All enquiries: planning@conservancy.co.uk

CHICHESTER HARBOUR CONSERVANCY

Havant Borough Council
Development Management
Public Service Plaza
Civic Centre Road
Havant
PO9 2AX

BY EMAIL ONLY

30th September 2026

Dear Selina Donophy,

Application: **APP/26/00504 -** Permission for change of use from horse grazing fields to two fenced, fully enclosed, dog walking paddocks.
Location: **Mengham Field, 46 Mengham Lane, Hope Not House, Hayling Island, Hants, PO11 9JX**

Thank you for consulting Chichester Harbour Conservancy on the above planning application. Chichester Harbour Conservancy is a unique organisation in that it is the only Harbour Authority with statutory responsibility for conserving natural beauty within a National Landscape (formerly AONB). Further details are explained in the Appendix to this response.

Please note that the above case has been considered as a fully delegated decision by the National Landscape Planning Officer at Chichester Harbour Conservancy.

Chichester Harbour Conservancy's Response

NO OBJECTION WITH CONDITIONS:-

1. **Hours of operation be limited as the LPA considers appropriate (avoiding dark times as stated).**
2. **Appointment-only basis, only one customer booking per dog walking paddock at any one time, and limited to a maximum of 3 dogs per customer booking.**
3. **No artificial lighting to be installed.**
4. **Signage be agreed in writing with LPA prior to installation and to be non-illuminated.**
5. **Notwithstanding the details provided, details of fencing to include timber posts to be agreed in writing with LPA prior to installation.**
6. **No solid fencing to be erected without prior permission of the LPA.**

Conditions are to be read in conjunction with the overall recommendation and should not be separated.

Reasoned Justification

In principle the proposed use could be compatible with the existing rural character of this site within the Chichester Harbour National Landscape provided that the intensity of the use is and remains low, is suitably managed, and avoids the erection of any solid or inappropriate fencing, buildings, or visually intrusive signage, car parking/ hard surfacing or artificial lighting.

Whilst the overall size of the paddock area is a concern, the northern paddock being some 186 metres long which would be fully enclosed by fencing, and it is understood that the proposed use would be in addition to the continued use by some stable tenants, the scale and extent of the dog walking paddock use and the impact of physical changes required could be controlled by suitable conditions to ensure that the character, tranquillity, natural beauty and nature conservation value of the site is conserved and enhanced.

It is understood that the dog walking paddocks would be operated on an appointment-only basis, with slots of up to one hour (which includes a 10 minute changeover period between customers), with one customer/booking per paddock (2 at any one time,) and with a maximum of 3 dogs per customer as clarified in the applicant's response to representations. These matters could be controlled by condition to limit the intensity of the use which could form part of a management plan in order to safeguard the tranquillity of the National Landscape by protecting against further increased activity and potential noise impacts.

The application form outlines that the use would be operated between 8am and 7pm in summer months or between 8am and 4pm in winter months, although it is noted that a longer operating period is specified in the Design and Access Statement. The differing hours of operation, and an understanding of precisely which operating hours would be in force at any given month, would need to be clarified. This would need to be sufficiently precise, not only in terms of the intensity of use but also as it is important to ensure that hours of operation would be limited to daylight hours only to avoid the need for any artificial lighting in the interests of maintaining the Dark Skies of the National Landscape. A suitable condition to prevent any artificial lighting being installed is also recommended.

The application details indicate a 2.6m wide access strip required for maintenance of the adjacent ditch when required. This area is outside of the red line area and it has been assumed that no works are proposed in this area on that basis. The application details also appear to indicate the area to the immediate west of the proposed northern paddock as a potential extended car parking area as there are no precise detail of the limits of any hard or vegetated areas on the drawings. However, the red line also does not include the existing parking area or the area to the north of this. This would need to be clarified. It is nevertheless understood from the application details that there would not be any changes to the vegetation, and the existing hedgerows would remain. Any significant extension of hardstanding within the site should be avoided to conserve its rural character.

The proposed deer stock fencing would have a relatively lightweight appearance which could help blend with the natural landscape when seen from wider views and it is noted that there are some trees and hedges not indicated on the applicant's site plan which would provide some further screening and there is an opportunity for further enhancement with native planting typical of Chichester Harbour National Landscape. However, the use of metal posts is not ideal and timber

posts would be more visually appropriate in this location, particularly given the extent and height of fencing proposed. Notwithstanding the details provided, revised fencing details to include timber posts could be agreed by condition. Any solid fencing should be avoided as this would be visually harmful and should be controlled by condition.

Any proposed signage should be suitably low-key and non-illuminated to help minimise its visual impact and this should be controlled by condition to safeguard the character of the area and natural beauty of the wider landscape.

Yours sincerely,

Rebekah Hincke

National Landscape Planning Officer
Chichester Harbour Conservancy

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Appendix

Chichester Harbour National Landscape
Chichester Harbour was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1964. Since 22nd November 2023, all AONBs are referred to as 'National Landscapes' to better reflect their national importance. Chichester Harbour is the smallest mainland National Landscape in England, and is quite rightly regarded as a nationally important **protected landscape.**

Local Planning Authorities must give great weight to the primary purpose of the AONB designation.

> The primary purpose of the AONB designation is to **conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area**. In pursuing the primary purpose, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment. Recreation is not an objective of designation, but the demand for recreation should be met insofar as it is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry, and other uses.

All relevant authorities, including Local Planning Authorities, have a new strengthened duty as of 26th December 2023, under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to 'seek to further the purpose' of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB (National Landscape).

Chichester Harbour Conservancy
Chichester Harbour Conservancy was established in 1971. It is a unique organisation in that is the only Statutory Harbour Authority with responsibility for the conservation of natural beauty within a National Landscape. Its purposes extend beyond that of other National Landscapes, to include leisure, recreation, and the conservation of nature.

The management of the National Landscape was formalised through the Countryside and Rights of Way Act of 2000 with Chichester Harbour Conservancy appointed as the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) for the National Landscape.

Chichester Harbour Conservancy's Planning Committee
Chichester Harbour Conservancy utilises a member-led Planning Committee to act on behalf of the Conservancy Board in responding to the larger of more controversial planning applications and consultations. Membership is derived from the Conservancy Board and the Statutory Advisory Committee. The Conservancy's Case Officer reports, agendas, and minutes of past meetings are on the Conservancy's website.

Chichester Harbour Statutory Management Plan
The Chichester Harbour Management Plan (2025-2030) details the Special Qualities of the National Landscape and features four policy aims to guide its management. Chichester Harbour Conservancy prepared the Management Plan on behalf of the Local Planning Authorities. The Plan was subject to a public consultation over 8 weeks and is a material planning consideration under Policy NE14 of the Chichester Local Plan (2021-2039) and Policy CS12 of the Havant Borough Core Strategy. This means it is relevant in making planning decisions within and around Chichester Harbour National Landscape.
Chichester Local Plan 2021-2039
Havant Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011 and Allocations Plan 2014

Chichester Harbour Planning Principles
Chichester Harbour Conservancy has developed seven Planning Principles to guide development in and around the National Landscape. These Planning Principles can be read on page 41 of the Management Plan. The Planning Principles directly inform whether a planning application is likely to be supported by the Conservancy, therefore applicants for planning permission are advised to meet and demonstrate compliance with these Principles (where appropriate).

Chichester Harbour AONB Landscape Character Assessment
The purpose of the Landscape Character Assessment is to provide an understanding of the unique landscape character and special qualities of the Chichester Harbour National Landscape to inform the development of National Landscape Management Plans and wider planning policy. The Landscape Character Assessment is a material planning consideration.

Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Chichester District Council and Havant Borough Council jointly published guidance on development proposals in Chichester Harbour AONB in 2017. It expands upon the relevant policies in the Local Plans, particularly relating to the design of replacement dwellings and extensions and provides photographic examples showing the impacts of developments and suggested techniques for limiting those impacts. The Joint SPD is a material planning consideration.

National Landscape Impact Statement
All applicants inside the National Landscape are recommended to submit a National Landscape Impact Statement to the Local Planning Authority to show how the application:

a) will conserve and enhance natural beauty;
b) complement the special qualities of the National Landscape and
c) will deliver the adopted Policy Aims and meet the Planning Principles in the Management Plan.

Applicants that spend time on preparing a National Landscape Impact Statement are likely to negate questions along these lines arising at a later date.

Conservancy Works Licence
The Chichester Harbour Conservancy Act 1971 (Sections 45, 47 and 48) makes it an offence for any person to construct, alter, renew, or extend any works on, under or over tidal waters or tidal lands below the level of Mean High-Water Springs in Chichester Harbour unless licensed to do so by the Conservancy. Approval must be gained before any works commence. Guidance notes can be found here.

Natural England
Natural England is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. It is responsible for ensuring that England's natural environment, including its land, flora and fauna, freshwater and marine environments, geology, and soils, are protected and improved. It also has a responsibility to help people enjoy, understand, and access the natural environment. Natural England advises that Chichester Harbour Conservancy's "knowledge of the site and its wider landscape setting, together with the aims and objectives of the AONB's Statutory Management Plan, will be a valuable contribution to the planning decision."

Summary of Environmental Designations at Chichester Harbour

Worldwide Designation	Ramsar Site	Wetlands are among the most diverse and productive ecosystems. Chichester and Langstone Harbours were recognised as a wetland of international importance when they were designated as a Ramsar Site in 1987, under the Ramsar Convention.
Nationally Important Designations	National Landscape	A National Landscape (formerly AONB) is a landscape which is considered so precious that it is protected for the nation. The criteria for designating a National Landscape include valuable wildlife, habitats, geology, and heritage, as well as scenic views. Chichester Harbour was designated as an AONB in 1964.
	Bass Nursery Area	A Bass Nursery Area is a place that is recognised as a haven for small school bass. Fishing for bass, or fishing for any fish using sand-eels as bait, by any fishing boat within any part of the Harbour as defined, is prohibited between 30th April and 1st November each year. Chichester Harbour was designated a Bass Nursery Area in 1990.
	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Chichester Harbour was designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest in 1970 because it was of special interest by virtue of its fauna, flora, geological or physiographical / geomorphological features.
	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	A Special Area of Conservation is a site designated under the Habitats Directive. These sites, together with Special Protection Areas, are called Natura sites and they are internationally important for threatened habitats and species. Solent Maritime SAC was designated in 1994.
	Special Protection Area (SPA)	A Special Protection Area is a site designated under the Birds Directive. Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA was designated in 1979.
	Water Framework Directive	This aims for good water quality and covers groundwater, surface water (rivers, canals, lakes, reservoirs, estuaries, other brackish waters, and coastal waters) out to one nautical mile from shore as well as wetlands. The Directive, which came into effect in 2000, gives shellfish harvesting waters and bathing waters special protection.
Locally Important Designations	Conservation Area	Conservation Areas protect special architectural and historical places of interest. There are ten Conservation Areas in and around Chichester Harbour.
	Dark Sky Discovery Site	Three Dark Sky Discovery Sites were defined in Chichester Harbour in 2017. They are particularly good sites for stargazing.
	Local Nature Reserve	Local Nature Reserves are particularly appropriate for educational, research or public information purposes. There are five Local Nature Reserves in Chichester Harbour.
	Local Wildlife Site	Local Wildlife Sites in West Sussex feature important habitats that complement Local Nature Reserves and the Site of Special Scientific Interest. They are the equivalent of a Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Hampshire. There are 16 Local Wildlife Sites in Chichester Harbour.
	Site of Important for Nature Conservation (SINC)	Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Hampshire feature important habitats that complement Local Nature Reserves and the Site of Special Scientific Interest. They are the equivalent of Local Wildlife Sites in West Sussex. There are 25 SINCs in Chichester Harbour.