmed that the houses would not be in an isolated location. The Framework definition of isolated has changed since the previous appeal and isolated homes are now classed as those lying outside settlement or groups of houses. Despite the change in definition, the proposed development would be located within a loose cluster of development and would not be isolated. I have not been provided with substantive evidence that any of the other types of development in the part 1 list of Policy S5 of the Framework apply to the proposal.

17. Policy S5 4 states that development proposals which do not fall within one of the categories set out in Policy S5 should only be approved in exceptional circumstances where the benefits of the proposal would substantially outweigh the adverse effects, including to the character of the countryside and in relation to promoting sustainable patterns of movement.

Land use and amount of development

18. The Council have not objected to the scale of the dwellings in terms of how the development would impact on the visual amenity of the locality when considered within the wider surroundings. The Council conclude that although the use of the land in this location would be contrary to Policies 3 and 4 of the HDPF, the design of the dwellings would not be a visually prominent form of development. I have no reason to take a different view.

[2] APP/Z3825/W/17/3174758

19. In conclusion, the proposal would conflict with policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the HDPF, Policy 1 of the NP and the Framework due to the location of the proposed development being outside the BUAB, not requiring a countryside location, not being physically well related to an existing settlement and would not limit the need to travel by private car.

Other Matters

20. I have been directed towards appeal decision APP/Z3825/W/25/3365004 for permission in principle and similarly located outside the BUAB. The appeal was dismissed in November 2025 and was therefore assessed against an older version of the Framework. I have also not been provided with any details of the case in order for me to make a comparative assessment.

21. The appellant has provided me with details of an allowed appeal in very close proximity to this site[3]. There are locational similarities between this appeal and 6009593, however, the sites differ in that appeal site 6009593 was previously developed land (PDL), the proposal was for a single self-build dwelling and the appeal was allowed as the site fulfilled the criteria for an infill site.

22. I have taken account of interested party representations in my decision, within which I have not been provided with substantive evidence that the scale of the development proposed would lead to significant conflict with the users of the public footpath.

23. Whilst I note the proposal would increase the amount of traffic in this particular location, I do not consider this would have a significant effect on the living conditions of nearby residential dwellings from noise and disturbance, especially when considered in the context of the A24 and surrounding development.

24. No substantive evidence has been put to me that the proposed development would lead to drainage or highway safety issues. The technical details consent stage would address drainage issues, and access for emergency services and refuse collection as well as the detailed design of the dwellings including in relation to the number and positioning of windows.

Planning Balance

25. The proposed development would result in a conflict with the Councils spatial strategy and with policies 1, 2, 3,4 and 26 of the HDPF, Policy 1 of the NP and the Development Plan when read as a whole.

26. Policy S3 of the Framework applies a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For development outside settlements, Policy S5 of the Framework should be applied.

27. Policy S5 of the Framework identifies forms of development that should be approved outside of settlements, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects. One of the forms listed is where the development would meet an unmet need which includes where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. Though the Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, Policy S5 1(j) requires development to be physically well related to an existing settlement. As

[3] Appeal Ref: 6009593

set out above, the site would not be physically well related to an existing settlement in the context of the Framework's definition.

28. There would be some economic and social benefits of the proposal through the provision of four new dwellings, the construction process and then from the future occupiers of the proposed dwellings. I have not assessed the visual impact of the proposal on the countryside as that falls outside the scope of this appeal, but would be assessed at technical details consent stage.

29. The Framework gives substantial weight to the benefits of providing homes which would contribute towards meeting the evidenced accommodation needs of the community.

30. Policy S5 4 states permission in this location should only be granted in exceptional circumstances where the benefits of the proposal would substantially outweigh the adverse effects, including to the character of the countryside and in relation to promoting sustainable patterns of movement.

31. I have not found significant harm in relation to the character of the countryside or promoting sustainable patterns of movement and the substantial weight the Framework gives to the provision of new housing outweighs the adverse effect of the proposal.

Conditions

32. The PPG makes it clear that it is not possible for conditions to be attached to a grant of permission in principle, whose terms may only include site location, land use and amount of development. Therefore, I have not imposed any conditions. Where permission in principle is granted by application, such as this, the default duration of that permission is three years, and there is no justification to vary this period.

Conclusion

33. The proposed development would conflict with the development plan but material considerations indicate that a decision should be made other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above the appeal should be allowed.

Claire Coles

INSPECTOR

Horsham District Council

Mr Nikolas Antoniou
NJA Town Planning Ltd
The Beehive
City Place
Gatwick
West Sussex
RH6 0PA

Application Number: DC/25/1300

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT, 1990 (as amended)
TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order 2017

On behalf of: Mr S Page

In pursuance of their powers under the above-mentioned Act and Order, the Council hereby REFUSE to permit the works specified hereunder, that is to say:

Permission in Principle for the construction of 4no. two storey dwellings.

High Chaparral London Road Washington Pulborough

as shown on Plan and Application Number DC/25/1300 submitted to the Council on 27/08/2025. The reasons for the Council's decision to refuse to permit the above works are specified hereunder.

1 The proposed development would be located within an unsustainable location in the countryside, beyond a defined built-up area on a site not allocated 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, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policy 1 of the Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan. 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.

Schedule of plans/documents:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Block plan		B-01	12.08.2025
Location plan		L-01	12.08.2025
Details plan	Proposed 3D Veiws	FE-02	12.08.2025
Site plan	Proposed and Street View Elevation	FE-01	12.08.2025

Elevation plan	Proposed Unit 1	U1E1	12.08.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed Unit 1, 3 and 4	U1E2	12.08.2025
Floor plan	Proposed Unit 1	U1P	12.08.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed Unit 2 Elevations 1 and 2	U2E1	12.08.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed Unit 2 Elevations 3 and 4	U2E2	12.08.2025
Floor plan	Proposed Unit 2	U2P	12.08.2025
Elevation plan	Unit 3 Elevations 1 and 2	U3E1	12.08.2025
Site plan	Unit 1	U1SP	12.08.2025
Site plan	Unit 2	U2SP	12.08.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed Unit 3 Elevations 3 and 4	U3E2	12.08.2025
Floor plan	Proposed Unit 3	U3P	12.08.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed Unit 4 Elevations 1 and 2	U4E1	12.08.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed Unit 4 Elevations 3 and 4	U4E2	12.08.2025
Floor plan	Propoed Unit 4	U4P	12.08.2025
Site plan	Unit 3	U3SP	12.08.2025
Site plan	Unit 4	U4SP	12.08.2025
Design & Access Statement		NONE	12.08.2025

Note To Applicant:
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.



Emma Parkes
Head of Development and Building Control

Date: 08/05/2026

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Right of Appeals
If you are aggrieved by the decision to refuse permission for the proposed development or to grant it subject to conditions, then you can appeal to the Secretary of State under Section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

You must appeal within 12 weeks of the date of the decision notice for a householder application or ‘minor commercial’ (shop front) development, and within 6 months for other types of planning applications. There are different timescale – usually 28 days – if an enforcement notice is/has been

served for the same (or very similar) land and development. Please note, only the applicant possesses the right of appeal.

Appeals can be made online at: https://www.gov.uk/planning-inspectorate. If you are unable to access the online appeal form, please contact the Planning Inspectorate to obtain a paper copy of the appeal form on tel: 0303 444 5000.

The Secretary of State can allow a longer period for giving notice of an appeal but will not normally be prepared to use this power unless there are special circumstances which excuse the delay in giving notice of appeal.

The Secretary of State need not consider an appeal if it seems to the Secretary of State that the local planning authority could not have granted planning permission for the proposed development or could not have granted it without the conditions they imposed, having regard to the statutory requirements, to the provisions of any development order and to any directions given under a development order.

If you intend to submit an appeal that you would like examined by inquiry then you must notify the Local Planning Authority and Planning Inspectorate (inquiryappeals@planninginspectorate.gov.uk) at least 10 days before submitting the appeal. Further details are at https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/casework-dealt-with-by-inquiries.

Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/25/1300
High Chaparral, London Road, Washington, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 3BP

DESCRIPTION:
Permission in Principle for the construction of 4no. two storey dwellings.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/16/1963	Outline application for the erection of 4x2 bed semi detached dwellings, 1x3 bed detached dwelling and 2x5 bed detached dwellings. Contruction of access road and provision of garage parking with all matters reserved except for access.	Refused on 30-08-2016 *Appeal Dismissed (ref. APP/Z3825/W/17/3174758).*

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE
The application site is currently undeveloped land the south of an existing dwellinghouse known as 'High Chaparral'. The application site is situated in a rural location outside of any defined built up area boundary. The application site is located to the south of High Chaparral which is a detached single storey dwelling in an elevated position. The existing site access to High Chaparral is located on the London Road, close to its junction with the A24 dual carriageway. The access is also a public footpath.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION
The application seeks permission in principle for four dwellings to the south of High Chaparral and Hilly Field. All material considerations are left for reserved matters, although elevations are submitted and visualisations included as part of the Design and Access Statement.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES
The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):
Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
Policy 4 - Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion
Policy 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
Policy 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs
Policy 17 - Exceptions Housing Schemes
Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
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 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
Policy 39 - Strategic Policy: Infrastructure Provision
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 – Parking

Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2031
Policy 1: A spatial plan for the parishes
Policy 8: Countryside protection
Policy 14: Design
Policy 17: Traffic & Transport
Policy 18: Car Parking

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF requires that all development plans complete their reviews no later than 5 years from their adoption. Horsham District Council is currently in the process of reviewing its development plan however at this stage the emerging policies carry only limited weight in decision making. As the HDPF is now over 5 years old, the most important policies for the determination of this application must be considered as to whether they are 'out of date' (NPPF paragraph 11d). This includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, whether the Council can demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (NPPF footnote 8).

The Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, with the supply currently calculated as being 1 year. The presumption in favour of development within Paragraph 11d) of the NPPF therefore applies in the consideration of all applications for housing development within the District (unless footnote 7 or Paragraph 14 applies to relevant applications), with Policies 2, 4, 15 and 26 now carrying only moderate weight in decision making.

All other policies within the HDPF as itemised above have been assessed against the NPPF and are considered to be consistent such that they continue to attract significant weight in decision making.

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):
Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Policy 2: Development Hierarchy
Policy 6: Climate Change
Policy 7: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction
Policy 9: Water Neutrality
Policy 10: Flooding
Policy 11: Environmental Protection
Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 14: Countryside Protection
Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 19: Development Quality
Policy 20: Development Principles
Policy 23: Infrastructure Provision
Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
Policy 25: Parking
Policy 37: Housing Provision
Policy 38: Meeting Local Housing Needs
Policy 40: Improving Housing Standards in the District
Policy 41: Rural Exception Homes

Planning Advice Notes:
Shaping Development in Horsham District

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:

HDC Arboriculturalist: The land area is clothed by belts of trees to the South, alongside the watercourse at the base of the hill, and to the West. These collective groups make a valuable contribution to the landscape setting. A mature fir tree adjacent to the entrance would require removal to enable an appropriate accessway to be engineered.

If the site is considered appropriate for the quantum of residential development proposed, engineering for the access road, land contouring and utilities/drainage provision associated therewith will require a design based on a measured tree survey and AIA to ensure that these landscape components are respected in accordance with the relevant design standard BS:5837:2012 – Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations.

Recommend no engineering is proposed within the minimum recommended root protection areas of retained trees of landscape merit, for any greenfield development proposals. The principal tree belts are to the edges of the site and could therefore be respected in a design for the quantum of residential development proposed.

Natural England: Standing Advice issued.

Landscape: No objection. Urbanising features should be avoided, careful consideration should be had for surfacing materials, turning area design and driveway layout design is required. Impacts on character must be managed which will need sensitive and detailed design.

WSCC Highways: As per the application type, details are not required in regards to dwelling size (number of bedrooms), vehicular access, or parking and turning arrangements. At Technical Details Consent stage, the LHA would expect details to be provided demonstrating proposed vehicular access arrangements to the site, sufficient space for parking and turning of vehicles in accordance with WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments. Sufficient secure and covered cycle storage should also be demonstrated, to encourage sustainable transport methods and reduce the reliance upon the private car.

Southern Water: Comment. Construction of the development shall not commence until details of the proposed means of foul/surface water drainage disposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Southern Water.

Representations:

7 representations (received from 5 addresses) objecting for the following reasons: -

- Highways and parking
- Road safety and road width
- Public footpath
- The application is the same as that dismissed at appeal under DC/16/1963
- Public right of way
- Increased risk of flooding
- Disruption to neighbouring amenity, including neighbouring equestrian use
- Single access track is shared

Parish Comments:

Object: -

- Highway Access and Parking
- Loss of General Amenity
- Overdevelopment

- Privacy Light and Noise
- Trees and Landscaping
- Contrary to Storrington & Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan.

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

Background:

A preceding planning application for 7 dwellings on the site was refused planning permission under ref: DC/16/1963 for the following reasons: -

1 The proposed development would be located outside of a built-up area boundary on a site not allocated for development within the Horsham District Planning Framework, or in an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan. The proposed development would therefore be inconsistent with the overarching strategy for development setout within the Horsham District Planning Framework. The proposed development is therefore contrary to Policies 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and to the National Planning Policy Framework (2012).

2 The site lies within a rural location outside the limits of any existing settlement and does not constitute a use considered essential to such a countryside location. The proposal would therefore conflict with Paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and with Policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

3 The proposed dwellings by reason of their siting, plot subdivision and associated domestic paraphernalia would be out of keeping with the character of the area and would represent a form of development which would be detrimental to the rural appearance of the area. The proposal therefore conflicts with Paragraph 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policies 25, 26, 30 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

A subsequent appeal against this decision was dismissed, with the Inspector noting: -

- As the development would be outside any BUAP and would concern an unallocated site it would not accord with the HDPF's locational strategy. There would therefore be significant conflict with Policies 2, 3 and 4 of the HDPF. There would also be conflict with Policy 26 because this development is one not requiring a countryside location.

- While the site is not subject to any special landscape designations, the construction of seven houses would nevertheless significantly change the character and appearance of this land, leaving it with a much more developed urban appearance. While the submitted block plan only shows an indicative layout, were that layout to be adopted….consider that the resulting development would have an unduly intense appearance, given that the houses in the eastern half of the site would have limited space between them and they would be sited at the transition between the more built up area to the north and the essentially undeveloped area to the south.

A further reason for refusal relating to the absence of a s106 agreement to secure affordable housing / contributions was resolved as part of the appeal process.

This current application seeks Permission in Principle, which is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for residential development, which separates the consideration of matters of "principle" for the proposed development, from the "technical details" of the development. As such, the Permission in Principle route has two stages: the first being the "Permission in Principle" stage (subject of this current application), which establishes whether the site is suitable in-principle; and the second being the "Technical Details consent" stage which is when the detailed development proposals are assessed.
The scope of the Permission in Principle application (being the first stage) is limited to location, land use, and amount of development.

Location:

The proposal seeks permission in principle for 4 dwellings. The proposal would be to the south of a dwellinghouse known as High Chaparral which is a bungalow along a private access lane. The application site is located outside of a defined built-up area and is therefore within the countryside in policy terms. The site is not allocated for development within the Local Plan or within a made Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy 2 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) sets out the main growth strategy, focusing development in the main settlements. The HDPF outlines that the proposed settlement hierarchy is the most sustainable approach to delivering housing; where new development is focused in the larger settlements of Horsham, Southwater and Billingshurst; and limited new development is directed elsewhere, and only where it accords with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan. Specifically, Policy 3 of the Horsham District Planning Framework seeks to retain the existing settlement pattern and ensure that development takes place in the most sustainable locations as possible.

Policy 4 of the HDPF refers to the expansion of settlements outside the built-up area, and states that such development is only supported where: the site is allocated in the Local Plan or in a Neighbourhood Plan and adjoins an existing settlement edge; the level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement type; the development is demonstrated to meet the identified local housing needs; the impact of development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long term development; and the development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape and townscape character features are maintained and enhanced.

Policy 1 of Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan states that "Development proposals located inside the boundaries will be supported provided they accord with other provisions of the Development Plan, outside of the BUAB will be supported on allocated sites."

The application site is within the countryside on a site which has not been allocated for development. The proposal would therefore be contrary to the approach to housing delivery set out in the above polices. In addition, the proposal would not meet any of the exceptions identified within Policy 26 of the HDPF and is not considered essential to the countryside location. The proposal would not therefore provide a suitable location for housing with regard to the spatial strategy within the Development Plan.

As the Council has been unable to meet its housing land supply targets within the parameters of the existing development plan policies, the 'Shaping development in Horsham District' document sets out an approach to boosting the supply of housing. In particular, unallocated sites outside but adjoining built up area boundaries can be supported, subject to meeting certain other criteria.
The other criteria includes: -

- The site adjoins the existing settlement edge as defined by the BUAB;
- The level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement the proposal relates to;
- The proposal demonstrates that it meets local housing needs or will assist the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services;

- The impact of the development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long-term development; and
- The development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape character features are maintained and enhanced.

The above approach is intended to facilitate housing development in the most sustainable locations, with those being sites with a direct relationship to the edges of settlements. The site does not have any such relationship with a settlement boundary, being instead located amongst a loose cluster of development. The site is located between Ashington, a medium sized village, to the north, Washington, a smaller unclassified settlement, to the south, with Storrington further to the west. There is limited opportunity to access pedestrian routes in the vicinity of the site, and while a bus stop is present on the A24 (at Spring Gardens) neither of the nearest settlements would provide for the day-to-day needs of future occupants. Future occupants of the development would therefore be highly reliant on private vehicles to access necessary services in larger settlements with only limited and undesirable infrastructure available for pedestrians.

The proposal would not accord with the necessary criteria within the "Shaping development in Horsham District" document. The proposed dwellings would be remote from day-to-day services, where the provision of market housing in this location, not linked to a rural use, would be contrary to Policy 26 of the HDPF and would not be in accordance with the overarching spatial strategy for development as set out in Policies 3 and 4 of the HDPF. It is therefore considered that the principle of the proposed development within the countryside is contrary to the overarching spatial strategy and principles of the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Development Plan.

Land Use and amount of development:

Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the HDPF promote development that protects, conserves, and enhances the landscape character from inappropriate development. Proposal should take into account landscape characteristics, with development seeking to provide an attractive, functional and accessible environment that complements the locally distinctive character of the district. Buildings should contribute to a sense of place, and should be of a scale, massing, and appearance that is of a high standard or design and layout which relates sympathetically to the landscape and built surroundings.

The character of the area is informal, rural and has a sporadic build pattern with only one dwelling in proximity to the application site, being High Chaparral which is a bungalow. The proposal would result in the addition of built form, however an overly suburban appearance could be avoided with some additional landscape details that avoid an overly suburban design. The dwellings would not be of a modest scale, however the Place services Landscape officer has been consulted during the course of the application and have no objection in principle to the scale of the dwellings in terms of how the development would impact on the visual amenity of the locality when considered within the wider surroundings. The access to the site is a single vehicle width private drive from Spring Gardens. The use of the land in this location would be contrary to Policies 3 and 4 of the HDPF, however from what has been submitted in principle, the design of the dwellings would not be a visually prominent form of development within the wider landscape.

The proposal would not be in conflict with policies 25, 32 and 33 of the HDPF subject to the inclusion of landscape conditions which seek to minimise the impact of the development on the surrounding landscape.

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.

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. Natural England have been consulted on this Appropriate Assessment and have provided standing advice which raises no objection to this approach.

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 s.70 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, HDPF Policy 31, and paragraph 193 of the NPPF.

Biodiversity Net Gain:

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 and significant on-site enhancements will be secured over this period by way of a Legal Agreement.

As no biodiversity net gain plan has been provided, it has not been possible to confirm whether the proposed development is exempt from the requirement to achieve a minimum 10% BNG. If the application were the be approved, this information would be requested as BNG would be required for a positive recommendation.

Conclusions and Planning Balance:

Permission in principle is for four detached dwellinghouses. As the site is not allocated for development with the HDPF or a made neighbourhood plan, owing to the site's location outside of the built-up area boundary, the principle of the development is resisted under Policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework. The Council cannot however demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing sites of 1 year. Therefore, the presumption in favour of sustainable development at paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged in this instance.

The conflict with the development plan is afforded significant weight, as it would undermine the strategic process of allocating housing sites for development in appropriate locations, and the democratic process of selecting sites within Neighbourhood Plans.

The Shaping development in Horsham District document is recent guidance on the provision of housing supply outside of built-up area boundaries, and while the current housing shortfall is a material consideration of significant weight, the site does not adjoin the settlement edge, the proposal would not benefit from its provisions.

It is acknowledged that some pedestrian routes are present in the immediate vicinity of the site. These would not however provide a means of accessing neighbouring settlements, where the nature of the connecting roads and the distances involved mean that walking is not a realistic option. The site is not considered sustainably located to be able to offer non-car transport options for future residents and is contrary to the Councils spatial strategy for housing, this would not be overcome by the presence of a bus stop at Spring Gardens.

Whilst the contribution of four market dwellings would bestow socio-economic benefits in the form of housing delivery, the proposed development would result in adverse impacts arising from the sustainability of the location that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits arising from the contribution of the dwellings to the Council's housing supply. The material benefits are not therefore considered to outweigh the harm identified above, and the proposal is therefore recommended for refusal.

Recommendation: Application Refused

Reason for Refusal:

1. The proposed development would be located within an unsustainable location in the countryside, beyond a defined built-up area on a site not allocated 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, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policy 1 of the Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan. 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.

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.

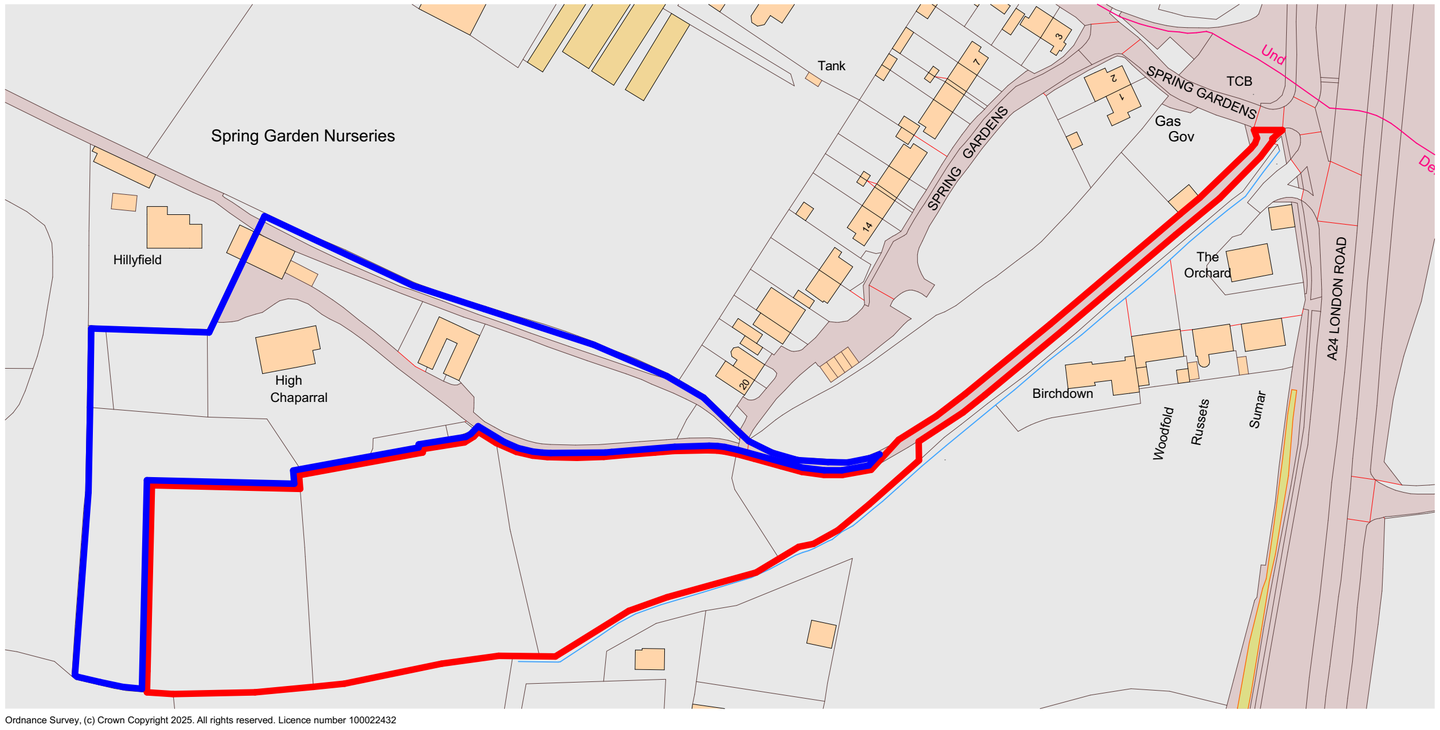
Plans list for: DC/25/1300
Schedule of plans/documents **not approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Block plan		B-01	12.08.2025
Location plan		L-01	12.08.2025
Details plan	Proposed 3D Views	FE-02	12.08.2025
Site plan	Proposed and Street View Elevation	FE-01	12.08.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed Unit 1	U1E1	12.08.2025

Elevation plan	Proposed Unit 1, 3 and 4	U1E2	12.08.2025
Floor plan	Proposed Unit 1	U1P	12.08.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed Unit 2 Elevations 1 and 2	U2E1	12.08.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed Unit 2 Elevations 3 and 4	U2E2	12.08.2025
Floor plan	Proposed Unit 2	U2P	12.08.2025
Elevation plan	Unit 3 Elevations 1 and 2	U3E1	12.08.2025
Site plan	Unit 1	U1SP	12.08.2025
Site plan	Unit 2	U2SP	12.08.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed Unit 3 Elevations 3 and 4	U3E2	12.08.2025
Floor plan	Proposed Unit 3	U3P	12.08.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed Unit 4 Elevations 1 and 2	U4E1	12.08.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed Unit 4 Elevations 3 and 4	U4E2	12.08.2025
Floor plan	Proposed Unit 4	U4P	12.08.2025
Site plan	Unit 3	U3SP	12.08.2025
Site plan	Unit 4	U4SP	12.08.2025
Design & Access Statement		NONE	12.08.2025

DELEGATED

Authorising Officer sign/initial Guy Everest Date: 06.05.2026



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L 1:1250
LOCATION PLAN

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\\192.168.0.6\Company\PCS Current PGA\1. PGA Current\269125 High Chaparrel\5. DRAWINGS\269125 High Chaparrel - Proposed 30.07.2025.pln269125 High Chaparrel - Proposed 30.07.2025.pln

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Rev.	Amendments	Date	Drw.

PHILIPS SURVEYORS
BUILDING SURVEYORS, DESIGNERS & CONSULTANTS
PHILIPS SURVEYORS LLP, THE OLD COACH HOUSE, 78
LOWER STREET, PULBOROUGH, WEST SUSSEX, RH20 2AA
T: 01798 873222
E: INFO@PHILIPS-SURVEYORS.CO.UK
W: WWW.PHILIPS-SURVEYORS.CO.UK

CLIENT:
Mr S PAGE
HIGH CHAPARRAL, LONDON ROAD, WASHINGTON, WEST SUSSEX, RH20 3BP

PROJECT:
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF 4 NO SUSSEX STYLE HOUSES / BARNS WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS & LANDSCAPING
HIGH CHAPARRAL, LONDON ROAD, WASHINGTON, WEST SUSSEX, RH20 3BP

DRAWING TITLE:
Feasibility
LOCATION PLAN

DRAWN:	JOB NO:	SCALE @ A2:
GRM	2691/25	As Shown
CHECKED: PGA	DRAWING NO: L-01	REV:
DATE: JULY 25		

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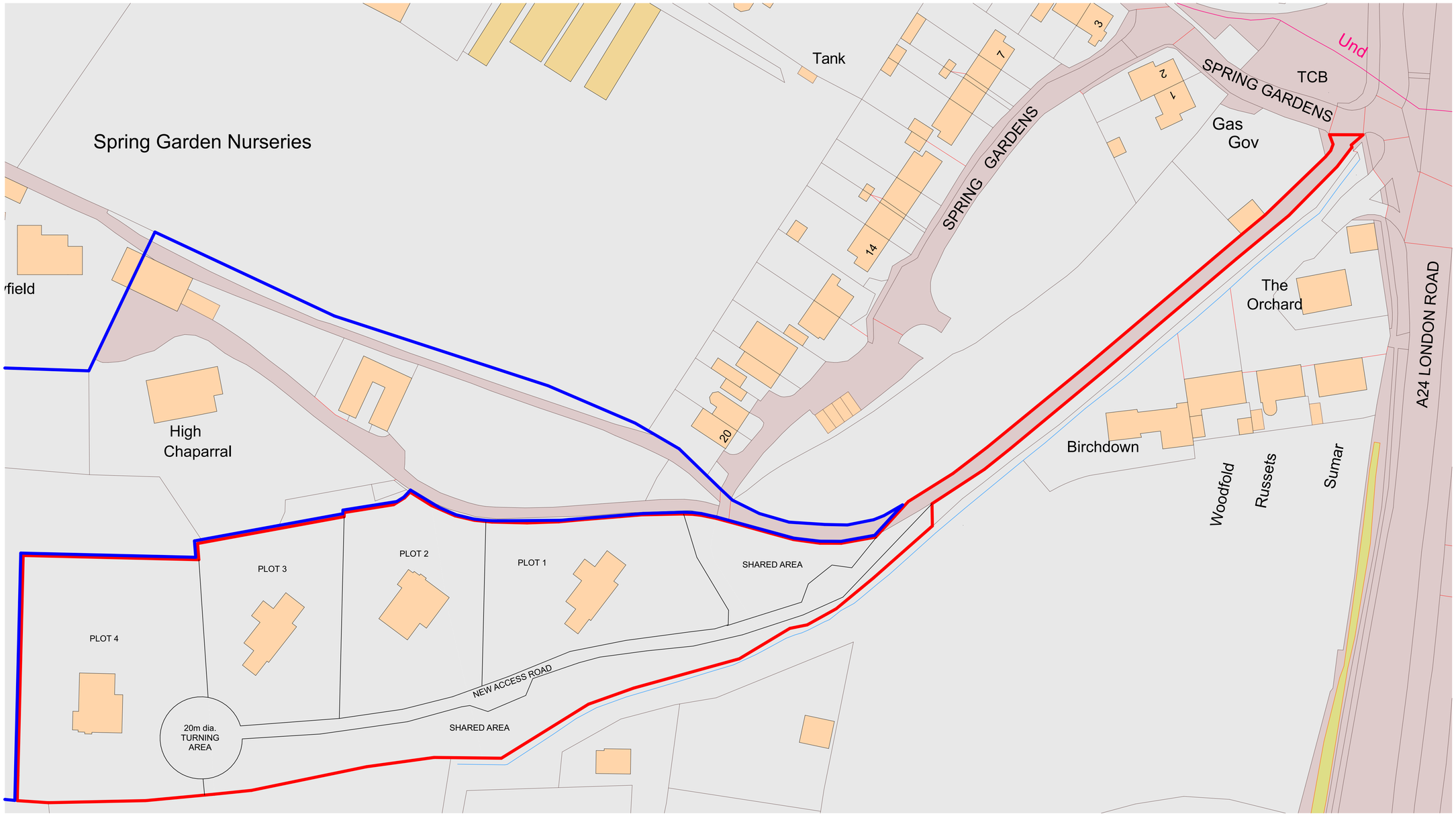

B 1:500 BLOCK PLAN

0 10 20 30 40 50

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PHILIPS SURVEYORS
BUILDING SURVEYORS, DESIGNERS & CONSULTANTS
PHILIPS SURVEYORS LLP,THE OLD COACH HOUSE, 78 LOWER STREET, PULBOROUGH, WEST SUSSEX, RH20 2AA
T: 01798 873222
E: INFO@PHILIPS-SURVEYORS.CO.UK
W: WWW.PHILIPS-SURVEYORS.CO.UK

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Mr S PAGE
HIGH CHAPARRAL, LONDON ROAD,
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DRAWING TITLE:
Feasibility

BLOCK PLAN

DRAWN:	JOB NO:	SCALE @ A1:
GRM	2691/25	As Shown
CHECKED: PGA	DRAWING NO: B-01	REV:
DATE: JULY 25		

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