Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/26/1542
Greenfield Farm, Valewood Lane, Barns Green, West Sussex, RH13 0QJ

DESCRIPTION:
Erection of 2no. single storey day room / utility buildings associated with approved residential caravan pitches.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DISC/26/0339	Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Conditions 4, 5, 6, 13 and 14 to approved application DC/25/0055.	Pending Consideration
DC/25/0055	Use of land for the stationing of 5 static caravans for residential purposes and 3 associated day rooms. Associated landscape works.	Application Refused on 22.05.2025. *Appeal Allowed on 24.11.2025.*

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

This application relates to Greenfield Farm, located on the eastern side of West Chiltington Lane, north of the junction to Valewood Lane. Whilst currently laid to grass, the site has planning permission for the change of use of the land, to a gypsy and traveller site, with associated day rooms and landscape works, reference DC/25/0055. This permission is unimplemented, however, an application is currently being considered by the council seeking to discharge the applicable pre-commencement conditions. The wider site comprises a gypsy and traveller use with 14x pitches granted between 2010 and 2016, with 9x of the pitches sited adjacent to the southern boundary of the site facing Valewood Lane and 5x pitches on the western side facing West Chiltington Lane.

The site is located outside of the built-up area boundary, and though the presence of the existing pitches on the site alongside wider established sporadic residential development to the east is acknowledged, the site is rural in character and appearance, formed predominantly of open fields bounded by established trees and planting. To the north of the site lays Kingfisher Farm and Greenacres Farm, the former being an established gypsy and traveller site for 11 pitches (though, additional unlawful pitches have been sited and is subject to a planning compliance investigation) and the latter hosting 2x pitches.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

Planning permission is sought for the erection of 2 single storey day rooms/utility buildings, to be sited within the approved gyspy and traveller site. The proposed day rooms will be sited within the curtilages of the two southern pitches, sited to the south of the approved static mobile homes, adjoining the western boundaries. The day rooms would measure 5.7 metres in width and depth, hosting a dual pitched roof with an eave's height of 2.4m and an overall ridge height of 4.2m. The buildings are to be

identical to the already approved dayrooms serving the northern pitches, consisting of brick walls and a titled roof. No further amendments to the original scheme are proposed.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):
Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
Policy 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
Policy 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs
Policy 21 - Strategic Policy: Gypsy and Traveller Sites Allocations
Policy 22 - Gypsy and Traveller Sites
Policy 23 - Strategic Policy: Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation
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
Policy 42 - Strategic Policy: Inclusive Communities

Barns Green & Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan 2024-2031
Policy 1 – Green Infrastructure Conservation
Policy 12 – Design Parameters

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):
Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change
Strategic Policy 10: Flooding
Strategic Policy 11: Environmental Protection
Strategic Policy 12: Air Quality
Strategic Policy 13: Landscape and Settlement Character, Development Patters and the Natural Environment
Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection
Strategic Policy 17: Green and Blue Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Strategic Policy 19: Development Principles
Policy 25: Parking
Strategic Policy 43: Gypsies and Travellers

Supplementary Planning Guidance:
Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (2017)
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (2017)

Planning Advice Notes:
Shaping Development in Horsham
Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

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:

Ecology Consultant: Holding Objection
The Preliminary Ecological Assessment (Sylvatica Ecology Ltd., November 2024) has been reviewed, relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected and Priority species and habitats and the identification of appropriate mitigation measures. Place Services are not satisfied there is sufficient ecological information available for determination of this application and recommend that details of survey results, mitigation and enhancement measures for protected species are required to make this proposal acceptable. The reasons for this are outlined below:

There is insufficient ecological information on European Protected Species and protected species available for determination. This is because the ecological assessment (Preliminary Ecological Assessment (Sylvatica Ecology Ltd., November 2024)) is out of date to support this application, in line with CIEEM Guidance1 and paragraph 6.2.1 of British Standard (BS) BS42020 'Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development 2013'. This is because the initial site walkover was undertaken in October 2024. As a result, we recommend that the applicant's ecologist provides an ecological addendum or an updated ecological report to support this application, which should require an additional site visit and may require updated desk study information.

NatureSpace (District Newt Licencing): Comments:
The applicant has provided an ecological report in the form of - Reptile and Great Crested Newt Survey Report, Greenfield Farm, Barns Green, The Ecology Co-op, July 2025.

The above report is based on what seems to be a previous application at the site, and therefore the assessment does not accurately reflect the merits of the current proposal. The site area is incorrect and it is difficult to understand the exact habitat impacts of this current application. The report has included some eDNA results from 2025 which demonstrated a likely absence of GCN in the pond adjacent to the site, but that GCN are present within the landscape, although most ponds could not be accessed. Some brief mitigation measures have been included within the report. Given the scale of the works for this particular development, requesting a licensed approach may be considered disproportionate to the likely impacts of the works.

It is therefore agreed that the works could be completed under a Precautionary Working Method statement. This however should be subject to receipt of an update/addendum which accurately assesses the habitat impacts of this current application and devises site specific mitigation based on this updated information. It is recommended that this updated assessment/mitigation statement is submitted to the LPA for approval prior to determination. This statement should incorporate measures including but not limited to: material and waste storage, management of trenches if applicable, any habitat manipulation required, any pollution prevention measures and steps taken should GCN be discovered onsite.

Southern Water: Comment
The Council's Building Control officers or technical staff should be asked to comment on the adequacy of Soakaways to dispose of surface water from the proposed development. No new Soakaways should be located within 5 metres of a public or adoptable gravity sewer, rising main or water main. No soakaways should be connected to the public surface water sewer. Proposed Disposal to ground from package treatment plant The Environment Agency should be consulted directly by the applicant regarding the use of a private wastewater treatment works which disposes of effluent to sub-soil irrigation.

WSCC Highways: No Objection
The LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (in line with TR6 paragraph 4) and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:
Representations:
None received

Parish Comments:
Itchingfield Parish Council: Objection
Itchingfield Parish Council's grounds for its recommendation to refuse DC/25/0055 were based on overdevelopment of the site, and the risks associated with inadequate foul and surface water drainage, which would compound those risks already present, without mitigation, in previously approved development on the Greenfield Farm site.

On the basis of overdevelopment and the continuing absence of any demonstrable adequacy in any proposed or implemented drainage strategy in, or associated with, application DC/26/1542, Itchingfield Parish Council continues to object strongly to development on the site and recommends planning approval be refused.

Member 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:

The application site comprises an approved, but currently unimplemented, gypsy and traveller site, forming 5 static caravans and 3 associated day rooms, approved at appeal under DC/25/0055. An application is currently being considered by the council seeking to discharge the applicable pre-commencement conditions attached to DC/25/0055, reference DISC/26/0339. This application seeks full planning consent for the erection of a further 2 associated day rooms, serving the two south pitches on the site.

The application does not entail a material change of use of the site, which is restricted to occupation by gypsy and travellers through conditions attached to the permission in place on the site. The provision of day rooms / amenity buildings is recognised in good practice guides as essential on individual pitches, with the proposal providing a kitchen/day room, bathroom and utility room. The scale of the proposed development would not be disproportionate to the related mobile homes nor wider site and matches the 3 day rooms approved under DC/25/0055.

Subject to all other material considerations below, the development is considered to be acceptable in principle.

Design and Appearance:

Policy 23(e) of the HDPF states that development for non-allocated gypsy / traveller sites must demonstrate that:

e. The development will not have an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the landscape and the amenity of neighbouring properties, and is sensitively designed to mitigate any impact on its surroundings.

In addition, Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the HDPF promote development that protects, conserves and enhances the landscape and townscape character from inappropriate development. Proposals should take into account townscape 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.

Policy 13 of the HDLP, seeks to protect and enhance the District's natural environment, landscape character and biodiversity by ensuring development is landscape-led and responds positively to its surroundings. The policy requires development to conserve landscape and townscape character, maintain settlement separation, safeguard and enhance green and blue infrastructure, geological and biodiversity assets, and deliver measurable biodiversity net gains. It also requires SuDS to be integrated in suitable locations to provide drainage, landscape and ecological benefits, with appropriate long-term management and maintenance arrangements secured.

Policy 19 of the HDLP relates to development quality and seeks to ensure that all development is of a high-quality and inclusive design, informed by an understanding of the local context, in order to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment and deliver sustainable buildings and places. The Policy also seeks to ensure development makes efficient use of land, responds sympathetically to its surroundings, protects the amenity of existing and future occupiers, and provides safe, accessible environments that promote sustainable travel and reduce opportunities for crime and antisocial behaviour.

Policy 43 of the HDLP states that development for non-allocated gypsy / traveller sites must demonstrate that:

f. the development will not have an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the landscape and is sensitively designed to mitigate any impact on its surroundings;
g. the layout of the site, its associated facilities and landscaping will be designed to a high standard, including pitches, hardstanding, amenity blocks, play spaces and boundary treatments.

Policy 12 of the Barns Green and Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan, seeks to ensure that development is of a high-quality design that contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area, respects the scale and setting of surrounding development and landscape, protects important open spaces and local identity, safeguards residential amenity, creates safe and accessible environments, supports green infrastructure, and incorporates appropriate local materials and vernacular design.

The proposed day rooms will be sited within the curtilages of the two southern pitches, sited to the south of the approved static mobile homes, adjoining the western boundaries. The day rooms would measure 5.7 metres in width and depth, hosting a dual pitched roof with an eave's height of 2.4m and an overall ridge height of 4.2m. The buildings are to be identical to the already approved dayrooms serving the northern pitches, consisting of brick walls and a titled roof.

The proposed day rooms would be comfortably accommodated within the existing pitch boundaries and would not create a cluttered or overdeveloped appearance, either in isolation or in combination with existing and proposed surrounding development. The day room will be located in close proximity to the main dwelling, not giving rise to concerns relating that the buildings could be converted and used as an independent unit of accommodation. The buildings' scale and design would appear in-keeping with the character and appearance of the wider surrounding area and will be viewed alongside the established

context of the area. With the above in mind, the proposal is considered in accordance with Policies 23, 25, 33, 33 of the HDPF and Policies 13, 19 and 43 of the HDLP.

Highways Impacts:

Policy 23(b) of the HDPF states that development for non-allocated gypsy / traveller sites must demonstrate that:

b. The site is served by a safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access. The proposal should not result in significant hazard to other road users;

In addition, Policy 40 of the HDPF seeks to direct development to areas which are integrated with sustainable transport networks, encourage sustainable transport choices and ensure that new development is safe for all modes of transport, including vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. In addition, proposals should minimise conflict between traffic, cyclists and pedestrians.

Policy 24 of the HDLP promotes sustainable transport by reducing the need to travel, prioritising walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport, and requiring development to accord with relevant transport and design guidance. Policy 25 seeks adequate, safe and secure parking provision, supports sustainable transport through cycle parking and EV charging facilities, and resists the loss of parking spaces unless suitable mitigation is provided.

Policy 43 of the HDLP states that development for non-allocated gypsy / traveller sites must demonstrate that:

b. the site has safe and convenient access to the highway and public transport services;
c. there is provision within the site for parking, turning and servicing;

It was concluded as part of DC/25/0055 that safe and adequate access would be provided for users of the site and the development of the site was not considered to have a severe cumulative impact on the function and safety of the highway network. This application solely relates to the erection of 2 day rooms/utility buildings and as such, West Sussex County Council, in their role as the LHA does not anticipate that the proposals would give rise to a significant material intensification of movements to or from the site. The LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (in line with TR6 paragraph 4) and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

Other Matters:

Amenity Impacts

Policy 33(2) states that development shall be required to ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land. This is read in connection with Policy 23(e) as set out above in the case of gypsy and traveller proposal sites.

Policy 43 (3) of the HDLP states the development will be required to demonstrate that it will not result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of occupiers of neighbouring sites. Policy 19 of the HDLP seeks to protect the amenity of existing and future occupiers.

Given the relationship with the nearby residential properties, and the distance between the site and neighbouring properties, it is not considered that the proposed development would result in harm through overlooking and loss of privacy. For these reasons, the proposed development would not result in harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties and users of land, in accordance with Policies 23, 32, and 33 of the HDPF and Policies 19 and 43 of the HDLP.

Ecology:

Policy 31 of the HDPF states that development will be supported where it demonstrates that it maintains or enhances the existing network of green infrastructure. Development proposals will be required to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity, and should create and manage new habitats where appropriate.

Policy 17 of the HDLP supports development that maintains and enhances green and blue infrastructure. The policy requires green and blue infrastructure to be integrated into the design of development and seeks to protect and enhance protected, priority and notable species and habitats, whilst supporting habitat creation and ecological recovery.

The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA), prepared by Sylvatica Ecology and this was originally submitted as part of the original application, reference DC/25/0055. Forming a reason for refusal, the council found insufficient information had been submitted to establish the protection of the ecological and biodiversity interests of the site and whether suitable mitigations or enhancements are necessary and achievable, contrary to Policy 31.

As part of the subsequent appeal process, a Reptile and Great Crested Newt Survey Report, prepared by The Ecology Co-Op was then submitted. The survey did not identify the presence of reptiles or Great Crested Newts within the site and concluded that the proposed development could proceed subject to a series of precautionary mitigation measures. The Council's ecological consultant confirmed that there is sufficient ecological information available to support determination of this application, stating;

- No reptiles were recorded during any of the eight reptile survey visits undertaken between May and July 2025.
- eDNA surveys identified Great Crested Newts in two ponds within the wider area, but the pond immediately adjacent to the site returned a negative result.
- The report concluded that it is very unlikely that reptiles or Great Crested Newts are utilising the site.
- The risk of impacts to Great Crested Newts arising from the development was assessed as negligible.
- Precautionary mitigation measures were recommended, including an ecological toolbox talk prior to commencement of works and appropriate management of vegetation clearance and habitat manipulation.
- The implementation of the precautionary mitigation measures was recommended and subject to appropriate conditions, the development could be made ecologically acceptable.

The above survey has been submitted in support of this current application. In allowing the appeal, the Inspector concluded that no adverse ecological effects would arise, subject to appropriate conditions securing the recommended mitigation measures. In reaching this conclusion, the Inspector noted that the existing stable building had negligible bat roost potential and that no hedgerows or trees would be removed, thereby maintaining habitat continuity and avoiding any severance of bat flight lines. Whilst acknowledging the potential for disturbance from artificial lighting, the Inspector was satisfied that this could be adequately controlled through a suitably worded lighting condition. The Inspector also found that potential impacts on hazel dormice could be avoided through the retention of a 15m buffer to hedgerows, whilst mobile protected species such as hedgehogs could be safeguarded through implementation of the precautionary methods set out within the PEA. The Inspector concluded that no likely adverse effects would arise either on-site or off-site in respect of ecology.

The comments by the Council’s ecological consultant, commenting on the Preliminary Ecological Assessment, and NatureSpace are acknowledged. Whilst an updated ecological addendum has not been provided, the Council is satisfied that the previously submitted evidence remains relevant to this application, which is reduced in size and limited to the erection of two day rooms within the wider area previously assessed. Given this current site area was included within the red line of DC/25/0055, the previous measures remain applicable to this current application. In these circumstances, and noting that no material changes have occurred on the site since the appeal decision, it would not be reasonable or justified to reach a different conclusion regarding the ecological acceptability of the proposal. The findings of the previously submitted survey work and the conclusions reached by the

Inspector are therefore applicable in the assessment of this current application and the development is therefore considered to comply with Policy 31 of the HDPF and Policy 17 of the HDLP.

Drainage and Flood Risk:

Policy 23 of the HDPF states that development for non-allocated gypsy / traveller sites states that:

a. There must be no significant barriers to development in terms of flooding, poor drainage, poor ground stability or proximity to other hazardous land or installation where conventional housing would not be suitable.

b. The site can be properly serviced and is supplied with essential services, such as water, power, sewerage and drainage, and waste disposal. The site must also be large enough to provide adequate vehicle parking, including circulation space, along with residential amenity and play areas;

Policy 43 (h) of the HDLP states development proposals will be required to demonstrate the site has or will have a supply of essential services, such as mains gas and electricity, water, sewerage, drainage and waste disposal.

The day rooms will form part of the wider site as approved under DC/25/0055, in which in granting permission, a suitable foul and surface water drainage condition was attached. An application is currently being considered by the council seeking to discharge this pre-commencement condition, reference DISC/26/0339. As the drainage strategy associated with the wider site is currently under consideration, there is no further requirement to impose a further drainage condition as part of this consent.

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:

- From 6 August 2026, BNG does not apply to planning applications for developments where the site area within the redline boundary is 0.2 hectares or below.

Conclusions:

This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of two day rooms associated with an approved gypsy and traveller site. The proposed buildings are modest in scale, are sited within the approved pitches, and are identical in form, design and appearance with the day rooms already approved under application DC/25/0055. The development would not result in an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area, residential amenity, highway safety, ecology, drainage or flood risk. Having regard to the appeal decision relating to the wider site, including the ecology conclusions reached by the Inspector, the proposal is considered to comply with the relevant policies of the HDPF, HDLP and Barns Green and Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

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 to be used in the development hereby permitted shall strictly accord with those indicated on the approved plan and application form.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

4 **Regulatory Condition**: The development hereby permitted shall be undertaken in strict accordance with the ecological mitigation and enhancement measures contained in the Preliminary Ecological Assessment (Sylvatica Ecology Ltd dated November 2024) and the Reptile and Great Crested Newt Survey Report (The Ecology Co-op dated July 2025). This will include the appointment of an appropriately competent person, for example an Ecological Clerk of Works, to provide on-site ecological expertise during the construction process. The appointed person shall undertake all relevant activities, and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: As these matters are fundamental to safeguard the ecology and biodiversity of the area in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), and to enhance Protected and Priority Species/habitats and allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

5 **Regulatory Condition**: No external lighting or floodlighting shall be installed other than with the permission of the Local Planning Authority by way of formal application.

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

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/26/1542

Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Supporting Statement	Reptile and Great Crested Newt Survey Report by The Ecology Co-Op, dated 15th July 2025	P10436	25.09.2026
Supporting Statement	Preliminary Ecological Assessment by Sylvatica Ecology Ltd dated 17	NONE	25.09.2026

	November 2024		
Location plan	Location Plan	2603GR_000	25.09.2026
Block plan	Proposed Block Plan	2603GR_002	25.09.2026
Elevation & Floor plan	Proposed Utility Building	2603GR_101	25.09.2026
Supporting Statement	Application Form	NONE	25.09.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Sam Nye Date: 19/11/2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 20.11.2026