13 July 2026

Philippa Robinson

[redacted]

74 High Street
Sevenoaks TN13 1JR
savills.com

Inspector E Catcheside
Planning Inspectorate

Sent via email:
East2@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Dear Inspector Catcheside,

Appeal Reference 6005400 (LPA Ref: DC/24/1196)
Land South of Bax Close, Storrington, West Sussex, RH20 4HN

I write in respect of the above appeal. The Hearing for this appeal took place on 11 June 2026 with the site visit undertaken on 12 June 2026.

The Appellant has since reviewed the comments and considers that most of these themes were discussed extensively at the Hearing or have been dealt with in detail through the Appellant's supporting submissions. Therefore this letter focuses only on points raised by interested parties that the Appellant seeks to clarify for the Inspector, as there was not an opportunity to previously respond to these matters, nor were they raised as a reason for refusal; consequently, they were not addressed within the Appellant's Hearing Statement.

Procedural Concerns

Two procedural concerns have been raised by interested parties. The Appellant would like to provide clarification in relation to these matters:

1. The reason for the consultation after the Hearing

The Appellant wishes to clarify the reasons for the additional consultation on the submitted Hearing Statement.

The Appeal was originally submitted on the basis that it would be determined through the Inquiry procedure. However, on 12 March 2026, the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) confirmed that the Appeal would instead proceed by way of a Hearing and provided the Appellant with an opportunity to update their submission to reflect this change in procedure. The deadline for the submission of updated appeal documentation was 30 March 2026, and the Appellant duly submitted its Hearing Statement and supporting appendices to PINS via email on 30 March with PINS confirming receipt on the same date.

As discussed at the Hearing, due to an administrative error, the Appellant's Hearing Statement and Appendices were not uploaded to Horsham District Council's (HDC) online planning portal at the time they were submitted. Whilst the Appellant understands that these documents were available throughout the consultation period on the PINS Appeal Portal, it was acknowledged during the Hearing that not all interested parties may have been aware of, or accessed, the appeal documents via that route and therefore may not have had the opportunity to review the information.

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It was agreed at the Hearing that a further consultation should be undertaken to ensure all parties had a fair opportunity to consider and respond to the information. Accordingly, HDC issued and published a notification letter on 16 June 2026, advising interested parties that comments could be submitted until 1 July 2026. A total of 24 responses were subsequently received by PINS and forwarded to the Appellant on 2 July 2026 for consideration.

2. The information provided in the Appellant's Hearing Statement.

The information submitted in relation to the technical construction of the proposed access road, contained within Appendix F of the Appellant's Hearing Statement and more specifically Appendix 2 (cross section of the proposed ramp, drawing ref: TR26-5299_RUR_CEL) of this document, does not constitute new information in planning terms. Nor is it proposed that it will form part of any permission granted. Rather, it is the type of detail that would be required as part of the discharge of the relevant condition (noted as Condition 21 in the list of agreed conditions submitted to PINS on 30 June 2026).

It is also important to note that this detail would ordinarily be prepared and provided at the detailed design stage as part of the Section 278 agreement process under the Highways Act 1980. Such details would be the subject of a separate technical approval process and would ultimately be submitted to, and approved by, the Local Highway Authority prior to the commencement of the relevant highway works. Thus, would not normally form part of a planning application.

The reason for providing this information at the appeal stage is not to introduce a new element of the scheme, but to demonstrate the technical feasibility of constructing the access road using a reduced-dig construction methodology across the identified Root Protection Area. This evidence has been submitted to show the standard specification for the reduced dig access solution and the requirement to have a slope from Bax Close. Further explanation is provided at paragraphs 6.3 and 6.4 within Appendix F of the Appellant's Hearing Statement . The detail of this approach would be provided through the discharge of planning conditions and the Section 278 design process.

The Appellant therefore confirms that no amendments to the proposed development (including the access) have been proposed through the appeal.

Implications of the Proposed Access

Concerns have been raised regarding the proposed access gradient and its suitability for pedestrians and wheelchair users. However, these comments appear to be based on the assumption that the access road is required to comply with the Equality Act (2010) or inclusive access guidance applicable to primary pedestrian routes. This is not the case.

The proposed vehicular access from Bax Close is neither the sole nor the primary pedestrian access serving the development. A dedicated pedestrian access is proposed from the easternmost corner of the site directly onto Amberley Road, providing the most convenient and direct route to the town centre. In addition, users will have access to the existing Public Right of Way network, which also offers a more direct pedestrian connection than a route via Bax Close. Given that the access road is principally intended to serve vehicular movements and does not represent the primary pedestrian route, there is no requirement for the adjacent footway to comply with the gradient standards typically applied to dedicated accessible pedestrian routes.

In highway design terms, Manual for Streets 2 (2010) acknowledges that gradients of up to 8% (approximately 1:12) may be necessary and should be regarded as a practical maximum unless particular local difficulties exist. The submitted information shows a typical construction detail for a 2m slope with a gradient of 1:10. Further explanation and context for this drawing is provided at paragraphs 6.3 and 6.4 within Appendix F of the Appellant's Hearing Statement. In this case, there is sufficient space to accommodate a longer ramp of up to 14m in length at a gradient within the specified requirements (Manual for Streets). The full construction details including gradient will provided with the information submitted with proposed condition 21.

I trust the above clarifies the Appellant's position on two key themes that have been raised by interested parties since the Hearing. However, if you have any questions or require further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Philippa Robinson MRTPI
Associate Planner