

MME PLANNING SERVICES

Removal of pole barn and conversion of existing stable building to form 1no detached self-build dwelling with associated works.

at

Oaklands Stud, Forest Grange, Horsham, West Sussex,
RH13 6HX

Planning Statement

Ref: P-039b

November 2025

Version 1



Figure 1: Site Location

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1. Introduction

1.1 MME Planning Services is instructed to submit this full planning application for the removal of an existing pole barn and conversion of existing stable building to form 1no detached self-build dwelling with associated works at Oaklands Stud, Forest Grange, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 6HX.

1.2 The application is submitted following the Council's decision to refuse planning permission under planning reference number DC/25/0462 in July 2025 a similar development. This application seeks to address the issues raised by the Council in its refusal. The reasons for refusal were as follows:

- 1 *The development would be located beyond a defined built-up area on a site not allocated within the Development Plan and would not be essential to this countryside location. The development would therefore be contrary to the overarching spatial strategy and hierarchy approach of concentrating development within defined settlements and advocating a planned approach to settlement expansion, contrary to policies 1, 2, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015). Notwithstanding the absence of a five-year land housing supply, and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) at paragraph 11(d), it is not considered that there are any material considerations in this instance which would outweigh harm arising from conflict with Local and Neighbourhood Plan policies in these regards.*
- 2 *The design and scale of the development particularly the enclosure of the pole barn, introduction of large glazed openings, and domestic-style materials results in a block-like and suburban appearance at odds with the site's rural character. Additionally, the proposal would introduce a formalised residential use and associated paraphernalia that would domesticate and degrade the natural, rural character of the site, in conflict with the purposes of the High Weald National Landscape. The proposal fails to respect the setting of the High Weald National Landscape, conserve or enhance the visual and spatial qualities of the protected landscape and is contrary to Policies 25, 30, 32, and 33 of the HDPF.*

3 *The application fails to provide a tree survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, or adequate tree protection details despite the presence of ancient and TPO-protected trees. This omission prevents proper assessment of potential harm and risks indirect impacts such as future pressure for pruning or removal. The proposal is therefore contrary to HDPF Policy 30.*

1.3 Specifically, the proposals have been updated to remove the pole barn, with a simpler form to the conversion of the stable building which would retain its existing character and address reason for refusal 2. In addition, a tree survey, impact assessment and method statement are provided to address reason for refusal 3. With these matters addressed, it is considered that Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF would be engaged, therefore addressing reason for refusal 1, as set out above.

2. Site, Surroundings and Background

2.1 The application site relates to an existing private equestrian facility located to the north of Forest Grange, outside any designated built-up area boundary. The site is therefore located within the countryside in policy terms. The site is also located within the High Weald National Landscape (formerly AONB). An area of ancient woodland (St. Leonards Forest) is located immediately to the north of the application site. The proposed site is opposite to the property known as Forest Grange Manor which includes a Grade II listed country house (Forest Grange) built in 1913. The proposed site, therefore, is considered to be within the wider setting of the Listed Building.

2.2 The site comprises a stable building with lean-to pole barn located immediately to the south of the stable building. The wider site consists of a number of divided paddocks, along with a sand school and hay barn. The site is accessed to the south-east, with the site bound by mature trees and woodland to the north and south, and divided paddocks to the east and west. The stable building is of a traditional design with a low-pitched roof and additional space for storage. The soft landscaping to the southern boundary of the site is classified as Priority Habitat.

2.3 The initial approval for the stables / equestrian facility was permitted under planning reference CG/33/94 in August 1994 and included a use condition (Condition 4) which required that the stables be used in association with the use of the dwelling at Tanglewood (formerly known as 1 Garage Cottages Forest Grange). This condition

has since been removed from the site under a Removal of Condition application, reference DC/24/1499 in January 2025.

- 2.4 It is noted that the wider site has been granted planning permission under an allowed appeal for Use of land for part-time fitness boot camp (Retrospective) under planning reference DC/23/2234 in March 2025. It is also noted that a tree located outside the application site boundary has recently been granted a tree preservation order (TPO).

3. Planning History

- 3.1 Planning Application – Ref: CG/33/94 – Erection of stables and haybarn Site: 1 Garage Cottages St Leonards Forest Horsham – Decision: Permitted, 10/08/1994.

Outline Planning Application – Ref: CG/25/96 – Erection of 1 house (outline) Site: Forest Grange (Land Adj) Horsham – Decision: Refused, 02/10/1996.

Planning Application – Ref: CG/15/00 – Sand school Site: Tanglewood Forest Grange Horsham – Decision: Permitted, 20/06/2000. As detailed above, this application included a condition (Condition 4) restricting the use of the sandschool for commercial / livery purposes.

Planning Application – Ref: DC/22/2125 – Erection of detached barn and laying of hardstanding (Retrospective) – Decision: Refused, 02/05/2023. Appeal Allowed, 12/02/2024.

Lawful Development Certificate Application – Ref: DC/22/2126 – Application to confirm the continuous mixed use of equestrian facility including the stationing and occupation of a caravan / mobile home providing independent accommodation for a period in excess of ten years prior to the date of this application (Lawful Development Certificate - Existing) – Decision: Refused, 06/03/2023.

Planning Application – Ref: DC/23/2234 – Use of land for part-time fitness boot camp (Retrospective) – Decision: Refused, 19/06/2024. Appeal Allowed, 24/03/2025.

Planning Application – Ref: DC/24/0974 – Proposed change of use of land from equestrian to a mixed use including settled gypsy accommodation site comprising 2 pitches. Retention of existing hardstanding and proposed biodiversity enhancements (Retrospective) – Decision: Refused, 24/10/2024. Appeal Submitted

Removal of Condition Application – Ref: DC/24/1499 – Removal of Condition 4 of previously approved application CG/33/94 (Erection of stables and haybarn) relating to the tie to the existing dwelling at Tanglewood – Decision: Permitted, 13/01/2025

Planning Application – Ref: DC/25/0462 – Conversion and extensions to existing stables and pole barn to form 1no. detached dwelling and associated works – Decision: Refused, 23/07/2025.

4. Proposals

- 4.1 As detailed above, planning permission is sought for the conversion of an existing stables building to form 1no 2-bed detached dwelling and associated works. An existing pole located to the south of the stable building would be removed. The proposed conversion would retain all of the main features of the stable building as well as its existing 'L' shaped footprint
- 4.2 The proposed dwelling would have an overall width of approximately 25.5m, an overall depth of approximately 7.5m and an overall height to the ridge of the stable building of 3.7m. The existing stable building would not be extended and the conversion would be fully contained within the existing building fabric.
- 4.3 Following the previous refusal under planning reference DC/25/0462, the proposed conversion has been carefully revised and developed. As set out above, the main form, appearance and external materials would be retained, resulting in a modest dwelling which clearly reflects the traditional equestrian / rural form and character of the existing stable building to be converted. In order to further enhance this and reduce the built form on site, the existing pole barn would be completely removed, resulting in a development which would be commensurate with the existing setting and the countryside location.
- 4.4 The proposals would be contained within the existing yard area and would not encroach towards the north beyond the existing post and rail fencing separating the application from the wider field / paddocks. The proposed conversion would utilise the existing openings to the building, which again acts to preserve the equestrian character of the building and site.

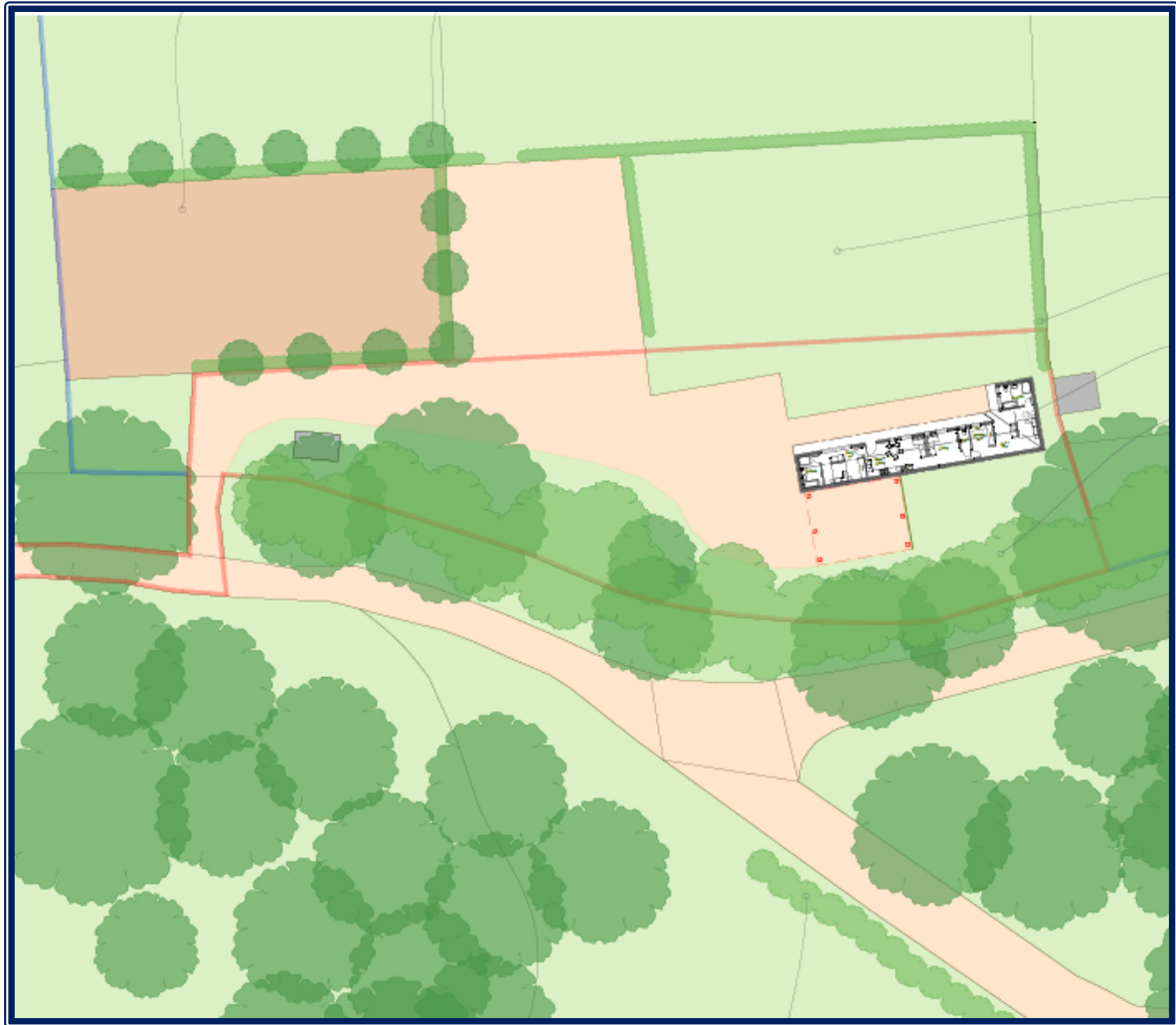


Figure 2: Proposed Site Plan

- 4.5 The proposals would consist of the retention of the existing external materials including the tongue and groove cladding and the corrugated sheet roofing. As mentioned above, the existing openings of the stable building would be used to fit windows and doors which would be timber framed, again reflecting the character and materials of the existing building. The openings are primarily located to the north of the building. The proposed dwelling would have a GIA of approximately 95sqm.
- 4.6 As is evident from the new plans provided with this application, the overall form, appearance and character of the stable building would be retained. Extensive mature soft landscaping is present to the south of the application site, restricting any views of the application from the private road, as well as from the Grade II listed building at Forest Grange. It is noted that additional planting has also been added to the north of the application building.

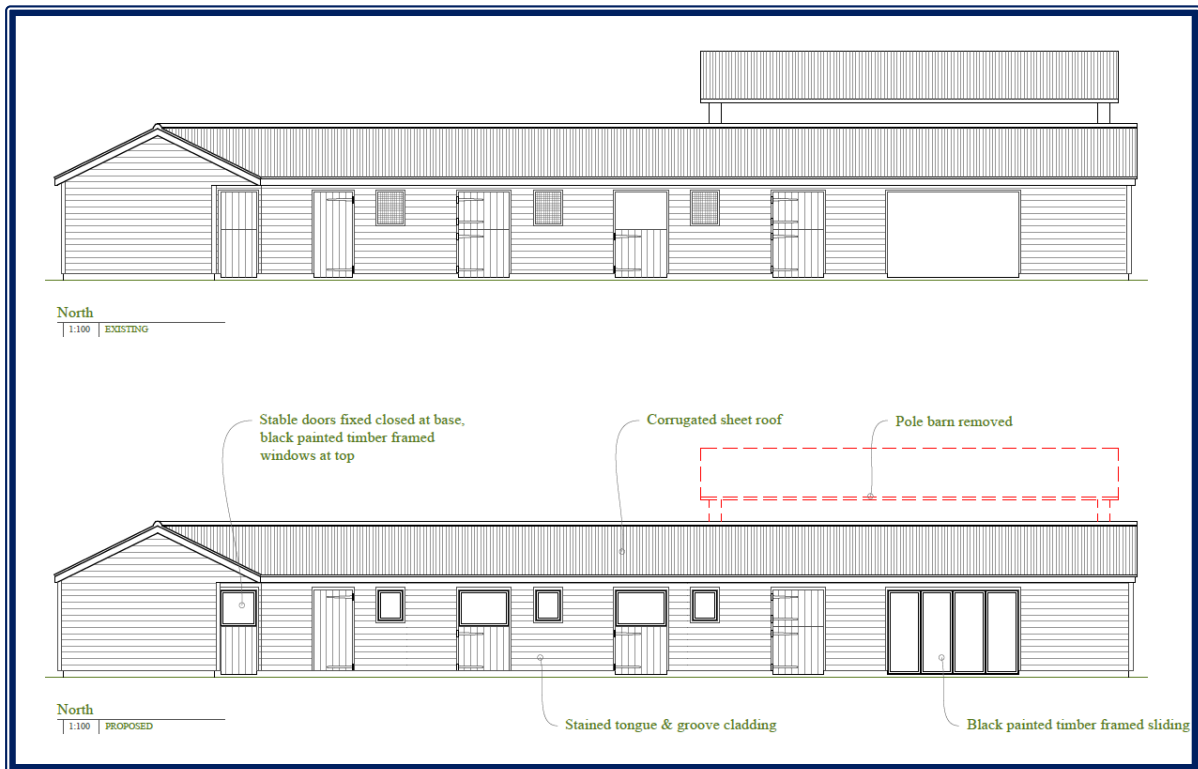


Figure 3: Existing and Proposed North Elevation

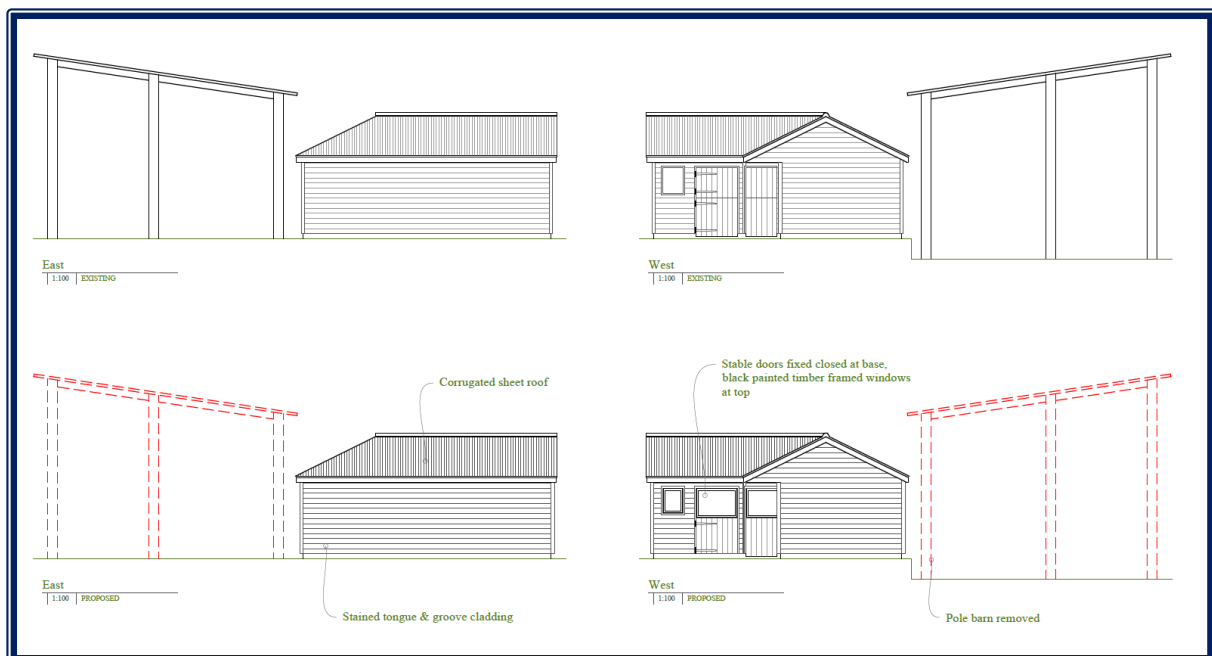


Figure 4: Existing and Proposed East and West Elevations

- 4.7 The proposed design is considered to be in keeping with the setting and the overall scale would be comparable to existing development within the immediate vicinity, and appropriate in terms of the size of the plot. Given the retention of the overall form, appearance and equestrian character of the host building, there would be no detrimental impact on the High Weald National Landscape as a result of the proposals.

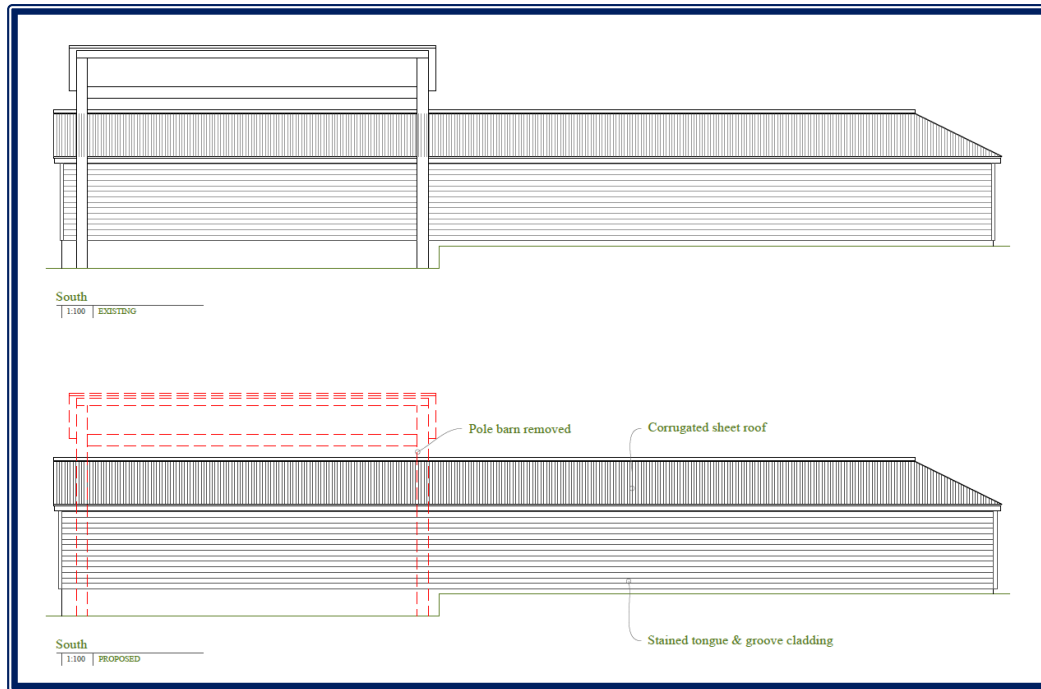


Figure 5: Existing and Proposed South Elevation

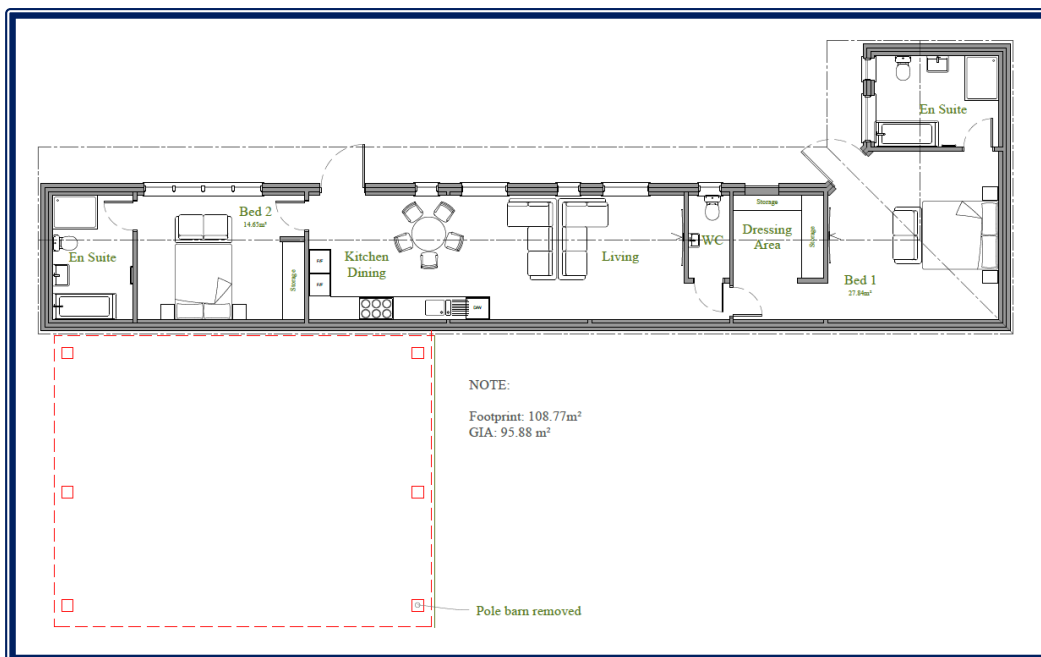


Figure 6: Proposed Floor Plan

- 4.8 The proposed development is considered to be appropriately separated from neighbouring properties to avoid any impact on amenity and would provide a good level of accommodation for future occupiers. Sufficient parking would also be provided, with the development served by an existing access from the private lane.
- 4.9 Given the extent and positioning of the extension works and alterations to the building, the proposal would not result in harm to any trees, nor would it unacceptably harm biodiversity, ancient woodland, irreplaceable habitat, protected species or any priority habitat network.
- 4.10 The application is supported by a tree survey, method statement and arboricultural impact assessment. It is also noted that a structural report has also been produced in support of the application which confirms that the stable building is capable of conversion.

5. Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) and National Guidance

- 5.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework for the preparation of local plans for housing and other development. The NPPF should be read as a whole.
- 5.2 Running throughout the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Sustainable development is achieved through three main objectives which are – economic, social and environmental.
- 5.3 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that for decision-taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, planning permission should be granted unless the policies of the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed, or, any adverse impact of doing so would 'significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits' when assessed against the policies of the NPPF when taken as a whole (NPPF paragraph 11 d).

Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015)

- 5.4 Paragraph 34 of the NPPF requires that all development plans complete their reviews no later than 5 years from their adoption. Horsham District Council has submitted its new local plan for examination, however at this stage, the emerging policies carry limited to no weight in decision making.
- 5.5 A Local Development Scheme (LDS) was published in February 2025 by the Council. The LDS sets out the production timetable for the New Local Plan anticipated to be adopted April 2026. Notwithstanding the above, as the HDPF is now over 5 years old, the most important policies for determining this application are now considered to be 'out of date'. This position is further highlighted given that the Horsham District Local Plan examination hearing meetings scheduled for January 2025 were cancelled by the appointed Inspector, and in April 2025 has advised that the Plan is withdrawn due to concerns about its legal compliance.
- 5.6 The Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites. The presumption in favour of development within Paragraph 11d) of the NPPF therefore applies in the consideration of all applications for housing development within the District, with Policies 2, 4, 15 and 26 now carrying limited weight in decision making.
- 5.7 While considered to be out of date, the main HDPF policies relevant to this application are as follows:
- 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 10 - Rural Economic Development
 - Policy 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
 - Policy 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs
 - Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
 - Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
 - Policy 30 - Protected Landscapes
 - 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 40 - Sustainable Transport
- Policy 41 - Parking

Colgate Neighbourhood Plan

5.8 There is no made Neighbourhood plan for the Parish of Colgate.

Planning Advice Note(s) (PAN)

5.9 Relevant PAN's to this application are as follows:

- Shaping Development in Horsham District
- Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

6. Planning Considerations

Principle of Development

- 6.1 The HDPF spatial development strategy as contained within policies 2, 3 & 4 directs development to sites within built-up area boundaries, encourage the effective use of brownfield land, and aim to manage development around the edges of existing settlements in order to protect the rural character and landscape.
- 6.2 The site is located outside of the built-up area and is not allocated within Horsham's adopted development plan (comprising in this case the HDPF), while it is again noted that these are now out of date. As a result, residential development in this location would conflict with the requirements of Policies 2 and 4 (Settlement Expansion) of the HDPF. The site is also not in an isolated location therefore the opportunities afforded by Paragraph 84 of the NPPF do not apply in this instance.
- 6.3 Notwithstanding the above, the Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, with the latest Authority Monitoring Report (April 2025) detailing a supply of only 1 year. Therefore, the tilted balance contained in paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged.

- 6.4 While the Council has submitted the New Horsham District Local Plan for examination, as detailed above, the appointed Inspector has advised that the new Local Plan be withdrawn (April 2025) and the process is re-started. As such, the weight given to the above policies and the New Local Plan is therefore limited to none at this stage. In addition, as will be detailed below, there are no material matters which would represent a reason to refuse this application, and the concerns raised under planning reference DC/25/0462. In any event, any issues or harm that are identified would need to surmount a high hurdle to prevail in this balance.
- 6.5 The site is located approximately 1km from the built-up area boundary of Horsham, which is classed as the main town and at the top of the settlement hierarchy for the District and the site is considered to be within a reasonable distance of services. While it is acknowledged that future residents would likely be reliant upon private vehicles to access facilities, leading to some harm in this regard, this harm would be tempered by the short distance to Horsham. Alternative options such as cycling and walking are available and overall, occupants of the proposed dwelling would have reasonably good access to services and facilities in a higher order settlement.
- 6.6 The proposal relates to the conversion of an existing and established building to a residential dwelling. It is noted that Policy 10 of the HDPF supports the conversion of rural buildings to commercial in the first instance. However, given the spatial context of the site and surroundings, it is considered that a residential use would be more reflective of the surrounding land uses, and therefore more appropriate in this regard.
- 6.7 In addition to Policy 10 of the HDPF, Policy 32 of the emerging Local Plan introduces more explicit support for the conversion of rural buildings to residential use. It is noted, however, that this policy refers to buildings in agricultural or forestry use, and does not mention stables. Furthermore, since the new Local Plan is some way off adoption, it remains possible that the wording within this policy may change. As such, while the emerging policy indicates an intention to take a more positive approach to conversion of rural buildings than the HDPF, it carries only limited weight at this stage, as detailed above.
- 6.8 Furthermore, the proposal would also be acceptable in principle as it represents development on previously developed land / brownfield land. The definition of previously developed land within the NPPF is as follows – *“Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.*

This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape”.

- 6.9 The use and more effective use of previously developed land attracts support in the NPPF, as well as in Policy 2 of the HDPF. Under the definition set out above, given the use of the site for equestrian purposes and the fact that there is an existing stable building and pole barn present, the site is classed as previously developed land / brownfield land. This weighs in favour of the proposed development.
- 6.10 From an assessment of the delegated report in relation to application reference DC/25/0462, concerns were raised by the Council regarding the structural suitability of the stable building and the current use of the building. Reference was also made within the previous application that the development would amount to a rebuild.
- 6.11 To address these points, this application is supported by a structural survey of the stable building, which confirms that the building is capable of conversion. In addition, the delegated report states that as the building is currently in use it is neither redundant or disused. In response to this point, attention is drawn to Appendix A which is a recent appeal decision where at Paragraph 36 the Inspector states that – “Although the appeal buildings are currently in use, I have no reason to dispute that they are redundant in terms of no longer being needed or useful”.
- 6.12 The applicant has advised that equestrian activities are effectively redundant on site and their horses are able to stay outside, with the stable building used very sparsely for actual stabling. The building is therefore no longer needed and is available for residential conversion in this regard. As such, the fact that it is in use and taking into account the Inspector’s view within Appendix A, should not form part of the reason for not accepting the proposed development in principle

- 6.13 In addition, the delegated report under the 'Principle of Development' section states that the proposal would not enhance the setting. The amended proposals which are the subject of this application seek to remove the large pole barn to the south of the stable building. Given that the proposal would retain the character and appearance of the stable building and taking into account the removal of the large pole barn structure, it is considered that the resulting development would result in an enhancement of the site.
- 6.14 Further to the above, attention is drawn to HDC application reference DC/18/0249 which granted planning permission for the 'Conversion and extension of existing outbuildings into a three-bedroom single storey dwelling. Demolition of remaining buildings with retention of one shed'.
- 6.15 This approval was also located in the Parish of Colgate and within the High Weald National Landscape and from inspection of the plans and details, permitted significant alterations and extensions to the buildings on the site, appearing more as a rebuild. No concerns were raised by the Council in relation to this and the delegated report for this application states that – "In addition the current application proposes to largely retain and adapt the existing development on the site, rather than erect a replacement dwelling". The current proposals under this current application at Oaklands Stud would retain and adapt the existing stable building, as per the consideration of the Council under application reference DC/18/0249.
- 6.16 A similar further example can be viewed under HDC planning reference DC/15/2447 which granted planning permission for 'Conversion of buildings to three bedroom dwelling and construction of glazed link. Partial demolition of piggery and demolition of store building'. This approval was again located within Colgate Parish and within the High Weald National Landscape. Indeed, it is noted that this site was located on a slope with expansive views over open fields.
- 6.17 The delegated report attached to the above application stated that the proposal would re-use redundant or disused buildings and the principle of development was considered to be acceptable on this basis. The current proposal would also re-use a building that is no longer needed. As such, the context and policy position would be the same in this regard.
- 6.18 The above examples are considered relevant to this application. In addition, it is highlighted that permission was granted for these conversions to form dwellings at a time when HDC had a 5-year housing land supply.

6.19 It is noted that there are a number of other recent decisions that have granted residential developments outside of the defined built-up areas in other parts of the District. Examples include reference numbers DC/22/0495 and DC/22/2250 which each sought permission for 1no dwelling and were granted at appeal in August 2023 and March 2024 respectively, and DC/23/2278 which sought permission for 8no dwellings and was granted by the Council's planning committee North in April 2024.

6.20 Lastly, a very recent appeal decision issued in October 2025 under planning reference DC/24/1486, granted permission for a new build dwelling approximately 2 miles away from the closest built-up area boundary. Within the appeal decision the Inspector states that –

“27. The proposed dwelling would be in a location that is not considered suitable when assessed against the relevant HDPF and NP policies. The site lacks close proximity to a wide range of essential services and facilities. Although there are some opportunities for travel by means other than private car, reliance on car journeys is likely to be significant. In these respects, the proposal would conflict with key development plan policies.

28. Balanced against the harm are a number of benefits. The overall housing supply remains significantly deficient, and the provision of an additional dwelling would make a meaningful contribution to addressing this shortfall. The Framework recognises that small sites can make an important contribution to housing supply and are often built out quickly. There would also be modest economic benefits during construction and through local spending, as well as a small contribution to housing diversity. While the scale of these benefits is modest given that only one dwelling is proposed, in the context of current housing pressures, even a single additional home represents a valuable and positive contribution.

29. Taking all matters into account, the adverse impacts of granting permission would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole. Consequently, the proposal benefits from the presumption in favour of sustainable development as defined in paragraph 11d of the Framework.”

- 6.21 Further, more recent examples of applications for the conversion of existing buildings to dwellings include reference numbers DC/23/0627 which sought permission for the conversion of stables and was granted at appeal in December 2024; DC/21/0501 and DC/24/1710 which each sought permission for the conversion of existing buildings to form 1no dwelling and both granted under delegated powers by the Council in January 2025 and DC/23/1023, which also sought permission for the conversion of an existing building to form 1no dwelling and was granted under delegated powers by the Council in March 2025.
- 6.22 While it is acknowledged that every application and site context should be considered on its own merits, taking into account the current situation of the Council in terms of its 5-year housing supply and the above examples, there is an expectation that a consistent approach is applied to decision making.
- 6.23 It is highlighted that the above permitted dwellings were located a significant distance away from any defined built-up areas. The above examples clearly show that notwithstanding the distances to the respective settlement boundaries, these boundaries are now considered to be out of date given the lack of 5-year housing supply. As such, the tilted balance is engaged and the principle of residential development in this location is acceptable.
- 6.24 This position is confirmed by the Inspector within the appeal decision in relation to application reference DC/22/0495, which states “I have attached limited weight to the conflict with HDPF Policy 26 in respect of development outside of built-up area boundaries. The housing shortfall dictates that those boundaries are out of date. I consider that some weight can still be given to the strategy set out within HDPF Policy 2, in terms of the general locations of new development, but the fact that a site may lie outside of the built-up area boundary does not, in and of itself, constitute a reason to refuse planning permission”.
- 6.25 Notwithstanding this viewpoint, given the relatively close proximity of the site to the main town of Horsham, it is considered that the proposal would accord with criterion 4 of Policy 26 of the HDPF, as it would enable the sustainable development of rural areas. This would be the case for this application site, with the application seeking the conversion of an existing building on previously developed land and as future occupiers would have access to a range of facilities and services located in Horsham, similar to existing residents within Forest Grange.

- 6.26 The housing supply position of the Council is deficient. 1no additional dwelling would contribute towards the much-needed supply of houses. Small sites can often be built out relatively quickly. There would be economic benefits arising from construction and spend in the local economy. Although these benefits are tempered by the small contribution that 1no dwelling would make in the context of the current circumstances, the additional dwelling would be valuable.
- 6.27 In addition to the above, it is again reiterated that due to the updated design and extent of the proposals when compared to the previous approval, the development would not result in harm to the High Weald National Landscape, with all of the works combined resulting in an enhancement of the setting. The proposals would also be acceptable and would not have an adverse impact on the ancient woodland to the north and priority habitat to the south.
- 6.28 In summary, given the lack of a 5-year housing supply, the location of the site close to the main town of Horsham, the site being designated as previously developed land, and relevant recent examples of housing developments permitted outside of settlement boundaries, including the conversion of existing rural buildings, and the resulting landscape enhancement that the development would achieve, the principle of residential development is therefore acceptable.

Design, Appearance, and Impact on the Setting

- 6.29 Policy 25 of the HDPF seeks to protect the natural environment and landscape character of the District, including the landform, development pattern, together with protected landscapes and habitats. Development will be required to protect, conserve, and enhance landscape and townscape character, taking account of areas or features identified as being of landscape importance, individual settlement characteristics and settlement separation. In addition, development will be supported where it maintains and enhances the Green Infrastructure Network.
- 6.30 Policy 30 of the HDPF states that the natural beauty and public enjoyment of the High Weald AONB and the adjoining South Downs National Park will be conserved and enhanced and opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities will be promoted. Development proposals will be supported in or close to protected landscapes where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts to the natural beauty and public enjoyment of these landscapes as well as any relevant cross boundary linkages.

- 6.31 Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF require development to be of a high standard of design and layout. Development proposals must be locally distinctive in character and respect the character of their surroundings. Where relevant, the scale, massing and appearance of development will be required to relate sympathetically with its built-surroundings, landscape, open spaces and to consider any impact on the skyline and important views.
- 6.32 As set out above, the amended proposal for which planning permission is sought under this current application has been developed and formulated with regard to the previously refused scheme under planning reference DC/25/0462. Further regard has also been given to the existing character of the site and building and the relationship with the High Weald National Landscape.
- 6.33 Firstly, the removal of the pole barn as part of the proposals would result in an enhancement of the site and would directly address the concerns raised by the Council within the previous refusal with regards to the extent of built form to be created. The delegated report states – “This block-like massing is visually dominant, detracts from the unassuming stable building as it presently stands and is entirely at odds with the modest scale and informal pattern typical of buildings in this rural location”. As such, it is considered that the current proposal would overcome this matter.
- 6.34 In addition, it is acknowledged that the proposals as submitted under the previously refused application, while the overall built form and scale of the stable building were to be retained, sought to alter the external materials. The current proposal, given the suitability of the existing stable building for conversion, as confirmed by the structural report submitted, seeks to retain the existing external materials, with timber framed windows and doors added to the existing openings. Overall, the equestrian features of the stable building would be retained and enhanced, with fixed stable doors proposed ensuring that the character of the resulting dwelling remains as existing, resulting in an appropriate appearance within this setting.
- 6.35 The development would not encroach towards the north into the adjacent field beyond the existing post and rail boundary and yard area, with hedging planted to the north of the building(s), limiting any impact on the High Weald National Landscape. The external alterations have been sensitively designed and are considered to enhance the setting. The existing stable building is discreetly located, behind an area of extensive soft landscaping to the south and as such is not clearly visible from the private access road to the south of the site or any public vantage points, as detailed in the Figures below.

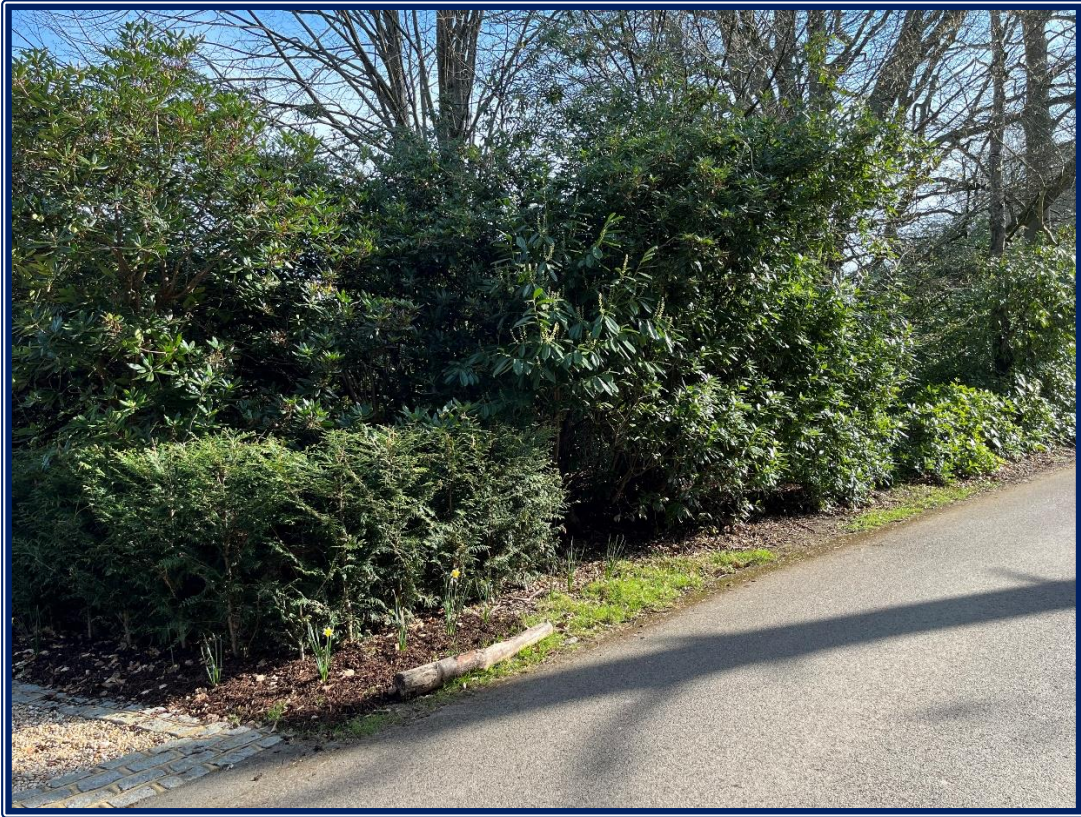


Figure 7: Extensive soft landscaping to the south of the site



Figure 8: Extensive soft landscaping to the south of the site (left hand side of access track)

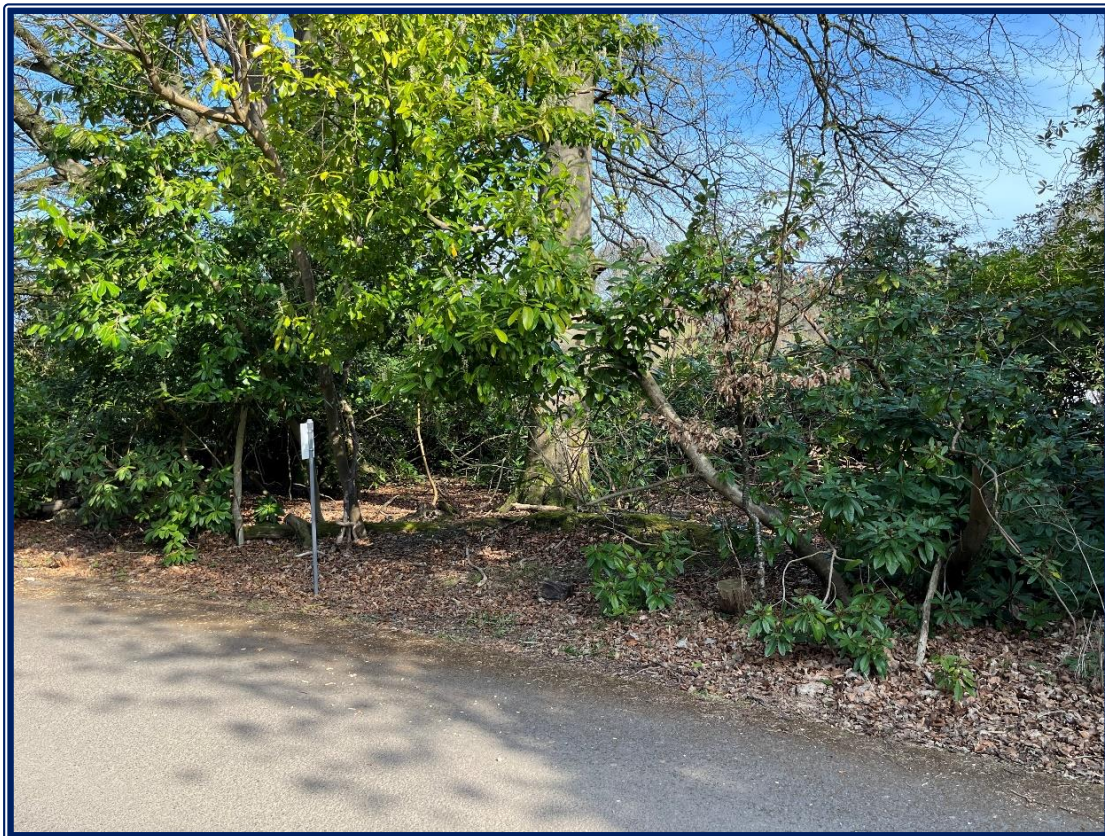


Figure 9: Extensive soft landscaping to the south of the site



Figure 10: Extensive soft landscaping to the south of the site



Figure 11: Extensive soft landscaping to the south of the site



Figure 12: Extensive soft landscaping to the south of the site

- 6.36 Therefore, it is considered that given the resulting design of the stable conversion, the fact that the existing character of the building would be preserved, the removal of the pole barn, and the screening around the site, the proposed dwelling would not appear as a prominent or alien feature within this setting. The proposal is considered to relate well to its surroundings, with no detrimental impact identified with regards to the High Weald National Landscape. As set out above, the proposals are considered to result in an enhancement to the site and surroundings.
- 6.37 In addition to the hedging already planted, the applicant would also provide additional planting and is willing to accept a landscaping condition as part of any permission, which would result in a further enhancement to the site.
- 6.38 The Council's attention is again drawn to the 2no similar examples set out above under planning reference numbers DC/18/0249 and DC/15/2447 which are also located within Colgate Parish and the High Weald National Landscape and resulted in the creation of residential dwellings respectively. Given the sensitive conversion and overall appearance and scale of the stable building which would be retained, the removal of the pole barn and soft landscaping already planted and to be planted, and taking the above examples into account, it is viewed that the proposed residential use of the site would not detract from the landscape character.
- 6.39 The proposed development would result in a development of high quality, and would appropriately reflect the character and visual amenities of the countryside location and the High Weald National Landscape. As is clear from the submitted plans and amendments, the proposed development would not have a "suburbanising impact that undermines the open, rural, and wooded character of the High Weald National Landscape", as purported by the Council within the previously refused application, reference DC/25/0462. This is further highlighted by the fact that the existing site already has an approved hardstanding / parking area, and existing hard and soft boundaries which would sufficiently contain the development. Given these existing features, there would be no need for addition residential paraphernalia to be added in association with the proposed dwelling, as raised by the Council within the previous delegated report.
- 6.40 Overall, the proposals would represent appropriate development within this setting, overcoming the concerns and reason for refusal 2 within the previously refused application under planning reference DC/25/0462, and would be in accordance with Policies 25, 30, 32 and 33 of the HDPF.

Heritage Considerations

- 6.41 Policy 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) relates to development affecting heritage assets. This policy requires proposals to be of a design and/or scale which preserves or enhances the special character and appearance of the relevant heritage asset, uses building materials and techniques that are appropriate within the local context, does not harm significant views within the area and restores or retains traditional features.
- 6.42 Taking into account the updated design as submitted within the application and removal of the pole barn, as well as the context and relationship with the listed building, the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the designated heritage asset and would be in accordance with Policy 34 of the HDPF.

Neighbouring Amenity and Environment for Future Occupiers

- 6.43 Policy 33 of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.
- 6.44 Given the relationship of the proposed dwelling, as indicated on the site plan provided, with neighbouring properties, it is considered that the proposals would not have a detrimental impact in terms of overlooking, overbearing impact or loss of light to neighbouring residential properties. In addition, it is contended that there would be no significant issues in terms of harmful noise or disturbance generated as a result of the proposed development, beyond that of the existing use of the site. The proposed dwelling would be of an appropriate size and would comply with national space standards and appropriate external amenity space would also be provided for future occupiers.
- 6.45 Overall, the proposed development would not result in demonstrable harm to neighbouring amenity and would therefore be in accordance with Policy 33 of the HDPF.

Parking and Highways

- 6.46 Policies 40 and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework relate to transport and parking, and states that more transport choice including community transport where appropriate will be encouraged, as well as a reduction in private car use and greater accessibility to more sustainable modes of transport. The district has a good rail network so the increased use of stations will be encouraged through better pedestrian and cycle links. Adequate parking and facilities must be provided within developments to meet the needs of anticipated users.
- 6.47 The plans indicate that the proposals would be served by an existing access to the site from a private lane, over which the applicant has a right of way, and as such, no highway safety concerns would be apparent. The provision of 1no dwelling would not result in a marked increase in trips to and from the site which would be detrimental to the function of the highway network, particularly when compared to the existing equestrian use of the site.
- 6.48 Sufficient space for vehicle parking would be available on site, and overall, the proposals would be acceptable in this regard.

Ecological and Biodiversity Considerations / Enhancements

- 6.49 Policy 31 of the HDPF states that –
- “Development will be supported where it can demonstrate that it maintains or enhances the existing network of green infrastructure. Development proposals will be required to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity and should create and manage new habitats where appropriate. The Council will support new development which retains and/or enhances significant features of nature conservation on development sites. The Council will also support development which makes a positive contribution to biodiversity through the creation of green spaces, and linkages between habitats to create local and regional ecological networks”.
- 6.50 The application is supported by a detailed Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA). The submitted ecological information outlines that the proposals would not have a detrimental impact on protected habitats or species, with mitigation and enhancement measures proposed.
- 6.51 As such, the submitted details provided indicate that there would be no detrimental impact on habitats or protected species, in accordance with Policy 31 of the HDPF.

Tree Considerations

- 6.52 In order to address the third reason for refusal in the previously refused application under planning reference DC/25/0462, and to ensure that the development would not have a detrimental impact on surroundings trees, this application is supported by a tree survey, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Method Statement and a Tree Protection Plan.
- 6.53 The Arboricultural Method Statement concludes that “the overall quality and longevity of the amenity contribution provided for by the trees and groups of trees within and adjacent to the site will not be adversely affected as a result of the local planning authority consenting to the proposed development. It is considered that any issues raised in this report, or beyond the scope of it can be dealt with by planning conditions”.
- 6.54 As set out within the submitted details, the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on any trees or planting, particularly to the south of the site, including the adjacent TPO tree. As detailed above, the applicant would be happy to provide a comprehensive hard and soft landscaping scheme, including the provision of trees and other planting, via a suitable condition.

7. Summary and Conclusion

- 7.1 Overall, given the position of the Council with regard to its 5-year housing supply, the location of the site in close proximity to Horsham, the designation of the site as previously developed land and recent decisions relating to residential development outside of built-up areas, the proposal represents an appropriate form of development, resulting in the sustainable development of this rural location.
- 7.2 The proposals for 1no dwelling would be commensurate with the prevailing character of the vicinity and there would be no detrimental impact on the High Weald National Landscape or the nearby heritage asset, and would result in an overall enhancement of the setting. The proposals would also be acceptable when considered against all other materials matters, as detailed within this statement and supporting information.

- 7.3 There are no adverse impacts of granting permission which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of an additional dwelling when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. As a result, the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be applied and Paragraph 11(d) indicates that permission should be granted.
- 7.4 As such, while now considered to be out of date, the proposals would be in accordance with Policies 4, 25, 26, 30, 31, 32, 33 and 34 of the HDPF and therefore, the Local Planning Authority is respectfully requested to grant planning permission accordingly.