Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/26/1461
Coachmans, Cowfold Road, West Grinstead, West Sussex, RH13 8LZ

DESCRIPTION:
Creation of a below ground swimming pool.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

None relevant to the above application.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES
The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 28 - Replacement Dwellings and House Extensions in the Countryside
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles

Cowfold Neighbourhood Plan 2019 – 2031
Policy 9 – Residential Development Principles

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):
Policy 19: Development Quality
Policy 20: Development Principles

Parish Design Statement:

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:

Newt Officer:
- The development falls within the red impact risk zone for great crested newts. Impact risk zones have been derived through advanced modelling to create a species distribution map which predicts likely presence. In the red impact zone, there is highly suitable habitat and a high likelihood of great crested newt presence.

- There are 16 ponds within 500m of the development proposal, the closest of which are 33m and 72m away.

- There are recent great crested newt records within 500m.

Arboricultural Officer: No objection.

Southern Waters: Has raised no objections to this proposal.

Parish Comments:
Cowfold Parish Council: None received.

Representations:
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:

The application has been assessed on the basis of the submitted details, together with the planning history of the site and adjoining properties, available images and photographs supplied by the agent. These details were considered sufficient to allow the application to be properly considered and determined.

Character and Appearance

Policy 28 of the HDPF relates to house extensions and outbuildings in the countryside, stating that ancillary accommodation and garaging must demonstrate that the need for additional space cannot be met from an existing dwelling or buildings suitable of conversion on the site, with new outbuildings sited to have regard to the dwelling they serve and be grouped with the house. The policy also states that the use of ancillary accommodation as a separate dwelling will not be supported.

Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF seek to ensure that development promotes a high standard and quality of design in order to enhance and protect locally distinctive characters. The policies also seek to ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of development relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the skyline and important views.

Policy 9 of the Cowfold Neighbourhood Plan aims to maintain that residential Development proposals will be supported where they are within the built-up area of Cowfold and:

a. are of a sympathetic scale, relating positively to the character, function and layout of the area;
b. maintain appropriate distances between buildings to avoid unacceptable adverse impacts on existing facilities or amenity of adjacent residential properties;
c. Incorporate the use of high-quality building materials and finishes consistent with high thermal efficiency;
d. are of a density that is appropriate to its location and has regard to current levels in the immediate area;
e. are designed to account for the unavailability of mains gas; and
f. Provide appropriate infrastructure to facilitate EV charging for car parking spaces without the need for further groundworks.

The proposal seeks planning permission for the creation of a below ground swimming pool. The proposed swimming pool would be located to the south-west of the main dwelling and would be positioned within the front garden area of the property. The proposal would not be easily visible from wider views and would be sited directly opposite from the eastern neighbouring property's swimming pool, also positioned within the front garden area. It is noted that the western neighbouring property has an indoor swimming pool as well. The swimming pool would be used for incidental purposes in connection to the main dwelling. Therefore, it is not considered that the proposal would result in an unacceptable level of activity or noise beyond what would be anticipated as part of a residential use. Additionally, the proposed swimming pool is viewed to be of a relatively modest size which would sit comfortably within the confinement of the application site and would not result in harm to wider landscape views.

On that basis, the proposal is considered to be of a design, form and scale which is appropriate to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling. The development would not harm the character or appearance of the wider area. It is therefore considered that the visual impact of the proposal is acceptable and would accord with the above policies.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

Policy 33 of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.

Given the below ground nature of the proposed swimming pool, it is considered that the siting and layout of the proposal and the resulting relationship with adjacent properties would be sufficient to prevent any unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity. Furthermore, a planning condition has been imposed restricting the use of the swimming pool solely for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the main dwelling.

Trees and Landscaping

Policy 26 seeks to maintain that development in the countryside protect, conserve and enhance the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area in which it is located including the pattern of woodlands, fields, hedgerows, trees, waterbodies and other features.

Following consultation with the Council's Arboricultural Officer, it is considered that the small fruit trees and vegetation within the area of development and foreseeable associated process are not of a form/size/age that would potentially merit their consideration as potential constraints on development of the site. The hedge to the South would not foreseeably be detrimentally affected.

The issue in respect of impact on mature trees and thus wider landscape setting/features in the longer term with such engineering in the countryside invariably depends on the logistics involved in the use of heavy plant at the property for excavation and construction purpose and the subsequent tipping of the spoil in the vicinity.

A suitably worded condition has been imposed in order to control site set-up and spoil disposal within close proximity to the above mentioned mature trees.

Biodiversity Net Gain

In accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024 as amended, this application is exempted from the statutory requirement to demonstrate a 10% net gain in biodiversity as the development is below 0.2 hectares.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered to comply with relevant local and national planning policies and 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 **Pre-commencement Condition**: No development shall take place until a Precautionary Working Methods Statement (PWMS) detailing reasonable avoidance measures for great crested newts has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Works shall only be undertaken in accordance with the approved Method Statement.

Reason: To allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and Policy 31 of the Horsham Development Framework (2015).

4 **Regulatory Condition**: The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall strictly accord with those indicated on the application form and approved plans.

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).

5 **Regulatory Condition**: The swimming pool hereby permitted shall be used solely for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling known as Coachmans, Cowfold Road, West Grinstead and shall not be used for any commercial purpose.

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

6 **Regulatory Condition**: During the construction phase, heavy plant shall not be used nor any spoil shall be deposited within the vicinity of surrounding mature trees within development site.

Reason: To ensure the successful and satisfactory protection of important trees, shrubs and hedges on the site in accordance with Policies 30 and 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/26/1461

Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Location plan		COACHMANS_01	09.09.2026
Block plan		COACHMANS_02	09.09.2026

Floor plan	Proposed pool and section	COACHMANS_03	09.09.2026
Supporting Docs	Application Form.	NONE	09.09.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Halima Chowdhury Date: 29.10.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 30.10.2026