

We respond in respect of DC/25/1439

Demolition of existing agricultural barns and erection of 3no. residential dwellings, with associated car ports, landscaping and parking.

(The prior application on this site was under DC/24/1087)

General:

We approved of the development of 5 barn conversions previously listed under DC/24/1087 and we likewise approve of the development of 3 larger units instead of the 5 barn conversions.

We consider that the designs presented are considerate to the environment and to existing neighbours.

However, concerns remain and are:

Access:

The highways report suggests that the traffic will be reduced from the prior “agricultural use”. As previously referenced under DC/24/1087 there was no material agricultural use for at least the 10 years before the application and agricultural traffic did not exist. Recently (for a period of around 2-3 weeks during September 2025) sheep were grazed on field 256.

We do not consider that the road/track is adequate for the traffic as it is not wide enough and requires reversing around blind corners if vehicles meet. Currently the only wider sections are the private driveways of other houses on the track so are not “passing places” and should not be utilised as such.

The section from the ponds to the track high point is wider but does not afford 2-way traffic without driving off the designated track onto what is private land.

The section through the wood from the A24 to the ponds (which we are told is separately owned by a 3rd party) has one passing place at the pond end (currently used for a pile of road chippings) but is otherwise single track.

The exit onto the A24 is blocked when a vehicle leaves the track and is waiting to cross to the central reservation in order to head south. This leaves no entry for vehicles arriving at the track from the south which then becomes a hazard for other traffic on the A24. This state is no different to the current situation but increased usage will make it worse. A splayed entrance would resolve.

Any increase in traffic levels will affect the central reservation entrance crossing off the southbound A24. This approach to the track requires cars to wait for northbound traffic and necessarily occupies the same crossing section that anyone leaving the track heading south would wish to occupy in order to wait for southbound traffic. Any vehicle leaving the track is a potential blockage to the vehicle crossing from the central reservation. The issue can only be worsened by an increase in traffic movements. Meanwhile, vehicles approaching from the south have only a short section in which to decelerate and turn into the track. If a vehicle is in any way blocking or arriving at the track exit at the same time then it is likely to create a risk situation for all parties. Again this issue can only be worsened by an increase in traffic movements.

Process:

Regarding DC/24/1087 we wrote:

Additionally we understand that the longer term intent of the developer is to submit for the Permitted Development / change of use, and once approved then broaden this to a wider planning permission for full development. Whilst this may be allowed, it does seem to be against the spirit of the planning process and may result in certain issues being circumnavigated. It may be more appropriate to submit for the full application at the outset if this is the intention.

We are pleased that a full application has been made.

Environmental, Health and Safety

We are also pleased that in approving DC/24/1087 Horsham Planning took account of the measures for flooding and the ecosystem, and for the related services. Accordingly we do not repeat those issues herein as it is evident that Horsham Planning will similarly provide for them.

Under DC/24/1087 Horsham Planning also referenced details regarding **Hazardous Materials**.

Asbestos:

There is particular concern with asbestos as some of the roofing is of asbestos form, and this was referenced previously. The particular barns being developed have metal rooves, but we are concerned that such works will disturb asbestos wherever it is on site.

Also, the developer has presented for sale the farmhouse that lies on the overall site. The basis for sale is that it requires renovation. As such multiple working teams will be operational on the overall site.

Photograph 13 in the Risk Assessment Report shows what appears to be asbestos fragments already loose from whatever it was used on.

Page 25/26 of the Risk report refers to the asbestos risk as having a Likely eventuality with a High Risk and Severe Impact on residents.

The report references that groundworkers would likely be subject to inhalation of asbestos contaminated dust and accordingly it is also expected that nearby residents within the 100m radius lines would be similarly exposed. This is unacceptable.

The Remediation Report references Asbestos in soil samples from multiple trial pits, loose asbestos tiles stockpiled in barns, asbestos in rooves and walls, etc. The Phase II report in 5.3.2 references the severity of the issue to future residents and therein the risk to current neighbours from Asbestos fibres being airborne during the development. Even the vibrations from such development could dislodge fibres.

If the site is so badly contaminated then to protect all a site-wide “clean up” ought to be actioned prior to any development of the site or works on the farmhouse property.

It is noted that in the application the Developer has highlighted these issues around the Asbestos and been detailed in its existence. Accordingly it is anticipated that the Developer will action the appropriate works in a safe and considerate manner.

Nevertheless it is hoped that the authorities will monitor the clearance of the site in respect of Asbestos in particular (though we realise that some pesticides can be very damaging too).

Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE)

We are informed that the farm ceased to be farmed by the owners many years ago (late 1980's/ early 1990's) after an outbreak of BSE and a disposal of the affected cattle.

It is unknown if the cattle were burned on site or buried on site. If buried on site then excavations could result in a burial site being disturbed. As we understand it transmission to humans is highly unlikely but clarifying if and where burial sites exist may help protect groundworkers and residents.

Documents submitted:

We find that some of the statements/indications could be slightly misleading:

Water Neutrality Statement

Apparently as of 9 September 2025 the water neutrality rules for the Arun valley (Sussex North Water Supply Zone) were lifted. Therefore we are unsure of what currently applies in this respect or whether it is the rules as of the application date that apply.

Planning Statement:

2.2 Fig 1 shows the site border as a red boundary line. For the record the red boundary line encompasses sections of the neighbouring properties particularly along the roadway. We do of course accept that a digital red line has to have some thickness and is indicative on such a document but it should not be treated as an absolute reference.

2.4 seems to neglect to reference that some of the roofing on site is understood to contain asbestos. (Though the Risk Assessment report and other reports references this risk as Severe).

9 October 2025