



**Horsham  
District  
Council**

# **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT REPORT**

**TO:** Development Management Committee (South)

**BY:** Development Manager

**DATE:** 20 September 2016

**DEVELOPMENT:** Outline planning permission for up to 60 dwellings (including up to 35% affordable housing), informal public open space and children's play area, surface water attenuation, landscaping, vehicular access point from Storrington Road and associated ancillary works. All matters to be reserved with the exception of the main site access.

**SITE:** Land at Storrington Road Storrington Road Thakeham West Sussex

**WARD:** Chanctonbury

**APPLICATION:** DC/16/1489

**APPLICANT:** Gladman Developments

**REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA:** The application, if approved, would represent a departure from the Development Plan

**RECOMMENDATION:** To refuse planning permission.

## **1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT**

1.1 To consider the planning application.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

1.2 The application is made in outline. The application proposes the erection of up to 60 dwellings, served by a new access from Storrington Road. The proposed vehicular access point from Storrington Road is for consideration with the application. Matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale are reserved for later consideration. This proposal is a resubmission of an outline application for up to 107 dwellings which was refused in January 2016 (ref: DC/15/2374).

1.3 The application indicates an indicative layout of detached two storey dwellings with parking spaces and garages. The proposal includes up to 35% affordable housing units (21 units). The scheme would provide a total of 1.94 hectares of residential development based on a density of 31 dwellings per hectare. The proposed residential areas are limited to three areas surrounded by open green spaces. The main two areas are within the larger section of the site set to the north and west of Snapes Cottage. These two areas would be both set back from the boundaries of the site surrounded by open green areas. The third area is adjacent to Storrington Road in the smaller area of land which links the main site to the road. This residential area proposed here is shown set away from the south and north boundaries of this part of the site. The new access road proposed from Storrington Road would link the three residential parcels.

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- 1.4 The site is shown with potential for two proposed infiltration basins in the north west and south east corners of the site and a proposed area of play in the north east corner. The proposal would retain the majority of trees around the borders of the site. The scheme would require the removal of a hedgerow tree belt to accommodate the proposed site access from Storrington Road (B2139). A section of internal hedgerow tree belt would also be required to be removed to accommodate access through the site between fields.
- 1.5 The application has been accompanied by a number of supporting document including:
- Design and Access Statement
  - Planning Statement
  - Built Heritage Statement
  - Air Quality Assessment
  - Flood Risk Assessment
  - Statement of Community Involvement
  - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
  - Framework Travel Plan
  - Transport Assessment
  - Archaeological Assessment
  - Noise Impact Assessment
  - Economic Impact Assessment
  - Foul Drainage Analysis
  - Ecology Appraisal
  - Residential Development Benefits: Socio-Economic Sustainability Statement

### DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

- 1.6 The application site comprises an area of 4.89 hectares which includes fields located to the west of Storrington Road. The smallest field is immediately adjacent to Storrington Road and is unused land which has been left to grow naturally. This field is set at higher ground level than Storrington Road and is surrounded by trees and a hedgerow tree belt. This field has an area of approximately 4,800sqm and is directly north of a neighbouring dwelling at Venters, Storrington Road and south of a separate paddock used for horses. Given the shape of the proposed site, this paddock separates the majority of the site to the west from Storrington Road. With this separation, the proposed site is an unusual shape with limited roadside frontage.
- 1.7 Adjoining this field to the west are further fields which are part of the application site. These fields are used for horse and donkey grazing and have a total area of approximately 44,000sqm. The fields are divided by timber fencing. Due to the topography of the site the fields slope down from north to south with a central plateau. These fields are also surrounded by trees and a hedgerow belt.
- 1.8 The site is north of the built-up-area of Storrington. Storrington is classed as a 'Small Town and Larger Village' in Policy 3, Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF). Directly to the south of the site is a piece of former vacant land which abuts the built-up area boundary of Storrington at Rother Close and Jubilee Way. This piece of land was recently granted outline permission at appeal followed by reserved matters approval for the development of 75 dwellings (refs: DC/13/1265 & DC/15/2126). Development has commenced on this site, accessed via Water Lane.
- 1.9 The current application site is also north of a group of detached dwellings at St Marys Close. These houses are the nearest dwellings to the site which are within the built-up-area boundary of Storrington. The site also adjoins the north and west boundaries of Snapes Cottage. This property is a Grade II listed building. There is also a row of detached dwellings of traditional design facing the site on Storrington Road. The site also

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abuts the boundary of a dwelling at Littlebury House to the north of the site. To the west and to the north of the site (adjacent to Littlebury House) are further fields used for crops and grazing. To the south west of the site is a newly constructed industrial building for Tesla Engineering Ltd.

- 1.10 The site is located within the Horsham District Landscape Character Area E1: Parnham & Storrington Wooded Farmlands and Heath. According to this classification, 'the area has a distinctive landscape of rolling sandy ridges and stream valleys with a mosaic of oak – birch / woodland, conifer plantations, heathlands and rough pasture. Despite the proximity of the urban edge of Storrington and the intrusion of traffic, the area retains surprisingly rural character.'

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

### STATUTORY BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

### RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICY

- 2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012), sections 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12.
- 2.3 Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014).

### RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICY

- 2.4 The following policies in the HDPF are considered to be relevant:

Policy 1: Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development  
Policy 2: Strategic Policy: Strategic Development  
Policy 3: Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy  
Policy 4: Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion  
Policy 15: Strategic Policy: Housing Provision  
Policy 16: Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs  
Policy 17: Exceptions Housing Schemes  
Policy 24: Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection  
Policy 25: Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character  
Policy 26: Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection  
Policy 31: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity  
Policy 32: Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development  
Policy 33: Development Principles  
Policy 34: Cultural and Heritage Assets  
Policy 35: Strategic Policy: Climate Change  
Policy 36: Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use  
Policy 37: Sustainable Construction  
Policy 38: Strategic Policy: Flooding  
Policy 39: Strategic Policy: Infrastructure Provision  
Policy 40: Sustainable Transport  
Policy 41: Parking  
Policy 42: Strategic Policy: Inclusive Communities

- 2.5 Local Development Framework: Supplementary Planning Document:

- Planning Obligations (2007)

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### RELEVANT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- 2.6 The site is within the Parish of Thakeham. Thakeham has produced a Submission Neighbourhood Plan. At the time of writing the report, the plan had been submitted for independent examination via Horsham District Council. The application site is not allocated as a development site in the Submission Neighbourhood Plan.

### PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.7 Application site:

DC/15/2374	Outline planning permission for up to 107 dwellings (including up to 40% affordable housing), informal public open space and children's play area, surface water attenuation, landscaping, vehicular access point from Storrington Road and associated ancillary works. All matters to be reserved with the exception of the main site access.	Refused 20/01/2016
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- 2.8 The planning history below relates to the land to the immediate south of the application site known as at land North of Brook Close and Rother Close:

DC/15/2126	Application for Approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to Outline Planning Application DC/13/1265 (Development of approximately 75 dwellings including the creation of an access point from Water Lane. Provision of open space including children's play area, linear park, landscaping and sustainable urban drainage systems on the site).	Approved 21/12/2015
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DC/13/1265	Development of approximately 75 dwellings including the creation of an access point from Water Lane. Provision of open space including children's play area, linear park, landscaping and sustainable urban drainage systems on the site (Outline).	Allowed on appeal 20/11/2014
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### 3. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 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](http://www.horsham.gov.uk).

#### INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

- 3.2 **HDC – Housing (summarised):** Comment. The applicant proposes 35% affordable homes (21 units) which is welcomed. There is no suggested tenure split. This should reflect 70% rented and 30% shared ownership. The Housing Officer would urge the applicant to reach an agreement with a provider in order to clarify and confirm the tenure split and secure funding arrangements.
- 3.3 **HDC - Strategic Planning (Summarised):** Objection. The site is located in the countryside, well outside of the BUAB of Storrington. As such, the site is considered against 'Countryside Protection Policy 26' which protects the countryside against inappropriate development. The scheme does not meet the four criteria of Policy 26. Additionally, the Council can demonstrate a full 5-year housing land supply against the required number of dwellings per annum. The site has not been allocated for development in the Neighbourhood Development Plan. The proposal is therefore contrary to adopted strategy and is not planned growth within the Development Plan.

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- 3.4 **HDC – Technical Services (Drainage):** No overall objections to the drainage strategy proposed at the outline stage.
- 3.5 **HDC – Refuse Collections Supervisor (summarised):** Comment. Further information is required regarding access to the site for refuse vehicles and the capacity of the shared road surface for refuse vehicles.
- 3.6 **HDC – Environmental Health (summarised):** No objection subject to the following:
- Submission of Construction Environmental Management Plan to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority.
  - The noise report submitted by Peter Brett Associates is acceptable. The scheme is to be implemented in accordance with the details outlined in the report which recommends trickle vents to the windows of some dwellings.
  - The site is over 1km from the Storrington Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The applicant has submitted an air quality assessment report. However, the report lacks sufficient details. Therefore, a condition is recommended requiring the submission of a 'low emission strategy' scheme for the approval of the local planning authority.
  - Given the sensitivity of the proposed end use, a condition relating to the submission of a scheme associated with the contamination of the site for the approval of the local planning authority is recommended. Environmental Health would expect to see at least a desk top study and depending on the findings of this work, recommendations for further intrusive work and a watching brief over site preparation and groundworks.
- 3.7 **HDC – Parks & Countryside:** Comment (verbal). Concern is raised over the lack of integration between the open space, sport and recreation area in the current proposal and the approved open area at the site immediately to the south currently being developed. The LEAP should be relocated to the southern boundary where it can be accessed from both sites.
- 3.8 **HDC – Ecology Consultant (summarised):** No objection subject to the submission of the following for the approval of the Local Planning Authority:
- Updated ecology surveys, including an updated badger survey, a suite of dormouse surveys, with appropriate avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures as required;
  - A reptile mitigation method statement to expand upon those recommendations made within the Ecology Report by FPCR and to provide detail on reptile protection measures and receptor areas. This should include a reptile population survey and results to inform receptor site requirements;
  - A lighting plan showing measures to be used to avoid illumination of boundary habitats, and proposed areas of open space, to avoid disturbance to bats and mature trees with potential to support bats;
  - A management plan to ensure the long-term viability of new and existing habitats.
- 3.9 **HDC - Archaeology Consultant (summarised):** No objection subject to the submission of a written scheme of investigation to be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing prior to commencement of works.
- 3.10 **HDC – Conservation Officer (summarised):** Objection. Whilst the proposed reduction in housing from the previously proposed 107 dwellings to 60 dwellings together with the introduction of bands of soft landscaped areas buffering and running through the development is an obvious improvement in terms of the reduction of built form, the introduction of a housing estate to the open fieldscape would still erode the open historic fieldscape and subsume the immediate and wider setting of the listed building. The proposal results in less than substantial harm to the listed building.

- 3.11 **HDC – Landscape Officer (summarised)**: Objection. In comparison with the previously refused scheme, the current proposal provides for a considerable reduction in the number of dwellings on the site and an increased area of open space and green infrastructure all round. However, the proposal does not overcome the issue regarding the principle of development in landscape terms due to the introduction of urbanising form into the countryside and the expansion of the settlement onto a sensitive elevated area and well defined settlement edge. Even with the proposed landscape buffering to the south/south-east of the site, the housing development would be an unduly prominent addition which would be a looming backdrop to the listed building.

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

- 3.12 **West Sussex County Council – Flood Risk Management Consultant (summarised)**: No objection. Current mapping shows the proposed site is primarily at 'low risk' from surface water flooding and ground water flooding. Development should not commence until finalised detailed surface water drainage designs for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of hydrological and hydro geological context of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 3.13 **West Sussex County Council - Highways (summarised)**: No objection. The access arrangements are considered appropriate. The Highway Authority is also satisfied that the development would not give rise to any severe highway capacity impacts. Conditions are recommended requiring details of visibility splays for the access onto Storrington Road, cycle parking, internal roads and an amended Travel Plan all to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval prior to the first occupation of the development.
- 3.14 **West Sussex County Council – Section 106 (summarised)**: Comment. Contributions are required in relation to School Infrastructure, Library Infrastructure, Transport and Fire & Rescue Service Infrastructure. As the housing mix is not known at this stage, it is not possible to establish the proposed contributions for this scheme. If recommended for approval, a formula could be inserted into any legal agreement so that the necessary contributions can be calculated at a later date.
- 3.15 **West Sussex County Council: Rights of Way (summarised)**: Comment. It is noted that the proposed development does not affect the existing public rights of way network. The application makes reference to proposed footpaths within the development site. If it is intended for these footpaths to be public rights of way, this must be agreed with WSCC Public Rights of Way.
- 3.16 **Southern Water (Summarised)**: No objection subject to the following:
- The applicant is to enter into a formal agreement with Southern Water to provide the necessary sewerage infrastructure required to service this development.
  - The applicant will need to ensure that arrangements exist for the long term maintenance of the SuDS facilities.
  - No soakaways, swales, ponds, watercourses or any other surface water retaining or conveying features to be located within 5 metres of a public sewer.
  - No development to commence until a drainage strategy detailing the proposed means of foul and surface water sewerage disposal has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Southern Water.
- 3.17 **Environment Agency (summarised)**: No comment.
- 3.18 **Natural England (summarised)**: No objection. The proposal is unlikely to affect any statutory protected sites. Advice should be sought from the National Park advisor on the

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potential impact on the South Downs National Park. Natural England refers to their standing advice on protected species. The application may provide opportunities for biodiversity and landscape improvements of the surrounding areas.

- 3.19 **NHS Coastal West Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group (summarised):** Comment. Currently the GP practices are in buildings that are not able to pick up new growth. Housing development in these areas has grown significantly and until there is Estate funding available, GP's cannot cope with increasing patient volumes. Support could be obtained through a S106 contribution.
- 3.20 **South Down National Park:** No comments received. (*Comments are expected to be received and will be reported to committee*)

### PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

- 3.21 **Thakeham Parish Council (summarised):** Objection:
- The proposal conflicts with the local HDPF strategic planning framework. The site is greenfield and outside the settlement of Storrington and Sullington. It is not included in the HDPF for development.
  - The proposal conflicts with the emerging local planning framework. In particular it is in direct conflict with the Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan (TNP), which is currently under external examination following extensive consultation with local residents. The site of this proposal was specifically considered during the development of the TNP. Even with an assumed lower number of units (75) the site scored poorly and was ruled out on the grounds of: being outside current built-up areas, coalescence, negative impact on landscape and impact on a listed building.
  - The TNP includes provision of 270 new homes to significantly boost the supply of housing. This represents a 33% increase in housing volume in the parish.
  - To add a further 60 homes by granting permission on this site would invalidate the Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan by creating over supply of housing, its strong emphasis on avoiding further coalescence between the villages of Thakeham and Storrington, and in terms of planned provision of community facilities.
  - The scheme is not one of three development sites identified in the TNP and is not within an existing built-up area. The proposal would (in conjunction with 76 unit Crest Nicholson Water Lane development) completely remove an important part of the existing green gap between the currently dispersed housing along the B2139 in south western Thakeham. The scheme would create suburban coalescence. This is contrary to Policy 1 (Spatial Plan) of the TNP.
  - The proposal will demonstrably harm the setting of a Grade II listed Building (Snapes Cottage). This is contrary to Policy 7 (Heritage Assets) of the TNP.
  - The proposal would have a serious impact on the landscape character of the area which currently eases the transition from the built-up suburbs to the rural feel of most of the rest of Thakeham Parish. The site is currently a visible open area from public vantage points, including the South Downs and adjacent paths, and the applicant understates the visual impact. The site also makes a valuable contribution to biodiversity at the edge of the built-up area. This is contrary to Policy 10 (Green Infrastructure and Valued Landscapes) of the TNP.
  - This site is also an unsustainable location in terms of walking and cycling to the facilities of central Storrington. It is reasonable to anticipate that 60 new houses at this distance would translate into 250-300 additional vehicle movements which would impact on the road capacity of Storrington which are already overloaded at peak times.
  - The additional cars and high number of journeys will further exacerbate the well-known and serious air pollution problems in Storrington.
  - The strong sense of Storrington residents is that schools, dentist and doctors surgeries in the area are already at maximum capacity.

3.22 **Storrington & Sullington Parish Council (summarised):** Objection:

- The proposed site is not in the HDPF or in Thakeham's or Storrington, Sullington & Washington Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plans.
- It should also be noted that what had become apparent whilst conducting Neighbourhood Plan Surveys was the fact that residents of all surrounding villages wanted to protect the gaps / green spaces between each individual village.
- An objection is raised to the scheme on the grounds of traffic, air quality, lack of infrastructure and the fact that schools, dentists and doctor's surgeries are already at maximum capacity.

3.23 **Campaign to Protect Rural England Sussex (summarised):** Objection.

- As acknowledged in the applicant's Planning Statement, the site is not in accordance with the locational policies of the Development Plan. The site is contrary to Policy 4 of the HDPF and is not an allocated site in the HDPF or the Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan.
- The proposal is also contrary to Policy 25 of the HDPF: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character as it would extend the spread of built development and would erode the rural setting of Storrington. If granted, this scheme would irrevocably change the character of the countryside.
- There is no shortfall of housing supply. Horsham District has a five year housing supply as clarified by recent appeal decisions.
- Concern is raised over the Air Quality Assessment submitted.
- Concern is raised over the impact on protected species, especially the potential impact on wild birds.
- The scheme would irrevocably urbanise the site and cause significant harm to the character of Snapes Cottage, a Grade II Listed Building.
- The proposed development is not plan led and would deny local people the right to shape their surroundings through the Neighbourhood Plan process.

3.24 **Thakeham Village Action (summarised):** Objection:

- This land in the Thakeham Countryside is an unsuitable rural location outside the limits of any existing settlement.
- With the adoption of the HDPF, the Council has a five year supply of housing.
- The forthcoming Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate this site for housing. Instead it allocates sufficient housing at a previously developed site within the existing built-up area boundary. With more than 32% increase in the number of houses due in the Parish in the next few years, there is no need for this proposal of such a scale in the Thakeham community.
- Introducing suburban type housing would not be appropriate to this countryside location and would harm the landscape character and countryside amenity and atmosphere of this rural location.
- The site is visible from the South Downs National Park. Building on this land would harm the landscape character of the National Park.
- The site is not well contained in the wider landscape. It has a high degree of visual sensitivity from higher ground, the B2139 and the nearby footpath.
- The site has poor access to services and facilities. It is some 2km to the nearest service centre (Storrington) and more than 500m to the nearest frequent bus stop, so owners would be reliant on the use of the private car.
- Introduction of a housing development would create light pollution.
- Development of this site would result in the loss of good quality agricultural soils.
- The old hedgerows on the site provide refuges for wildlife, including protected species.
- The local infrastructure (roads, schools, health facilities, water supply, sewerage) are unable to take the increased pressure development would place on them.
- Development would affect the setting of a listed building.



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- Local air quality problems would be made worse.
- The proposed development would not result in a use required for a countryside location.

3.25 **76** letters of **objection** have been received from local residents. The grounds of objection are as follows:

- There is no material difference with this application to the previous highly inappropriate application.
- This is still Greenfield and prime agricultural land. This speculative and cynical application will destroy more of our rapidly diminishing countryside.
- The scheme would exacerbate the pollution problems in Storrington.
- This is not in the Thakeham Parish design Statement nor part of the Parish Neighbourhood Plan. The Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan should be given reasonable weight in the determination of this application.
- The proposal virtually joins the Water Lane development currently under construction and is likely to be a burden on the local sewer network.
- Storrington Road will be taking much more traffic already owing to the development of the Abingworth site, this adds considerably to that. There is no public transport available meaning all movements will be by car.
- This scheme is not necessary to meet Horsham's housing quota. Thakeham Parish already has approved developments for 222 new housing units to be constructed over the next couple of years.
- The developer is taking advantage of the prolonged procedure for the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- There is insufficient infrastructure and little employment potential. The scheme is unsustainable and would put an unacceptable burden on local services.
- This application means yet more traffic on an already busy road, both during the building phase and after it is complete. This could lead to accidents. The access point to the site is potentially a major highway safety issue.
- The scheme will have an impact on local schools which would be oversubscribed.
- The closure of the surgery by the library has had an impact on the Glebe Surgery in Storrington which would find it difficult to absorb patients from 60 more houses. There is a lack of health provision for this area already.
- The proposal undermines the green open spaces between the settlements within the Parish.
- This is overdevelopment in a small village. Huge developments of housing are already being undertaken in the area which will result in the loss of identity of a Sussex Village. This would result in a significant reduction in the standard of living for existing and new residents.
- Horsham District Council has already indicated that additional housing is required in the areas of Horsham, Southwater and Billingshurst and not in the small South Downs Villages. The proposal is outside the built-up-area boundary and contrary to the HDPF and NPPF.
- The proposal would affect local wildlife habitat, flora and fauna.
- Concern is raised over flooding, drainage and water provision.
- The building works would add to the noise, dust and disruption caused by the Crest development at Water Lane.
- The urbanisation of this rural area would be devastating to the rural ambience and outlook of the 15<sup>th</sup> Century Grade II Listed Building at Snapes Cottage.

## **4. HOW THE PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION WILL PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS**

4.1 Article 8 (Right to respect of a Private and Family Life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (Protection of Property) of the Human Rights Act 1998 are relevant to this application, Consideration of Human rights forms part of the planning assessment below.

**5. HOW THE PROPOSAL WILL HELP TO REDUCE CRIME AND DISORDER**

- 5.1 It is not considered that the development would be likely to have any significant impact on crime and disorder.

**6. PLANNING ASSESSMENTS**

- 6.1 As an outline application, the main issue in the consideration of this application is whether the proposal is acceptable in principle having regard to both central government and local development plan policies, and to any other material considerations.
- 6.2 The applicant has requested that all matters, except access are to be reserved for later determination. 'Access', in this instance, relates to the accessibility to and within the site, for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians in terms of the positioning and treatment of access circulation routes and how these fit into the surrounding access network.
- 6.3 This application is assessed against the relevant policies of the HDPF and the national planning policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is also relevant to this application.
- 6.4 The main issues for the Local Planning Authority to consider in the determination of this application for outline planning permission are the acceptability of the principle of the proposed residential development in land use terms; the impact on the setting on the adjacent Grade II Listed Building; the impact on the character and visual amenity of the landscape and locality; the impact of the development on the amenity of prospective and neighbouring occupiers; whether safe vehicular and pedestrian access can be provided to the site and the impact of the development on highway and pedestrian safety; traffic conditions in the locality; whether appropriate provision can be made for car and cycle parking, refuse storage/collection, drainage/flooding and; whether the development can be delivered without harming the interests of nature conservation, flooding, land contamination, archaeology and air quality.
- 6.5 In addition to the above, the previous refusal of outline permission for up to 107 dwellings on this site (DC/15/2374) is also a material consideration in the determination of the current proposal. This previous refusal is subject to an appeal through the public inquiry procedure to be held in April 2017.

Principle of Development

- 6.6 The previous scheme for this site was refused partly on the grounds that the scheme was contrary to the overarching strategy and hierarchical approach of the HDPF of concentrating development within the main settlements. The circumstances surrounding this site have not changed since the previous refusal. Therefore this principal objection to the development of the site still stands.
- 6.7 The HDPF demonstrates that there is adequate housing land available to provide the required 800 dwellings per annum for a 5 year period. Policy 3 of the HDPF, confirms that development should be focused within Built-Up Area Boundaries. In addition to Built-Up Areas, it is recognised that, in order for some communities to be able to grow and develop, it will be necessary for them to expand beyond their current built form. Accordingly, Policies 3 and 4 note that, by allocating sites in the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plans, it will be possible to meet the identified local needs of these settlements and provide an appropriate level of market and affordable housing, as well as maintaining the viability of smaller villages and towns. The Policy notes the importance of retaining the rural character

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of the District beyond these settlements. In this instance, the proposed site is well beyond the Built-Up-Area of Storrington in a countryside location.

- 6.8 The HDPF outlines the proposed settlement hierarchy which is the most sustainable approach to delivering housing. New development should be focused in the larger settlements of Horsham, Southwater and Billingshurst, with limited new development elsewhere, and only where it accords with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan. Specifically, Policy 3 of the Horsham District Planning Framework seeks to retain the existing settlement pattern and ensure that development takes place in the most sustainable locations as possible.
- 6.9 As the development site is outside the built-up-area boundary, not allocated in a Neighbourhood Plan and not within a strategic development site, the principle of residential development in this location is, therefore, contrary to Policies 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the HDPF.
- 6.10 In this countryside location, the site is also considered against 'Countryside Protection' Policy 26 which protects the countryside against inappropriate development unless it is considered to be appropriate in scale and essential to its countryside location and must also meet one of the four criteria.
- Support the needs of agriculture or forestry;
  - Enable the extraction of minerals or the disposal of waste;
  - Provide for quiet informal recreational use; or
  - Enable the sustainable development of rural areas.
- 6.11 The proposed development does not meet any of these four criteria, nor is it considered to be 'essential' for its countryside location. Given the Council can demonstrate a full 5-year housing land supply against the required number of dwellings per annum there is no overriding requirement or benefit for housing in this countryside location.
- 6.12 As stated, the application site is not allocated for development within an adopted Neighbourhood Plan. Thakeham has been designated as a Neighbourhood Development Plan Area, and a Submission Plan has been submitted to Horsham District Council for independent examination. The site has not been designated within the Thakeham Submission Plan.
- 6.13 As the Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan has not yet been made, it cannot be given any meaningful weight in the decision making process of this application. Notwithstanding this, given Thakeham Parish Council's strong objection to this proposal, it is unlikely that this site will be adopted as a housing site in the Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan within the immediate future. This is reinforced in the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA 2016) appraisal of the site which states that this site is 'not currently developable'.
- 6.14 Policy 15 of the HDPF outlines the provision of 16,000 homes for the Horsham District within the period 2011-2031. The policy includes the provision of 750 units within 'windfall sites'. As the Council can now demonstrate a 5 year housing supply, any windfall sites should be located within the Built-up-Area boundary in accordance with the overarching development strategy of the HDPF. As unallocated land outside the built-up-area boundary, this site could not be considered as a 'windfall site'.
- 6.15 In November 2014 application DC/13/1265 was allowed on appeal for up to 75 dwellings on a site immediately to the south (which abuts the existing Built-up-Area boundary). A Reserved Matters application has also been recently approved for this site and works have commenced on site. This scheme was determined prior to the adoption of the HPDF. In considering the appeal for this site, the Inspector commented that the development should be determined in accordance with the SPD on Facilitating Appropriate Development (FAD). The FAD SPD was brought in to address the lack of a five year housing supply and

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outlined an assessment of what would be considered appropriate development under the policies of the Development Plan Documents. With the adoption of the HDPF, the Council can now clearly demonstrate a five year housing supply and the FAD SPD no longer forms part of the Development Plan.

- 6.16 Given that the HDPF has now been adopted and that the Council can now clearly demonstrate a five year housing supply, the appeal decision for the development of the land directly to the south is not considered to set a precedent for the development of the current application site. As outlined below, there are also concerns that the current scheme would further erode the character of this countryside location, which would already be detrimentally affected by the development of the land to the south, and would also harm the rural setting of the adjacent listed building at Snapes Cottage.
- 6.17 Since the adoption of the HDPF, there have been numerous appeal decisions which support the Council's strategic approach to development and confirm that its policies are sound. Recently, appeal decisions have been received for development at Old Clayton Kennels, Storrington Road and Land at Bax Close, Storrington. In both these appeals, permission was sought for development outside the Built-up-Area boundary of Storrington on sites not allocated for development in the Local Plan or a Neighbourhood Plan. In both appeals, it was found that the development hierarchy within the HDPF was sound. Additionally, Policy 4 of the HDPF was seen as an integral part of the spatial strategy and the plan-led approach to the delivery of sustainable development across the district. Failure to accord with this policy was seen as carrying significant weight.
- 6.18 For the reasons outlined above, the principle of providing 60 no. houses, outside the Built-Up-Area boundary, within the countryside, and where the land hasn't been allocated for development within a Local or Neighbourhood Plan, is unacceptable. The development is not essential to its countryside location and is therefore contrary to Policies 1, 2, 3, 4, 15, 25 and 26 of the HDPF.

### Dwelling Type and Tenure

- 6.19 35% of the proposed 60 no. dwellings would be made available on the affordable housing market. This is in accordance with the requirements of Policy 16 of the HDPF. The proposed affordable housing provision is, therefore, acceptable in principle. In accordance with the HDPF, the housing tenure target would be to provide 70% as social / affordable rented properties and 30% as intermediate / shared ownership properties. The exact size and tenure split of the units could be controlled by a suitably worded legal agreement, if all other aspects of the proposed development were considered acceptable.
- 6.20 Policy 16 of the Horsham District Planning Framework seeks to achieve a mix of housing sizes to meet the District's housing needs, as identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), in order to create balanced and sustainable communities. As this is an outline application, with only access to be considered, the final mix of dwellings proposed across the site would be considered and controlled as part of a Reserved Matters application and based on the most up to date and need at that time. This would include the local housing needs data collated by the Parishes of Thakeham, Storrington and Sullington, and Washington and the findings of the SHMA.

### Impact on the Setting of Snapes Cottage

- 6.21 Policy 34 of the HDPF states that the Council recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and as such the Council will sustain and enhance its historic environment through positive management of development affecting heritage assets.
- 6.22 Snapes Cottage is a Grade II Listed building adjacent to the southern boundary of the site. The proposed development would be adjacent to the north and west boundaries of Snapes

Cottage and would be adjacent to the driveway to the cottage. During the summer months, glimpses of the roofscape including the chimney stack to the listed building, are permitted from the application site and the application site can easily be viewed looking west from the listed building with the views across the fieldscape to the open countryside beyond, reinforcing the historic rural isolation of the listed building. Greater views of the listed building are afforded during the winter months.

- 6.23 A History of the County of Sussex: Volume 6 Part 2 informs that Snapes Cottage was likely the original farmhouse of Snapes Farm but was replaced with a new farmhouse on the opposite side of the road in the late 17th century. The publication goes on to state that in 1982 Snapes Cottage “retained a 15th-century timber framed and jettied north cross wing of two bays with a crown-post roof, traceried bargeboards, and bay window. The hall range to the south was replaced in the 19th century by a small double-depth stone block.”
- 6.24 The appeal decision for the land south of Snapes Cottage for 75 dwellings did consider the setting of the listed building and concluded that there would be negligible less than substantial harm to the setting of the listed building on the basis that the historic value of the building as an isolated farmstead had been eroded to an extent that its context was of a detached historic property located within the countryside. The development scheme approved at appeal retained an undeveloped margin along the northern boundary thereby minimising the impact upon the listed building and thus retaining its context as a countryside residence.
- 6.25 The previous application for the application site sought outline planning permission for a higher quantum of housing (107 dwellings). The proposal was not supported, in part, due to the less than substantial harm that the development would have on the setting of Snapes Cottage and the historic landscape.
- 6.26 The current scheme has sought to address the impact on the setting of the listed building by significantly reducing the quantum of development proposed. With the reduction in proposed housing on site, the scheme indicates that there will be a green open space separating the east and north boundaries of Snapes Cottage. The submitted Framework Plan indicates a gap of approximately 17m between the northern boundary of Snapes Cottage and the parcel of proposed residential development to the north and approximately 25m between the western boundary of Snapes and the parcel of proposed residential development to the west. The scheme also includes a green open space area which divides these two parcels with a width of approximately 15m. This area runs north west diagonally from the corner of the boundary with Snapes Cottage. The proposal includes ‘Structural Planting’ around the boundary with Snapes Cottage. It is unclear what this planting would entail. However, planting would not overcome the potential impact on the setting of the listed building as the application site is set at a higher ground level than Snapes Cottage.
- 6.27 The Council’s Heritage Officer has commented that the current proposal is still considered inappropriate. Even with the reduction in housing and the set back from the boundaries of Snapes Cottage, the proposed housing development would still have a harmful impact on the setting of the listed building.
- 6.28 Snapes Cottage was built as an isolated farmhouse and whilst the building has lost the associated farmstead buildings, the building draws its significance from its architectural and historic value as a traditional building constructed of the local vernacular and sited within a landscape setting. It alludes to the historic land use of the region which is evident on the historic mapping. Whilst its context as an isolated farmstead has been eroded by the loss of traditional ancillary structures, as a result of the relocation of the farm nucleus to the land on the eastern side of Storrington Road, it still does have an association to the surrounding countryside which is important in respect of the morphology of the listed building and its setting. With the above in mind, the statement in the submitted Heritage Statement which

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sets out that “Snapes Cottage is no longer legible as an agricultural (farmhouse) building” is disagreed with.

- 6.29 As set out in the Heritage Statement (pg 14), “there is strong intervisibility between the central and much of the southern portions of the Site with the listed building, Snapes Cottage.” The open, green fieldscape of the application site provides the rural landscape in which the historic building can be read and interpreted; therefore, the application site is significant in forming part of the surroundings in which the heritage asset is experienced.
- 6.30 In November 2014, the residential development of the land to the south of the application site was allowed at appeal (APP/Z3825/A/14/2215437) with the Inspector commenting that “there can be no doubt that the public benefit from the proposed development, contributing to alleviating the shortfall of housing in the District, clearly outweighs such harm (to the setting of Snapes Cottage).” (pg 7, para 37)
- 6.31 Since the determination of the appeal, Horsham District Council are now able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply and, with this in mind, there are no tangible public benefits for the proposed development which would outweigh the harm to the setting of the listed building contrary to para 134 of the NPPF.
- 6.32 It should also be noted that the Inspector recognised that the “development on the appeal site would clearly cause harm to its landscape character” but further commented that “it is a great advantage of the appeal proposal that the higher ground on the north of the site would not be built upon, thus restricting the proposed housing to land where it would not impinge noticeably on views from the north and north-west, or indeed views from the South Downs.” The Inspector there placed value on the land to the north of Snapes Cottage (the application site) being retained to preserve the setting of the listed building.
- 6.33 Whilst the proposed reduction in housing from the previously proposed 107 dwellings to 60 dwellings together with the introduction of bands of soft landscaped areas buffering and running through the development (the ‘green’), is an obvious improvement in terms of the reduction of built form, the principle of introducing a housing estate to the open fieldscape would erode the open historic fieldscape and subsume the immediate and wider setting of the listed building.
- 6.34 Given the topography of the site and the strong intervisibility between the application site and the listed building, even with the proposed landscape buffering to the south/south-east of the site, the housing development would be an unduly prominent addition which would be a looming backdrop to the listed building. The built form set at a higher level to that of the listed building would also obstruct existing far reaching views of open countryside when looking west from Snapes Cottage and one would lose appreciation of the rural sense of place.
- 6.35 There is also concern that development of the open fieldscape would erode the landscape edge to the settlement of Storrington and together with the housing development allowed at appeal, the extension of built form into the fieldscape would engulf the isolated listed building and erode the transition from the urban character of Storrington to the rural area beyond.
- 6.36 It is acknowledged that the proposed additional housing would provide some benefits, including employment opportunities during the construction process and that the prospective occupiers would be likely to contribute to the local economy and would also be required to pay Council Tax. It is also acknowledged that 35% of the dwellings would be made available on the affordable housing market and that financial contributions secured through a planning obligation could, together with appropriate conditions, require the provision of off-site highway improvements and enhanced local facilities, thereby supporting the local community’s social well-being.

- 6.37 Whilst acknowledging that the development could provide some positive social and economic outcomes, on balance, it is considered that these benefits would not be of a sufficient scale to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the harm identified to the setting of the Listed Building. Additionally, as the Council can now demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, there is no overriding public benefit arising from the development which would outweigh the great weight to be applied to the harm caused to the heritage asset.
- 6.38 In the applicant's Heritage Statement for the current proposal, it is acknowledged that the 'immediate and extended settings contribute positively to the Asset's significance, although the setting offers only an aggregate minor contribution.' It is also acknowledged by the submitted Heritage Statement that the scheme would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of Snapes Cottage.
- 6.39 The current proposal is therefore considered an unsustainable form of development which is contrary to the objectives of the spatial strategy and results in harm to the setting of the listed building. In reaching this conclusion, significant weight is given to the fact the Council can deliver its housing requirements as outlined in the HDPF without having to rely on sites located outside built up areas, unless these are allocated through either the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plans. It is therefore considered that there is insufficient justification for overriding the strong presumption in favour of preserving the setting of the Grade II Listed Building.
- 6.40 As outlined above and taking into account the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the requirements of the NPPF and Policy 34 of the HDPF, the scheme would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the listed building and is recommended for refusal on this basis.

Impact on landscape character and the visual amenity of the locality

- 6.41 The site is located in a countryside location to the north of the village of Storrington. The site is located outside of Storrington's defined Built-up-Area and is therefore covered by HDPF Policies 25 and 26 which protect the countryside against inappropriate development, unless it is considered to be appropriate in scale and essential to that location.
- 6.42 The Council's Landscape Officer has commented that the site itself is considered to be of an overall moderate-high visual sensitivity due to its elevated position, its attractive middle-long distance views and its distinctive large hedgerow oaks. The topography gently rises to the centre of the site forming a plateau 5m above the bottom of the slope. The land then continues to rise more gently to the ridgeline to the north. As existing, the site is visually well contained from public views by mature hedgerows and trees, with the exception of the north-west boundary which affords glimpsed views from the public footpath.
- 6.43 The site is also seen against the backdrop of open countryside to the north and western boundary and existing suburban residential development to the east. There is an urbanising influence of the industrial development of Water Lane and recently constructed commercial unit on the land immediately to the south west of the site and this will be added to by the approved Crest Nicholson housing development to the south.
- 6.44 The site is identified within the Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment (HDLCA) as Landscape Character area 'E1: Parham and Storrington Wooded Farmlands and Heaths'. The landscape condition is considered overall to be good. Characteristics of relevance to the site itself are *small mostly well hedged pasture fields with mature hedgerow oaks and small areas of heathland*. The proposals show the existing hedgerow field pattern of the site is to be maintained and reinforced by new planting with limited hedgerow removal to provide access into and through the site therefore maintaining, to an extent, one of the landscape characteristics of the site.

- 6.45 At a local level, the site is categorised in the Horsham District Landscape Capacity study as Landscape Character Area 59: Land North of Water Lane, with low-moderate capacity for small scale housing development, defined as housing development of no more than 100 dwellings. Characteristics relevant to the site include its *'undulating landform with small to medium scale irregular pasture and arable fields'*, the *'strong network of thick hedgerow field boundaries'*, and the *'landscape condition is generally good'* with a *strong rural character except close to some of the urban edge'*.
- 6.46 The previous scheme (DC/15/2374) for up to 107 units was partly refused on the grounds that the scheme would diminish the rural and open character of this particular part of the landscape creating a discordant and uncharacteristically urbanised environment harming the character of the local countryside. The current proposal has significantly reduced the quantum of development on site and included large areas of open green space.
- 6.47 The Council's Landscape Officer has commented that the current proposal of up to 60 dwellings on the site will still have an adverse effect on landscape character and appearance of the area for the reasons detailed below.
- 6.48 The reduction in the quantum of development on site does not overcome the issue of the principle of development in landscape terms due to the introduction of an urbanising form of development in the countryside and the expansion of the settlement onto a sensitive elevated area and well defined settlement edge.
- 6.49 With regard to the recently approved Crest Nicholson development to the south, contrary to the current application site, this approved development would facilitate the transition between residential areas and the open countryside with the provision of an open space buffer to the north of the development. This was also key to retaining the setting of the listed building adjacent to the application site. At the appeal decision for the Crest Nicholson development, the Inspector concludes that *'the additional planting proposed along the northern boundary would give better definition between the built-up area and the countryside.'* The current proposal intends to further extend the settlement beyond this buffer resulting in a less well defined boundary open to future development expansion and further encroachment into the countryside.
- 6.50 The application site is also set at a higher ground than the site to the south which would further exacerbate the visual impact of the proposed development of the application site. The Landscape Officer has commented that whilst the existing hedging and boundary trees around the site would mitigate the visual impact of the proposal to some degree, this would not be sufficient to overcome the perception of urbanisation of the area and development encroaching into the countryside.
- 6.51 Overall, it is recognised that the current proposal provides for a considerable reduction in the number of dwellings on the site, when compared to the previous scheme for 107 dwellings, and an increased area of open space and green infrastructure all round. However, it is considered that the proposal again amounts to an urbanising form of development with up to 60 dwellings incorporating ancillary infrastructure including vehicular and pedestrian access onto the public highway, parking, landscaping, and boundary treatments. In addition to the adjacent development site to the south for 75 dwellings, the proposal would result in a significant cumulative impact and adverse effect on the landscape character and appearance of the area.
- 6.52 Additionally, as outlined in Sections 6.10 – 6.11 of this report, the proposal does not meet the requirements of Policy 26 in that the proposal is not 'essential' to its countryside location and does not meet any of the four criteria required for development in the countryside. In addition, the scheme would be contrary to Policy 25 of the HDPF in that the scheme does not protect, conserve or enhance the landscape character of this area.



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- 6.53 The scheme is therefore considered contrary to Policies 25 & 26 of the HDPF which aim to protect the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside from inappropriate development outside built-up-areas.

### Impact on the Amenity of Existing and Prospective Occupiers

- 6.54 The occupiers of Littlebury House, Snapes Cottage and the properties opposite the site on Storrington Road currently enjoy views onto the application site, which would undoubtedly be affected by the proposed development. The indicative plans show, however, the proposed quantum of development could be successfully designed to achieve appropriate separation distances and to ensure that there is no harmful loss of light, outlook or privacy to the occupiers of any adjacent properties. With the proposed green buffer zones in place, the proposal would not result in a significant impact on the amenity of the any adjacent properties, including the recently approved dwellings on the land to the south.
- 6.55 Parking areas and access roads could be designed so as to be sited away from adjacent properties and this would help to avoid harmful levels of disturbance to existing occupiers. The exact design and location of street lighting could be controlled by condition, if all other aspects of the development were considered acceptable, and this would help to ensure that adjacent occupiers were not exposed to unacceptable levels of glare/light pollution.
- 6.56 The introduction of 60 no. dwellings into what are currently open fields would result in increased levels of disturbance to adjacent residential occupiers associated with, for instance, the comings and goings of vehicles and the use of rear gardens. However, it is not considered that this would result in unacceptably harmful impact on the living environment of adjacent residents.
- 6.57 The indicative plans show that the development could be designed in such a way so as to ensure that all prospective occupiers had access to a suitably sized area of private amenity space that would provide a safe and pleasant area of useable outside space, complemented by on-site open space provision.
- 6.58 In light of the above, it is considered that the development could be designed to avoid harmful impacts on the amenities of existing or prospective occupiers in terms of loss of light, outlook or privacy. Measures to protect residents from harmful effects of noise, vibration and dust during the construction period could be controlled by a suitably worded condition requiring the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan to be approved by the Local Planning Authority.

### Highway Impact, Access and Parking

- 6.59 The application is made in outline and includes access to be considered as part of the proposal. To address the highway and transport impacts of the proposal, the application includes a Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan. The main highway and access issues to be considered under this scheme are as follows:
- Whether the proposed new vehicular access onto Storrington Road (B2139) is acceptable from a highway safety perspective.
  - Whether the addition of 60 dwellings is appropriate in this location in terms of trip generation and highway impacts.
  - Whether the proposal offers appropriate accessibility to and within the site, for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians.
- 6.60 It should be noted that the detail of the internal roads and footpath layout can be considered under a reserved matters application.

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- 6.61 With respect to the new vehicular access onto Storrington Road, the Highway Authority (West Sussex County Council) has commented that the new access is appropriate in principle. The proposed layout shows a 5.5 metre access road with footpaths on each side running around the radius to tie in with the existing footpaths on Storrington Road. The new access is shown opposite a dwelling called Springfields on Storrington Road and would require the removal of hedges. Taking account of recorded vehicle speeds, the highway authority has commented that, with appropriate visibility splays, the new access proposed would allow sufficient stopping sight distances and would be appropriate from a highway safety perspective.
- 6.62 The highway authority is also satisfied that the trip generation resulting from an additional 60 units in this location would not result in any severe highway capacity impacts. This is based on the TRICS selection parameters put forward which take into account local infrastructure and all other permitted developments, including the Abingworth Nurseries site.
- 6.63 The Transport Assessment reviews access by walking, cycling, and passenger transport for the proposed development. A Framework Travel Plan has also been submitted. The principal objective of the plan is to encourage a shift from the use of the private car, in particular single-occupancy vehicles, to the use of the more sustainable non-car modes for travel to and from the site. The plan would include the appointment of a Travel Plan Co-ordinator, a 'Sustainable Travel Information Pack' and regular surveys of residents.
- 6.64 The highway authority has commented that the review of proposed and existing accessibility is appropriate and that the broad layout of the Framework Travel Plan is appropriate.
- 6.65 If recommended for approval, further details of the proposed transport and access details, such as the submission of a Full Travel Plan and exact details of the road and pavement layout could be secured by condition. On the basis of the submission, the highway authority is satisfied that the scheme would not result in any adverse highway impacts and no objection is raised to the scheme with respect to access and highway safety, subject to conditions.

### Arboricultural Impacts

- 6.66 The applicant has submitted a Tree Survey which records 8 individual trees and 13 groups of trees, including mature Oak trees which are located around the borders of the fields of the site. The surveyed trees are dominated by Category B trees (considered to be of moderate to good quality and value) and Category C trees (considered to be of lower value). This reflects the overall fair to moderate quality of the tree stock, largely dominated by the young mature fieldside swathes of naturalised tree belts with scattered larger mature trees. There is a collective value to the boundary stock, with trees of a similar age, quality, contribution and character providing a fairly consistent visual screen and typical arrangement of pastoral enclosure.
- 6.67 Several trees were considered to represent specimens of notably high value (Category A). These are prominent larger trees with high screening value and maturity. The belt mature Oaks are considered to represent a principal screen along the southern reaches of the site and are discernible from across the wider rising landscape of the South Downs.
- 6.68 The scheme would potentially require the removal of a hedgerow tree belt to accommodate the proposed site access from Storrington Road. A section of internal hedgerow tree belt would also be required to be removed to allow access through the site between fields. The report also indicates that there may also be a conflict with a group of trees adjacent Storrington Road and the proposed residential development. Trees within this group may also need to be removed.

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- 6.69 The trees within the groups affected are indicated as Class B and Class C/B trees of moderate quality and value. Having regard to the retention of the majority of trees around the site including the retention of the Class A trees, the loss of some of the trees to accommodate the development is considered acceptable. If recommended for approval, a condition could be imposed requiring the submission of a method statement outlining the exact details of which trees are required to be removed and measures to protect the trees to be retained on site during construction works for the approval of the Local Planning Authority.
- 6.70 Landscaping details are not indicated in this proposal. If recommended for approval, details of the landscaping for the site could be required by condition to be submitted and considered as part of a Reserved Matters application. These details could include replacement trees to replace the ones to be lost on site.

### Nature Conservation, Ecology and Biodiversity

- 6.71 The application is supported by Ecological Reports that outline the findings of initial ecological surveys undertaken at the site. The Council's Consultant Ecologist has stated that the proposal is acceptable subject to conditions to secure ecological surveys and mitigation measures specifically in relation to badgers, bats, reptiles and dormice habitats. If recommended for approval, a condition could be imposed requiring the submission of these surveys and details to be approved by the Local Planning Authority.

### Flooding and Drainage

- 6.72 The site is located within Flood Zone 1 where there is a low probability of flooding and where residential development is considered acceptable by the NPPF.
- 6.73 Southern Water, West Sussex County Council and the Council's Drainage Engineer have raised no objection to this proposal, subject to the use of a condition requiring the submission and approval of details relating to the proposed means of foul and surface water drainage for the site.

### Contamination

- 6.74 As recommended by the Environmental Health Team, the proposal would be subject to a risk assessment for potential land contamination and a series of mitigation measures agreed, depending on the type of contamination identified. The necessary investigation and remediation measures, including implementation, would be controlled by condition, if all other aspects of the development were considered acceptable.

### Archaeology

- 6.75 The Consultant Archaeologist has commented that there is potential for archaeology to be present at the site which has not been fully addressed in the submission. As such, a condition could be attached to any planning permission preventing development until such a time that a programme of archaeological work to evaluate the archaeological potential of the site has been agreed with the Council.

### Renewable Energy

- 6.76 In accordance with Policies 35, 36 and 37 of the HDPF, if all other aspects of the development were considered acceptable, planning conditions could be used to promote the use of renewable energy sources and to restrict water use, control construction waste and to encourage the use of natural lighting and ventilation.

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### Air Quality

- 6.77 Storrington has been designated as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) by Horsham District Council. This is an area where pollution levels exceed the UK air quality objectives due to elevated levels of nitrogen oxide, a by-product of combustion and primarily attributed to road traffic emissions. The application site lies just over 1km to the north of the Storrington Air Quality Management Area.
- 6.78 The application is supported by an air quality assessment report prepared by Peter Brett Associates. The assessment provides a qualitative assessment of impacts associated with the construction phase and a dispersion modelling assessment to predict the impact of the proposed development on pollutant concentrations. The Environmental Health Team has commented that there are insufficient mitigation measures identified in the report to meet the requirements of the Horsham District Council's guidance document on Air Quality and Emissions Reduction. The guidance sets out appropriate and reasonable mitigation measures that should be designed into each scheme in order to make the scheme sustainable in air quality terms. The Environmental Health Team has stated that, if recommended for approval, a condition could be imposed to require the submission of a 'Low Emission Strategy' scheme, specific to the proposal, to fully mitigate against the predicted increase in traffic emissions.

### Refuse Collection

- 6.79 With respect to refuse collection, the Council would expect a full refuse strategy to be submitted as part of a Reserved Matters application in the event that an outline approval is granted.

### Coalescence

- 6.80 Policy 27 of the HDPF states that landscapes will be protected from development which would result in the coalescence of settlements. A number of the objections received have raised coalescence as an issue with this scheme. The proposal does represent an extension of development approved to the south, adjacent the built-up-area boundary with Storrington. Whilst this is considered to create an extension to an urbanised area, the proposal is not considered as coalescence. The development would link some individual houses to Storrington's built-up-area but would not link Storrington to any other village or settlement. Thakeham is the nearest settlement to the application site which is located further to the north separated by several fields. For this reason, the scheme would not result in any significant coalescence between the settlements of Storrington and Thakeham.

### Open Space Provision

- 6.81 Under the approved scheme for the land to the south, there is some natural play provision in the open space at the north of that site. Leisure Services have commented that this provision should be expanded and enhanced with additional play equipment to provide a facility equally accessible from both developments. To this end, Leisure Services have commented that the proposed area of play in the north east corner of the proposal should be relocated to the southern boundary and that it should be made clear that there will be access between the two sites through gaps in the boundary. The applicant has been made aware of these comments and should the proposal be otherwise acceptable, this could be satisfactorily controlled through reserved matters or conditions.

### Health Provision

- 6.82 Under the Horsham District Infrastructure Study Main Report (2010) health is seen as an essential criteria in the consideration of developments. Lack of health facilities (doctor's

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surgeries and dentists) in the Storrington area has been raised as an issue by the representations received for this proposal

- 6.83 The NHS Coastal West Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have commented that currently the GP practices will struggle to cope with the increasing patient numbers. On this basis, the CCG have commented that S106 funding to be used towards improvements for the existing facilities in and around Storrington and have suggested a tariff for calculating the potential contribution. CCG have been asked to clarify how this money will be spent in the area.
- 6.84 As with all contributions, the contribution towards health provision must be justified in accordance with the three tests set out under Regulation 122 of the Community and Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010, in so far that they must be; necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; directly related to the development and; fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. If considered in accordance with the tests, a contribution could be secured through a recommended S106 agreement (if recommended for approval).

### Legal Agreement

- 6.85 In the event that planning permission were to be granted, Policy 39 of the HDPF requires new development to meet its infrastructure needs. For this development, contributions would be required towards indoor and outdoor sports provision, community facilities, libraries, education, health, transport infrastructure, fire and rescue, highway improvements and affordable housing.
- 6.86 The developer contributions, secured in the event that planning permission is granted, could be allocated towards improvements within the local area, to ensure they benefit local residents. For the reasons outlined above, the provision of a commuted sum for specific local projects is considered a fair approach to deal with the cumulative pressure of additional residents on existing qualitative and quantitative deficiencies in the District and in this case, to enhance existing facilities in the local area.
- 6.87 Although the applicant has confirmed a willingness to enter into a legal agreement to secure the necessary sums, such an agreement is not yet in place. The development is, therefore, contrary to Policy 39 of the HDPF.

### Conclusions

- 6.88 This proposal represents a significant reduction in the quantum of development on site when compared to the previous refused scheme for 107 units. However, taking all matters into account, the proposal is still considered to represent an unsustainable form of development, on a site outside a defined built-up area boundary where the principle of residential development is unacceptable and cannot be supported. The Council is able to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply and consequently this scheme would be contrary to the overarching strategy and hierarchical approach of concentrating development within the main settlements.
- 6.89 Additionally, the provision of housing in this location would further diminish the rural and open character of this particular part of the landscape, creating a discordant and uncharacteristically urbanised environment.
- 6.90 Whilst the scheme reduces the impact on the setting of the adjacent listed building through the areas of open space proposed around the boundaries of the site, the proposal would still result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the listed building. It is considered that there is insufficient justification for overriding the strong presumption in favour of preserving the setting of the Grade II Listed Building.

- 6.91 The development is therefore considered harmful, even when weighed against the economic and social benefits of the scheme and as such, the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out in Paragraph 14 of the NPPF, cannot be applied. When all material considerations are taken into account, and given appropriate weight in the planning balance, the adverse effects of granting outline planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The proposal is therefore recommended for refusal.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 To refuse planning permission for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development is located in the open countryside, outside of any defined Built Up Area Boundary, on a site not allocated for development within the Horsham District Planning Framework, or an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Council is able to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply and consequently this scheme would be contrary to the overarching strategy and hierarchical approach of concentrating development within the main settlements. Furthermore, the proposed development is not essential to its countryside location and consequently represents an inappropriate, unsustainable and unacceptable form of development that is contrary to the aims and objectives of the NPPF and Policies 1, 2, 3, 4, 15, 25 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).
2. The provision of housing in this location, at the scale proposed, would diminish the rural and open character of this particular part of the landscape, creating a discordant and uncharacteristically urbanised environment harming the character of the local countryside. The development is, therefore, contrary to the NPPF and Policies 25 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).
3. The open, green fieldscape of the application site provides the rural landscape in which the historic Grade II Listed Building at Snapes Cottage can be read and interpreted. The provision of up to 60 no. dwellings, within the landscape setting of the Listed Building, would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the listed building. This would affect the significance of the heritage asset and the appreciation of its sense of rural isolation as a countryside residence. The development is therefore contrary to S66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).
4. The proposed development makes no provision for securing affordable housing units, or for contributions towards improvements to education provision; transport infrastructure; libraries; fire and rescue services; sport facilities; community facilities; and is, therefore, contrary to Policies 16 and 39 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), as it has not been demonstrated how the infrastructure needs of the development would be met.

### Note to Applicant:

1. The reason for refusal relating to infrastructure contributions and affordable housing provision could be addressed through the completion of a legal agreement. If the applicant is minded to appeal the refusal of this application you are advised to liaise with the Local Planning Authority prior to the submission of an appeal with a view to finalising an acceptable Agreement.