

Dear Gemma

We write in response to the Inspector's invitation dated 21 August 2026 concerning the relevance of the National Planning Policy Framework published on 17 August 2026 ("NPPF 2026"). The new Framework is directly relevant and, for the reasons below, supports the appeal. These comments should be read alongside the Appellants' Statement of Case dated May 2026.

For the purpose of reply proportionately the principal new policies are S3 and S5. As the appeal site lies outside a defined settlement, S3 directs the decision-maker to S5. Policy S5(1)(d) expressly provides for the redevelopment of previously developed land, including residential development. The Statement of Case identifies the appeal site as previously developed land and records the lawful access, stable building and hardstanding. The proposal for one dwelling therefore falls within the express S5(1)(d) as the site is previously developed land.

There is also an additional route under S5(1)(j). That policy expressly treats an inability to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply as evidence of unmet need. The Council's latest position cited in the Statement of Case is only 1.7 years' supply. The proposal would make a small but deliverable contribution to that need and HO7 requires substantial weight to be given to the benefit of providing homes which meet evidenced need.

For S5(1)(j), the site is physically related to existing development on Spring Gardens. Dwellings lie to the south-east and north-west, substantial commercial development is nearby, and the site is approximately 200 metres from a bus stop serving Ashington, Storrington and Horsham. It is therefore not an isolated home for the purposes of S5(3): it lies close to a group of houses and other built form. The proposal is only one dwelling, can be accommodated by existing infrastructure and would not generate a significant amount of movement.

Under S5, development should be approved unless its benefits are substantially outweighed by adverse effects when assessed against the national decision-making policies. No such adverse effects arise here. The proposed dwelling is of an appropriate scale and design, the established landscape boundaries would be retained and enhanced, and no objection was raised on matters such as highway safety, residential amenity, flood risk, ecology etc. subject where necessary to conditions. The proposal is consequently consistent with policies DP3, TR3-TR6 and the relevant environmental policies for reasons set out in the Statement of Case.

Finally, Annex A paragraph 2 states that development-plan policies, or parts of them, which are materially inconsistent with the national decision-making policies should be given very limited weight. Accordingly, the restrictive effect of the older HDPF countryside and settlement policies should not act as a barrier to policies for approval now contained in S5(1)(d) and S5(1)(j).

In summary, NPPF 2026 strengthens the case for allowing the appeal. The proposal is an expressly supported redevelopment of previously developed land, contributes to an acute housing shortfall, is not isolated, and causes no adverse effect that would substantially outweigh its benefits. The Inspector is therefore respectfully invited to allow the appeal, subject to appropriate conditions and the submitted unilateral undertaking.

Kind regards

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