



Horsham District Council
Parkside
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 1RL

Our ref: 22022
Date: 11 September 2026

For the attention of: Matthew Porter

Application ref: DC/26/1168
Location: Land North of Melton Drive Storrington West Sussex
Proposal/Description: Outline application, with all matters reserved, for the phased development comprising: Phase 1 construction of the access road (to be delivered through a subsequent Reserved Matters Application pursuant to Outline Permission DC/24/2006); and Phase 2 residential development of up to 56 dwellings with associated landscaping, pedestrian and vehicular access

Thank you for consulting with Place Services on the above application. This letter sets out our consultation response on the landscape impact of the application and how the proposal relates and responds to the landscape setting and context of the site.

Summary

Not supportive on landscape grounds	☐
No landscape objection, subject to attached recommendations and/or conditions	☐
Further information required prior to determination	☒
No landscape comments / does not wish to comment	☐

This review is based on a desktop study of the above-referenced application and its submitted documents, without a site visit. Our Landscape comments are as follows:

1.0. Site Context

- 1.1. The site is located to the north of Storrington and comprises a field parcel with vegetated boundaries and some scattered trees throughout.
- 1.2. The site is adjacent to a previously approved outline application (DC/24/2006) which is located to the west, and forms phase 2 of the development.
- 1.3. Grade II East Wantley (1285180) and East Wantley Barn (1471834) are located to the north of the site. The site bound by approved development DC/24/2006 to the west, approved development DC/23/0290 to the east and Storrington to the south.



- 1.4. Public Right of Way (PRoW) Footpath SAS-2442 is located to the north of the site, with Footpath SAS-2448 directly to the east.

2.0. Planning Policy Context

Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015)

- 2.1. The Horsham District Planning Framework Proposals Maps identifies the site as being located outside of the defined built-up area boundary and therefore the site is designated as countryside. The following policies are considered relevant to this application:

- Policy 24: Environmental Protection
- Policy 25: District Character and the Natural Environment
- Policy 26: Countryside Protection
- Policy 27: Settlement Coalescence
- Policy 31: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2031

- 2.2. The proposals should also have regard to the following policies from the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan.
- Policy 8: Countryside Protection
 - Policy 9: Green Gap
 - Policy 15: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

3.0. Review of the proposal/submitted information

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

- 3.1. The application is supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) undertaken by CSA Environmental. The methodology used for the assessment is outlined in Appendix H Methodology and Summary of Landscape and Visual Effects. The assessment was undertaken in line with the 'Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA3) and various Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Notes (TGNs) which is welcomed.
- 3.2. Paragraph 1.4 of the LVIA states that the assessment is based on site visits undertaken in February and July 2025 to see the site when trees were both in leaf and out of leaf. Photography was taken in April 2026 when vegetation was not in leaf, therefore representing the worst-case scenario which is welcomed.

Landscape Character

- 3.3. The LVIA correctly identifies the site as being located within the Wealden Greensand National Character Area (NCA 120), the Storrington Woods and Heaths WG7 character area of the Landscape Character Assessment of West Sussex, and LCA E1 – Parham and

Storrington Wooded Farmlands and Heaths of the Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment.

- 3.4. Table 3 outlines the Landscape Character Baseline judgements for the site and immediate surroundings, the townscape character of the immediate surroundings and the wider landscape character. Whilst the assessment outlines the value and susceptibility for the site and immediate surroundings, it is unclear what these are for the townscape of the wider landscape character, and therefore it is difficult to understand how sensitivity judgements have been reached.
- 3.5. Furthermore, it is also unclear if the wider landscape character area refers to all three identified character areas or only the more local areas.
- 3.6. Table 5 outlines the Effects on Landscape Character at year 1 and year 15. We agree with the judgements provided.

Visual Effects

- 3.7. We note that a Zone of Theoretical Visibility was not undertaken for the site. Given the sloping topography and proximity to the South Downs National Park area, this would have been helpful to understand the chosen viewpoints. However, the viewpoints identified to represent the site as outlined in appendices A and B are acceptable.
- 3.8. Type 1 visualisations were used for the LVIA. However, it is noted that not all visualisations are annotated. As per the guidance set out in Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals, type 1's should be annotated showing the location of the site and features/locations of interest within the view for context. This needs to be included for photographs 6, 7
- 3.9. Table 1 outlines the Visual Baseline of the site including visual receptors and their sensitivity. Paragraph M15 within the methodology states that:
“the sensitivity of the receptor varies according to its susceptibility to a particular type of change, and the value placed on it.” Paragraph M16 states *“visual sensitivity was assessed using the criteria in Table VE1 by combining judgements on the value of the views and their susceptibility to change.”*
- 4.0. At present there is no narrative within the assessment regarding the value and susceptibility of each of the visual receptors, therefore it is difficult to understand how sensitivity judgements have been reached.
- 4.1. Table 6 outlines the Visual Effects of the identified visual receptors. We agree with the judgements provided on visual effects.

Design and Layout

- 4.2. The mitigation measures outlined within paragraph 5.2 of the LVIA state that housing is to be set back from the higher ground in the southern part of the Site which is more visually sensitive in views from public footpath 2463. The LVIA also states that development should be a maximum of 1.5 storey in height and set below the tree line in the southern part of the site. Development has been sited to the south as shown in the Illustrative Parameters Plan and whilst we welcome that this is proposed as 1.5 storey, we query if development could be pushed back further from this boundary to better reflect the outlined mitigation measures. Further information should also be provided regarding the building heights for the remainder of the site
- 4.3. The Landscape Strategy Plan (dwg. CSA/7502/104) and Illustrative Coloured Masterplan (dwg no. 2505/PL.05) appear to show existing trees retained in rear gardens, specifically in plots 5 and 6 to the south of the site. We would discourage this as their longevity cannot be secured when in private gardens. All existing trees would be better preserved within in areas of public open space or public realm.
- 4.4. We have reviewed the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment, and it is difficult to see where the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) for existing trees are. We would suggest that the drawing is made clearer to ensure that the proposals allow for the protection of existing trees where possible, as these are quintessential to the landscape character of the site.
- 4.5. We welcome the central green corridor proposed through the development, however, we would advise that this is extended further south. This approach would enable the retention of existing oak trees and strengthen the north-south green corridor through the site, enhancing green infrastructure and open space provision. The Illustrative Parameters Plan 2505/PL.04 should be amended to reflect this.
- 4.6. A community orchard is proposed to the north of the site and whilst this landscape feature is welcomed, we query if there could also be opportunities for a more informal foraging trail around the outskirts of the site.

5.0. Summary

- 5.1. Whilst the submitted LVIA is broadly acceptable, there remain gaps in how the landscape and townscape sensitivity judgements have been reached due to a lack of narrative on value and susceptibility for wider landscape receptors. Furthermore, there is a lack of clarity over what the wider landscape character areas assessed are. We also have queries on the visual assessment due to the lack of narrative on visual receptors value and susceptibility.
- 5.2. The proposed mitigation is welcomed, however we would encourage further setback from the southern boundary to ensure that the mitigation measures outlined in the LVIA are fully realised. Clarification is also sought on building heights across the remainder of the site.

- 5.3. Existing trees should be incorporated into public open space or within the public realm instead of private gardens to ensure their long term protection. Additionally, Root Protection Areas should be clearly shown in the drawings.
- 5.4. The central green corridor is a positive feature, and we would recommend extending this further south, strengthening the north-south link and green infrastructure. There are also missed opportunities for delivering a more informal foraging trail around the open space within the site.
- 5.5. The Illustrative Parameters Plan 2505/PL.04 should be amended in response to the matters raised above to secure an improved green infrastructure provision and appropriate mitigation measures.

Please contact us if you have any queries in relation to this advice.

Place Services – Landscape Team

Email: landscape@essex.gov.uk



This advice has been provided by Place Services on behalf of Horsham District Council.

Please note:

This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.

We are unable to respond directly to applicants/agents or other interested parties. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant/agent or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer at the relevant LPA, who will seek further advice from us where appropriate.

AI may have been used in the preparation of this response, but its use will be limited to basic proof-reading, grammar, and spelling correction. This response has been reviewed by the author(s). If you have any queries, please contact us for information about our AI guidance.