

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 07 August 2025 17:16:19 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/25/0883
Categories: Comments Received

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 07/08/2025 5:16 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Ghyll House Farm, Limekiln Farm Broadwater Lane Copsale West Sussex RH13 6QW
Proposal:	Erection of a temporary workers dwelling for security, stud and equine rehabilitation. To include change of use to the land to the south of Limekiln Wood from agricultural to mixed use agricultural and equestrian, including the barn for the broodmares and retirement horses and alpacas.
Case Officer:	Kate Turner

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address:	The Old Post Office Nuthurst Street Horsham
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Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Member of the Public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Other
Comments:	According to the design and access statement submitted with planning application DC/25/0883, the equine rehabilitation facility that was the subject of planning application DC/23/1325 "is now developing as a stud, or breeding facility, for horses and for alpacas, [and] will offer its services on a commercial basis." The current application contends that, for the stud to operate safely, it

is essential that at least one worker be accommodated on-site overnight to deal with any emergencies that may arise. Hence this application for permission to construct a "workers dwelling" on an isolated field approximately one mile from the highway.

Such an application is exactly what was envisaged in the section of the National Planning Policy Framework that states that "planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless ... there is an essential need for a rural worker ... to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside" (paragraph 84a). To assess the need for such housing, the Government's guidance is that planning authorities should consider assessing "the degree to which there is confidence that the enterprise will remain viable for the foreseeable future" (paragraph: 010, reference ID: 67-010-20190722). The applicant certainly expects this to be done: in a supporting statement entitled "Need for rural accommodation", the applicant acknowledges that "to justify the need for a rural worker dwelling ... applicants must demonstrate both a functional need for the dwelling and the financial viability of the associated rural enterprise ... evidence must be provided that the business is financially stable, profitable, and has a reasonable prospect of remaining so."

Unfortunately, the documents currently displayed on HDC's planning website contain no evidence whatsoever that the business for which this accommodation is needed generates any revenue at present or is capable of generating any revenue in the future, nor that it is adequately capitalised, nor that it is "financially stable, profitable, and has a reasonable prospect of remaining so." Unsupported claims such as "we expect to increase our turnover and production by 85%" and "we have been able to support ourselves financially ... money has been invested back in to the business, it has no debt and is growing in reputation and popularity" are, frankly, worthless contentions unless they are backed up by supporting financial and business information, typically in the form of a conventional business plan.

Instead, the application glosses over this deficiency with a reference to the business plan submitted more than two years ago with application DC/23/1325. That document, however, described an operation that would "provide post-operative care and treatment for a number of equine ailments," a completely different financial proposition compared with the stud farm into which Limekiln Farm claims to be morphing. So the old business plan is irrelevant to this application, and the situation remains that absolutely no supporting evidence has been provided that the stud farm - without which this application has no substance whatsoever - could survive financially.

This matters because, in the event that the stud farm business proves to be less than viable, the need for the workers housing

falls away completely. What will remain will be an isolated rural dwelling built contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant guidance. In such circumstances, it would be reckless for Horsham District to even consider taking a decision on this application until it has asked for, and received, a proper and relevant business plan that includes sufficient financial information for the Council, with external advice if needed, to reach a view on the viability of the business on whose behalf this housing is said to be necessary.

What should the Council be looking for to satisfy itself that the business has a reasonable prospect of viability? Two of the key questions that the applicant's business plan should answer are:

Is the market for this particular service, in this area, big enough for a new entrant to have a realistic chance of attracting enough business? and

Will the new business's likely share of the available market be more than enough to cover all its expected costs?

Until the applicant produces a business plan that answers these and other relevant questions satisfactorily there are, in my view, no responsible grounds for even considering a decision to allow this application to proceed.

Kind regards

Telephone:

Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk



**Horsham
District
Council**