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Gemma Carey,
The Planning Inspectorate,
Temple Quay House,
2 The Square,
Temple Quay,
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BS1 6PN

09 October 2025
Ref: SL/Let/P2142i

Dear Gemma,

APP/Z3825/W/25/3370636 - Roundabout Place, Common Hill, West Chiltington, West Sussex, RH20 2NR.

This letter has been submitted on behalf of Remmus Homes in response to Horsham District Council's letter dated 6 October 2025. The letter reiterates the sole reason for refusal and provides limited commentary on the Appellant's Statement of Case.

While the Council has re-stated its original reason for refusal, it provides no new substantive evidence to contradict the professional assessment of its own officers, the supporting technical submissions, or the Appellant's submitted evidence

The Appellant respectfully maintains that the proposal accords with the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), and that the refusal reason is not supported by robust or proportionate evidence.

The Council's response simply repeats the committee reason for refusal, asserting subjective "perceived harm" to the Conservation Area and non-designated heritage assets. It does not engage with:

- The Officer's recommendation which concluded that any heritage harm would be less than substantial and at the lower end of the scale; and
- The updated housing land supply position, which the Committee report misrepresented as 2.9 years when the Council's own May 2025 report confirmed only a 1-year supply.

The appeal should therefore be determined on the evidence-based assessment undertaken by officers and the Appellant's specialist consultants rather than on matters of subjective interpretation.

Building Line

The Council maintains that the dwelling would be "beyond the building line" but provides no analysis or evidence to demonstrate that a consistent building line exists along Common Hill.

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Both the Council's own Officer Report and previous Inspector's findings at Ling Heath (APP/Z3825/W/17/3174615) confirm that *no defined building line* exists and that the character of the area is one of informality, with dwellings set at varying distances from the road, screened by mature vegetation.

The proposed dwelling would be set back approximately 14.2 metres from Common Hill, a greater setback than several nearby approved dwellings, including Ragmans Castle (DC/06/2535) and Enderby Thatch (DC/06/2867).

Consequently, the assertion of harm due to siting beyond a "building line" is factually unsound and contrary to both the Council's historic planning decisions and appeal precedents.

Heritage and Conservation Area

The Council's letter provides no analysis of the heritage significance of the Conservation Area or the Wells Cottages, nor any explanation of the magnitude of harm.

The Council's professional Conservation Officer and Planning Case Officer both concluded that the proposals would result in less than substantial harm at the lower end of the spectrum. The design was developed through extensive pre-committee discussion and revision, adopting locally distinctive Arts and Crafts materials, half-hipped roofs, and a landscape-led layout, all aided by officers.

The Appellant's heritage consultant (IHBC-accredited) confirmed that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The Council's current response does not contest that expert conclusion with any technical evidence.

The Inspector at Ling Heath (2017) expressly recognised that new dwellings within front gardens can be acceptable within this same street and Conservation Area, finding that *"there is no defined building line along Common Hill, and the proposal would not appear incongruous or out of place as part of the street scene."* That principle applies equally here.

Accordingly, any residual effect on heritage significance is minor, localised and demonstrably outweighed by the public benefits of a high-quality, sustainable new home in a defined settlement.

Housing Land Supply and the Tilted Balance

The Council's response does not address the Appellant's uncontested evidence that the District has only a 1-year housing land supply, as confirmed in the Council's own committee report of 20 May 2025 and recent appeal decisions (e.g. APP/Z3825/W/24/3355546).

This substantial deficit engages paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF, the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The appeal site lies within the defined settlement boundary of West Chiltington and is not constrained by any of the restrictive policies in Footnote 7 of the NPPF. In this context, the tilted balance clearly applies, and the limited localised impact does not significantly or demonstrably outweigh the proposal's benefits.

New Issues introduced by the Council

The Council's letter introduces new concerns relating to waste, trees, and vernacular building form, none of which formed part of the reason for refusal or were raised by statutory consultees.

These matters were addressed in the original submission:

- Tree and hedgerow protection measures were included within the tree protection plan and can be secured by standard condition.
- Waste storage and collection points have been considered, with sufficient space available in the garage for storage. This can be secured by standard condition.
- The proposed design takes its cue from the Arts and Crafts style that defines the Conservation Area, using white-painted brick, red clay tiles and a simple, asymmetrical form that fits in with the local character. The approach was developed with guidance from the case officer.

As such, no new technical or policy issues arise from these comments.

Conditions

The inclusion of a full set of suggested conditions is welcomed and demonstrates that the Council accepts there is no technical barrier to development if the appeal is allowed.

It is noted that Condition 4 refers to the installation of a rainwater/greywater harvesting system, which does not form part of the submitted or approved proposals. The condition also cites an incorrect Water Neutrality Statement reference. The Appellant respectfully suggests the following amended wording:

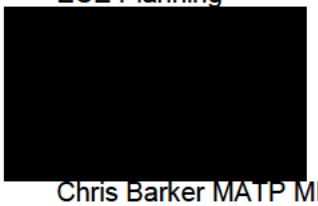
Revised Condition 4 - Water Efficiency Measures - *No development above ground floor slab level shall commence until full details of the water efficiency measures required by the approved water neutrality strategy (Water Neutrality Statement dated 03.01.2025) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

We request that this condition be updated accordingly.

Conclusion

The Appellant therefore respectfully requests that the appeal be allowed and that planning permission be granted, subject to appropriate and proportionate planning conditions.

Yours sincerely
ECE Planning



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