

DC/25/1957 – Oaklands Stud, Forest Grange, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 6HX

Demolition of pole barn and conversion of existing stable building into 1 detached dwelling

I object to this planning application.

I believe it should be refused because it repeats proposals that have already been clearly rejected, it conflicts with planning policy, and it is based on inaccurate and misleading information.

a) Previous planning history

This site has a long history of planning applications for residential use, all of which have been refused. These refusals have been upheld on appeal, and enforcement action is now underway to end unauthorised residential use.

In dismissing recent appeals, the Planning Inspectorate made two things very clear. First, there has never been any approved residential development north of the access lane. Second, the harm caused by residential development on this site outweighs any benefit, including the provision of additional housing.

The applicant does not mention the dismissal of the appeal for DC/24/0974, nor do they acknowledge that the enforcement notice and appeal decision under EN/24/0264 apply to the whole of the land they own, not just the part covered by this application.

When the Council approved DC/24/1499 in January 2025, it specifically ruled out any residential use of the stables. That restriction still applies and has been ignored in this proposal.

Nothing has changed since these decisions were made. This proposal does not address the reasons why previous applications were refused.

b) Planning policies

The proposal goes against planning policies that are meant to protect the countryside and the High Weald National Landscape. These policies direct new housing to suitable settlements and resist unjustified residential development in rural areas like this.

c) Inaccuracies and problems with the application

The application contains serious errors and omissions.

The applicant has misrepresented the boundaries of the land they own. The proposed garden would extend onto land owned by Forest Grange Private Road Limited and would interfere with existing field boundaries.

The proposal also breaks with the established pattern of development on the Forest Grange estate, where building has always followed a linear form and has never extended north of the access lane.

The building would require major rebuilding and includes suburban features that are out of place in this setting. It would be poorly lit, unsustainable, and has no confirmed utility connections. Fixing these problems would mean further development and more harm to the landscape.

The scheme would further damage the rural character of the site by breaking up fields, introducing domestic boundaries and installing inappropriate fencing.

Claims about screening are misleading. The development would be visible from the north, and the natural screening to the south no longer exists. The proposed fencing conflicts with earlier planning conditions and the High Weald Design Guide. Without it, the building would be clearly visible from the access lane and would harm the setting of the Grade II listed Forest Grange Manor.

Drainage has not been properly dealt with. There is no convincing surface water strategy and no foul drainage proposed at all.

The site is not sustainable. Shops and services are more than 3km away and can only be reached along narrow, unlit roads with no footpaths, making car use unavoidable.

Finally, the applicant has no right of access for residential use along the private lane, which is limited to agricultural purposes.

d) Conclusion

This is another attempt to introduce residential development on a site where it has already been clearly rejected.

The application is inaccurate, ignores previous decisions, and conflicts with planning policies designed to protect this sensitive landscape. For these reasons, I believe planning permission should be refused.