

Recommendation Report for Permission in Principle

REF NO: BN/83/26/PIP

LOCATION: Watermead
Yapton Road
Barnham
PO22 0BQ

PROPOSAL: Application for permission in principle for a maximum net gain of 1 dwelling.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	This application seeks approval for one dwelling and is accompanied by a location plan. As this is an application where only the principle and location of the development are under consideration, detailed matters such as layout, access, parking, appearance and landscaping are not assessed at this stage. The submitted location plan is therefore sufficient to enable determination of the key issue, namely the proposed location of the dwelling.
SITE AREA	0.13 hectares.
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT DENSITY (NET)	8 dwellings per hectare.
TOPOGRAPHY	The site is predominantly flat.
TREES	There is a small woodland to the western boundary of site and mature trees on the eastern side.
BOUNDARY TREATMENT	The boundaries comprise a brick wall, hedging and fence.
SITE CHARACTERISTICS	Residential garden.
CHARACTER OF LOCALITY	The area is rural. Whilst there are dwellings to the south, south-east and south-west of site, the land to the west is woodland, forming part of a former horticultural nursery and the land to the east is also horticultural - and includes a reservoir. The site to the north consists of an area of hardstanding with a lightweight single storey building and a caravan which has a PIP for 2-3 dwellings.

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

BN/34/26/PIP	Application for permission in principle for a minimum net gain of 2 dwelling to a maximum net gain of 3 No dwellings.	Refused 14-04-26 Appeal: Allowed 06-07-26
BN/114/25/PIP	Application for permission in principle for a minimum net	ApproveConditionally

gain of 1 dwelling to a maximum net gain of 1 No dwelling.

12-12-25

REPRESENTATIONS

Barnham and Eastergate Parish Council - Objection:

- Foul sewage system unable to cope with additional flows, harm to Lidsey Treatment Catchment Area identified.
- The new dwelling would contravene Dark Night Skies policy ES16.
- Due to the location of the site being situated between 2 biodiversity corridors, the committee are of the view that the application is potentially in conflict with environmental policy ES17.
- Outside of the Built-Up Area Boundary and conflicting with ES3, ES4 and ES10.

COMMENTS ON REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED:

This is a Permission in Principle application, and it is not possible to determine such applications with regard to technical matters such as trees, wildlife, surface/foul drainage, lighting, or highway safety/capacity. It is not relevant to consult those parties relevant to the technical matters at this stage (such as WSCC Highways).

Where not subject to the above or covered in the report conclusions, the following comments are made in response to the objections:

- Southern Water have commented but do not state any objections to this application; and
- The site is not directly between two Biodiversity Corridors but does adjoin one on its western side.

CONSULTATIONS

CONSULTATION RESPONSES RECEIVED:

SOUTHERN WATER - construction of the development must not commence until details of the means of foul/surface water drainage disposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Southern Water. Advise that they do not provide drinking water in this location.

ADC DRAINAGE - Detailed design subject to technical details application.

- No flood risk, drainage, or surface water management details have been submitted, so the feasibility of the drainage strategy cannot currently be assessed.
- Drainage matters are not considered a reason to object at the Permission in Principle (PIP) stage, but they will need to be fully addressed at the Technical Details Consent stage.
- The site is not considered to be at significant risk of flooding from rivers, the sea, or surface water, and no flood risk objection is raised.
- A 3-metre maintenance buffer should be retained alongside watercourses, which may affect the eventual site layout.
- The existing culvert beneath the access road may require upgrading, particularly if it is proposed as a discharge point.
- The eastern boundary ditch may have been partially infilled and will need investigation and possible reinstatement as part of the development.

- Given known shallow groundwater levels, infiltration drainage is unlikely to be suitable. The applicant will need to demonstrate an appropriate discharge route to either a watercourse or sewer.
- The future Technical Details application must demonstrate compliance with national sustainable drainage standards, including the management of extreme rainfall events.

COMMENTS ON CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

Noted.

POLICY CONTEXT

Designations applicable to site:

- Outside the Built-Up Area Boundary (BUAB).
- Current/Future Flood Zone 1.
- CIL Zone 3.
- Lidsey Wastewater Treatment Catchment Area.
- Adjacent to a designated Biodiversity Corridor.
- Nitrate Vulnerable Zones.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Arun Local Plan 2011 - 2031:

CSP1	C SP1 Countryside
DDM1	D DM1 Aspects of form and design quality
WDM3	W DM3 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

Barnham and Eastergate Neighbourhood Plan 2019 Reducing Flood Risk

POLICY ES1b

Barnham and Eastergate Neighbourhood Plan 2019 The Local Gap/ Green Infrastructure Corridor
POLICY ES3

Barnham and Eastergate Neighbourhood Plan 2019 Settlement boundary
POLICY H8

Barnham and Eastergate Neighbourhood Plan 2019 Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services
POLICY ES15

PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE:

NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG	National Planning Practice Guidance

SUPPLEMENTARY POLICY GUIDANCE:

SPD13	Arun District Design Guide (SPD) January 2021
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POLICY COMMENTARY

The Development Plan consists of the Arun Local Plan 2011 - 2031, West Sussex County Council's Waste and Minerals Plans, The South Inshore & South Offshore Marine Plan and Made Neighbourhood Development Plans. The policies are published under Regulations 19 and 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The relevant policies of the Barnham and Eastergate Neighbourhood Development Plan (BENDP) are referred to in this report.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND/OR LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:-

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

The proposal conflicts with relevant Development Plan policies in that it proposes residential development in the countryside not related to the settlements of either Yapton or Barnham.

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) provides that

(2) in dealing with an application for planning permission the authority shall have regard to -

- (a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application,
- (aza) a post examination draft neighbourhood development plan, so far as material to the application,
- (b) any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, and
- (c) any other material considerations.

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no other material considerations to be weighed in the balance with the Development Plan.

CONCLUSIONS

INTRODUCTION

This is a Permission in Principle (PIP) application, and the Local Planning Authority can only assess whether the site is suitable in principle. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states at paragraph 012 (Reference ID_ 58-012-20180615) that: "The scope of permission in principle is limited to location, land use and the amount of development. Issues relevant to these 'in principle' matters should be considered at the permission in principle stage. Other matters should be considered at the technical details consent stage."

The NPPG confirms at paragraph 020 (Reference ID: 58-020-20180615) that conditions cannot be imposed. The following report solely analyses the proposal in terms of Location, Land Use and Amount in respect of the principle of development.

LOCATION/LAND USE

This section covers the location/use of the site with reference to countryside, flood risk, and wildlife designations.

Countryside:

Arun Local Plan (ALP) policy C SP1 states residential development in the countryside outside the BUAB will not be permitted unless it accords with policies in the Plan which refer to a specific use or type of development. None of these relate to the proposal and so the proposal conflicts with the ALP.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2026) is an important material consideration in the determination of planning applications. Policy S3 of the NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development and directs decision-makers to Policy S5 where a site is outside of Built-Up Area Boundary (BUAB).

Policy S5 allows only certain forms of development outside of the BUAB to be allowed. In this instance S5(e) limited infilling. The development is for a small infill development.

Policy S6 of the NPPF addresses the weight to be afforded to neighbourhood plans. Policy S6 states that, in cases involving the provision of housing, the adverse effects of granting permission are likely to substantially outweigh the benefits where a proposal would conflict with a neighbourhood plan, provided that:

- the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan five years or less before the decision is made; and
- the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement.

The Barnham and Eastergate Neighbourhood Development Plan (BENDP) was made in March 2022 and shows the site outside the BUAB. The BENDP includes policies/allocations to provide for a minimum of 75 homes. On this basis, where there is conflict with the plan, the NPPF directs that this will likely outweigh the benefits.

BENDP Policy H8 states development proposals on land outside of the BUAB will not be supported unless it can demonstrate a need to be located in the countryside and there is conflict with this policy.

BENDP Policy ES3 seeks to prevent development that fails to preserve the separate identities of Eastergate and Barnham or causes further physical coalescence of the villages. In particular, development north or south of the B2233 should be prevented. This policy suggests it is concerned with the separation of Barnham from Eastergate not Barnham from Yapton.

The site lies on the edge of the BENDP area roughly midway between the settlements of Barnham and Yapton. It is north of the B2233. However, there are already dwellings in the immediate area, the site benefits from an existing access and due to the level of screening around the site, it is not visible from any public viewpoints. The proposal will have no impact on the identity of Barnham and will not cause any physical coalescence with Yapton.

The site is between Barnham, and Yapton. There is a continuous pavement between Barnham and Yapton. It would be a long walk to access services in either of these settlements however it is possible to take a bus or cycle and whilst the private car will be the most attractive mode of transport there are realistic alternatives available. In summary, this is not an unsustainable location. The development is approximately 1.2km away from Barnham Station.

The principle of development on this site conflicts with the ALP and the BENDP in respect of development in the countryside. The NPPF presumption and the impact of paragraph S6 are considered at the end of this report.

Flood Risk:

The site lies within the Environment Agency defined Flood Zone 1 and it is not affected by predicted changes in flood risk due to climate change. Ground water levels do have the potential to be high in this area (not specific to the site) however, the precise levels will not be known until detailed groundwater monitoring is undertaken in advance of a Technical Details application. There are no flood risk reasons to prevent a dwelling from being sited in this location.

Impact on the Biodiversity Corridor:

BENDP policy ES15 states that new development within or adjacent to Biodiversity Corridors must assess its impact on the natural environment and must not give rise to significant harm to the integrity or function of the Biodiversity Corridors. The BENDP identifies a biodiversity corridor following the line of the private track and extending north beyond its end. The application site is therefore adjacent to this corridor. BENDP policy ES16 states that proposals which detract from the unlit environments of the Parish will not be supported.

However, the site does not fall within the biodiversity corridor itself, and policy ES15 does not state that development within or adjacent to a corridor is unacceptable in principle. Matters relating to the biodiversity corridor and any lighting scheme do not conflict with the principle of development, but are technical considerations to be addressed through the submission of bat and wildlife surveys and the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures.

AMOUNT OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

The proposal is for the erection of a new dwelling. It is acknowledged that the site is well screened on all sides and is set well back from the main road, such that there are no meaningful public views into the site other than from the existing access track, and then only from a point immediately adjacent to the site. The access is already established and, therefore, the proposal would not result in any material change to the street scene. Whilst the development would generate additional vehicle movements along the access track, these would not be significant and it is noted that the site has historically experienced activity and a degree of human presence being part of a residential garden.

Whilst the proposed density would accord with Development Plan requirements, the pattern of development would not fully reflect the prevailing local character. In particular, Watermead and separately Saxby to the south comprise single dwellings within large plots extending southwards towards the main road. There are also nearby residential properties, including The White House, Sundance and Croftway House on the western side of the access track at approximately the same point as Watermead. Although these properties exhibit a different spatial arrangement to Watermead and Saxby, they nevertheless follow a more traditional pattern of development, being positioned side by side in a linear form.

It is a material consideration that an appeal was recently allowed on land immediately to the north of the site for Permission in Principle for between two and three dwellings (BN/34/26/PIP, Appeal Ref: 6008644). In that case, the Inspector concluded that, despite the proposal's conflict with local planning policy and a density greater than that of the surrounding area, the substantial screening of the site meant that the development would not adversely affect the visual appearance of the locality or appear so out of character as to cause material harm. The Inspector also attached considerable weight to the fallback position of an extant Permission in Principle for a single dwelling on that site.

The appeal site immediately to the north would achieve a density of between approximately 6.9 and 10.3 dwellings per hectare. The current proposal would result in a density of approximately 8 dwellings per hectare, placing it comfortably within that range. Having regard to the findings of the appeal decision, the level of screening surrounding the site, and the limited visual relationship between the proposed dwelling and the wider area, the proposal would not result in unacceptable harm to the character or appearance of the locality. On balance, the proposed density is considered acceptable in this instance.

SUMMARY

The presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in Policy S5 states that only certain forms of development should be approved outside settlement boundaries. Relevant to this proposal are criteria (e), which supports limited infilling within existing housing.

This report identifies that the proposal conflicts with development plan policies relating to development in

the countryside. By definition, the site is located in an area where new residential development is generally restricted. Furthermore, as the proposal is for a single dwelling, the benefits arising from the development carry limited weight.

Whilst the above assessment concludes that the site is sustainable, it is acknowledged that this is not the most sustainable location, being situated between the settlements of Barnham and Yapton and set back from the main road. However, it would not be reasonable to refuse planning permission solely because the site lies outside the defined built-up area boundary; demonstrable planning harm must also be identified.

Despite its countryside location, it has been demonstrated that the site is well screened from the wider area and would not result in harm to the visual qualities or character of the surrounding landscape.

The proposal represents a small-scale infill development and the site is well connected to the existing settlements of Barnham and Yapton. As such, notwithstanding the identified conflict with countryside policies, the proposal accords with the relevant criteria of Policy S5. The adverse effects do not outweigh the benefits and the conflict with Policy S6 is acceptable. On balance, any adverse impacts would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development, and the proposal is therefore considered to represent sustainable development.

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE

- 1 The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Watermead Location Plan 27/07/26.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of amenity and the environment in accordance with Arun Local Plan policies C SP1.

- 2 At the Technical Details stage the detailed proposal should include the following information:
 - Application Form, CIL Form, Fee, Drawings.
 - Phase 1 Habitat Survey (and any follow-up species specific surveys - as may be required by the results of the Phase 1).
 - Biodiversity Enhancement Statement.
 - Bat Friendly/Dark Skies Lighting Scheme.
 - Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and supporting information.
 - Drainage Statement (Surface Water & Foul)*
 - Lidsey Drainage Impact Assessment.
 - Arboricultural Implications Assessment, Tree Survey Schedule, Root Protection Area Schedule and Tree Constraints Plan. If the RPA of any tree proposed for retention overlaps the development, then an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan will also be required; and
 - Details demonstrating proposed vehicular access arrangements to the site, sufficient space for parking and turning of vehicles, and sufficient secure/covered cycle storage.

* Please also refer to the guidance and checklists here: <https://www.arun.gov.uk/surfacewater> and <https://www.arun.gov.uk/designer-checklists>.