



APPLICATIONS & APPEALS SERVICES

**CONSTRUCTION OF BUILDING COMPRISING 4 X
COMMERCIAL UNITS. CREATION OF NEW VEHICLE
ACCESS TO OLD CRAWLEY ROAD AND ASSOCIATED CAR
PARKING AND LANDSCAPING**

AT

**NEW HOUSE FARM, OLD CRAWLEY ROAD, FAYGATE,
HORSHAM, RH12 4RU**

PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

FEBRUARY 2026

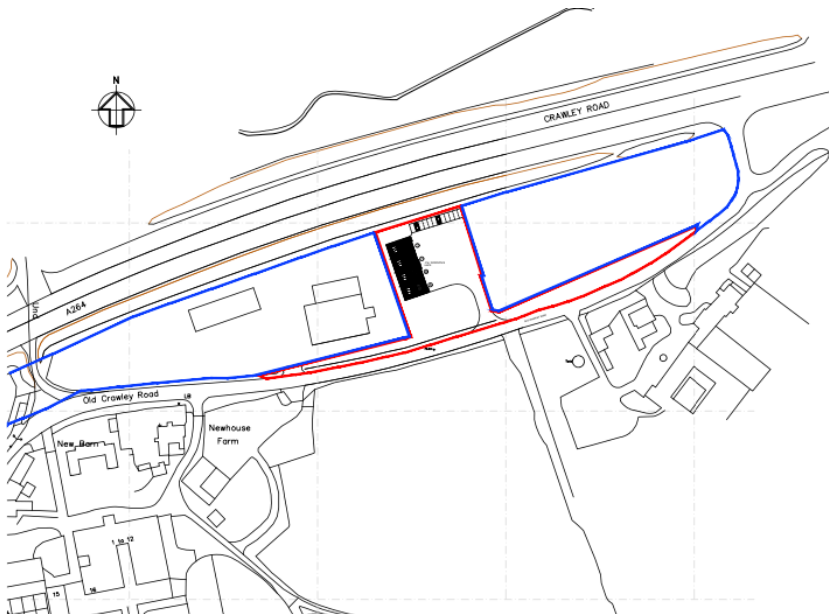


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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Planning permission is sought for the construction of a building comprising four commercial units together with the creation of a new vehicle access and associated car parking and landscaping at New House Farm, Old Crawley Road, Faygate, Horsham.

Figure 1: Site Location Plan



- 1.2 This supporting Planning Statement sets out the detail of the proposal which is described and appraised having regard to the following aspects:

- **Physical Context** – explains the physical context of the site and its surroundings;
- **Planning Context** – relevant planning history of the site and broad policy requirements;
- **Use** – the purpose of the proposed development;
- **Amount** – the extent of development on the site;
- **Scale** – details of the physical size of the proposed development;
- **Layout** – the relationship of the proposed development to the site and its setting;
- **Appearance** – details of materials, style and impact upon the existing and neighbouring properties;
- **Landscape** – impact of the proposal on the existing landscape and proposed planting and surfacing;
- **Access** – access to the proposed development and associated parking.

- 1.3 This Statement demonstrates that the proposed development accords with the relevant planning policies and that it is acceptable in all respects. It should be read in conjunction with the associated plans and reports.

2.0 PHYSICAL CONTEXT & PLANNING HISTORY

Physical Context

- 2.1 New House Farm is located within the countryside, close to the outskirts of Horsham. The majority of the farm is situated within the High Weald National Landscape (AONB) however, the application site, which is situated to the north of Old Crawley Road, is outside of the National Landscape boundary.
- 2.2 The farm extends to over 900 acres of (principally) arable land and comprises a number of agricultural buildings, the main farmhouse and other residential properties. The farm has diversified over the years and also comprises a business centre, a farm shop and tea room, pick your own and customer car parking.
- 2.3 The farmhouse is a grade II listed building and has a number of associated buildings that make up its setting, the oldest of which is a barn located directly to the south-east of the dwelling. Within the wider farm, most other buildings date from the 20th Century or later.

- 2.4 Other nearby listed buildings include Roffey Place (grade II listed) and Clovers (grade II listed) to the south east and east of the application site and Clyst Hayes (grade II listed) on Brook Lane to the east. The application site is covered by an 'Archaeological Site' designation.

Planning History

- 2.5 New House Farm has an extensive planning history which is set out at Appendix NJA/1. The most relevant, recent, application is DC/22/1901 where planning permission was granted in December 2022 for the construction of an agricultural plant and equipment storage barn and an extension to an existing agricultural barn at New House Farm, on land adjacent to the application site.
- 2.6 The following are photographs of the application site:



3.0 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal is for the construction of a building comprising four commercial units. The proposed building will be sited on a parcel of land to the north of New House Farm, situated in-between Old Crawley Road and Crawley Road.

Figure 2: Proposed Site Plan

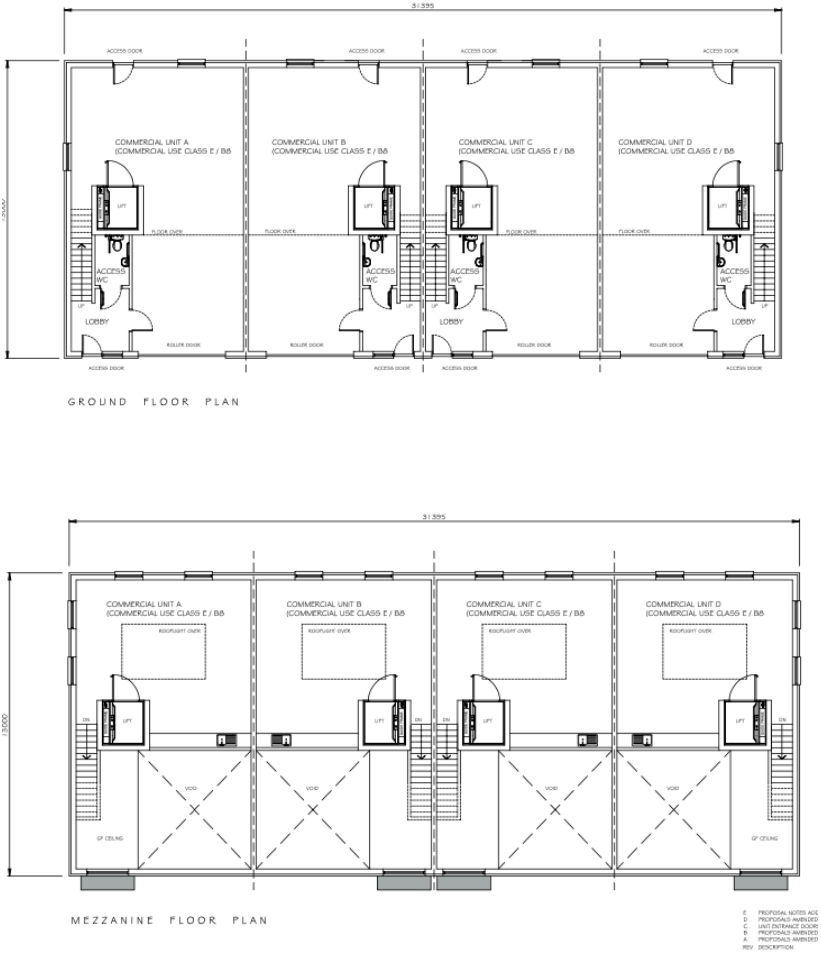


- 3.2 The proposal includes the creation of a new vehicle access from Old Crawley Road and the creation of a car parking area comprising 12 x spaces and new landscaping.

Figure 3: Proposed front and rear elevations



Figure 4: Proposed Floor Plans



3.3 The commercial units will comprise a first floor level with a kitchen area accessed via a lift and stairs and a ground floor WC. Each unit will have a roller door and separate access door to the front elevation and access doors to the rear elevation.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

Sustainable Development

- 4.1 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 (NPPF paragraphs 1 and 3).
- 4.2 Paragraph 2 of the NPPF sets out that ***'Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements'***.

- 4.3 Paragraph 7 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has the following three overarching objectives which are independent but need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways:

- a) ***'an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;***
- b) ***a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and***

c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy’.

4.4 Paragraph 10 states **‘So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).** For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Development Plan without delay.

4.5 Where there are no relevant Development Plan policies or the relevant policies are out of date, the NPPF states that planning permission should be granted unless the application of policies of the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a strong reason for refusing the development proposed, or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits

when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole. Particular regard should be given to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making efficient use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination (NPPF paragraph 11 d).

4.6 Paragraph 12 of the Framework states that **‘The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not normally be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed’.**

- 4.7 Paragraph 34 requires policies in local plans and spatial strategies to be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years and should then be updated as necessary. In respect of housing, ***‘Relevant strategic policies will need updating at least once every five years if their applicable local housing need figure has changed significantly; and they are likely to require earlier review if local housing need is expected to change significantly in the near future’.***
- 4.8 In terms of decision-making, the Framework states at paragraph 39 that ***‘Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible’.***

- 4.9 NPPF paragraph 85 requires planning policies and decisions to ***‘help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leading in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential’.***
- 4.10 Paragraph 87 states that planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors.
- 4.11 In respect of rural areas, NPPF paragraph 88 requires planning policies and decisions to enable the following:

- a. *‘ the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
- b. *the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;*
- c. *sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and*
- d. *the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship’.*

4.12 Paragraph 89 states that planning policies and decisions should also *‘recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have*

an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist’.

Highways and Car Parking

- 4.13 Paragraph 109 requires transport issues to be considered at the early stages of plan-making and development proposals.
- 4.14 NPPF paragraph 110 requires the planning system to actively manage patterns of growth. Whilst significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, it should also be recognised that *‘opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making’.*

- 4.15 Paragraph 112 states that if setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account the accessibility of the development, its type, mix and use, the availability of land and opportunities for public transport, local car ownership levels and the need to ensure that adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.
- 4.16 Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport (paragraph 113).
- 4.17 In considering development proposals, NPPF paragraph 115 requires (inter alia) that sustainable transport modes are prioritise and that a safe and suitable access can be achieved for all users. Any significant impacts on the transport network (in respect of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, should be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach.

- 4.18 Paragraph 116 makes it clear that ***‘Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios’.***

Effective Use of Land

- 4.19 Paragraph 124 requires planning policies and decision to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring healthy living conditions.
- 4.20 Paragraph 125 states (inter alia) that planning policies and decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings and paragraph 126 states that a proactive approach should be taken in identifying and helping to bring forward land that may be suitable for meeting development needs. Planning policies and decisions should also reflect changes in the demand for land (paragraph 127).

- 4.21 NPPF paragraph 128 states that local planning authorities should take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans where this would help to meet identified development needs.

Design

- 4.22 In terms of design, Section 12 seeks to achieve well designed places sets out that the ***‘The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities’*** (paragraph 131).
- 4.23 Paragraph 135 further states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping. Development should also be sympathetic to local

character and history and should be designed with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

- 4.24 Paragraph 139 states that ***‘Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:***
- a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes: and/or***
 - b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit with the overall form and layout of their surroundings’.***

Climate Change

- 4.25 Paragraph 161 requires the planning system to support the transit to net zero by 2050 and take full account of all climate change impacts. New development should be planned in ways that avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change and to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design.
- 4.26 Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (paragraph 170). Local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere as a result of new development (paragraph 181).
- 4.27 Applications which could affect drainage in or around the site should incorporate sustainable drainage systems to control flow rates and reduce volumes of runoff which are proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal (paragraph 182).

Natural Environment

- 4.28 Paragraph 187 requires planning policies and decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by

(inter alia) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Policies and decisions should also minimise impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity.

- 4.29 NPPF paragraph 189 states that '**Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas**'.

Habitats and Biodiversity

- 4.30 Paragraph 193 states that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply a set of

principles and if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated against or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

- 4.31 The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where there would be a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans and projects) unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site (paragraph 195).

Ground Conditions and Pollution

- 4.32 Paragraph 196 requires planning policies and decisions to ensure that a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination. Where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner (paragraph 197). Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative

effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment (paragraph 198).

Heritage

- 4.33 NPPF paragraph 207 requires an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting. Local Planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) (NPPF paragraph 208).
- 4.34 NPPF paragraph 211 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should (inter alia) take account of a number of matters including the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

- 4.35 Paragraph 212 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more importantly the asset, the greater the weight should be). Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development in its setting) should require clear and convincing justification (paragraph 213).
- 4.36 Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm (or total loss of significance) of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the loss or where certain other circumstances apply (paragraph 214).
- 4.37 Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use (paragraph 215).
- 4.38 The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining an application. Paragraph 2016 states that ***'In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset'***.
- 4.39 NPPF paragraph 219 states that ***'local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably'***.
- 4.40 NPPF paragraph 220 confirms that not all elements of a Conservation Area (or World Heritage Site) will necessarily contribute to its significance. The loss of a building in such areas which makes a positive contribution to significance should

be treated as either substantial harm or less than substantial harm (NPPF paragraphs 214 and 215) as appropriate.

Local Planning Policy

4.41 The 'development plan' comprises the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015). The relevant policies are listed as follows:

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)

- Policy 1: Sustainable Development
- Policy 2: Strategic Development
- Policy 3: Development Hierarchy
- Policy 4: Settlement Expansion
- Policy 7: Economic Growth
- Policy 9: Employment Development
- Policy 10: Rural Economic Development
- Policy 24: Environmental Protection
- Policy 25: District Character and the Natural Environment
- Policy 31: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

- Policy 32: The Quality of New Development
- Policy 33: Development Principles
- Policy 34: Cultural and Heritage Assets
- Policy 35: Climate Change
- Policy 36: Appropriate Energy Use
- Policy 37: Sustainable Construction
- Policy 38: Flooding
- Policy 39: Infrastructure Provision
- Policy 40: Sustainable Transport
- Policy 41: Parking

Emerging Policy

4.42 The Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040 was formally submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on Friday 26 July 2024 for public examination. Hearings commenced, however in a recent letter dated 04 April 2025 the Planning Inspector found that the Duty to Co-operate had not been met and raised significant soundness concerns in relation to the Plan's housing requirement and spatial strategy. As a result, the Planning inspector recommended that the Council withdraw the Plan.

The Council has responded however at this point, the HDPF (2015) remains as the adopted Local Plan for the District.

High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029

- 4.43 The Management Plan is a statutory document which defines the natural beauty of the AONB and sets out a twenty year strategy supported by five year action and investment priorities for conserving the nationally important landscape.

Relevant Legislation and Case Law

- 4.44 In considering the issue of the principle of the proposed development it is necessary to also consider the legal framework within which planning decisions are made. Planning legislation holds that the determination of a planning application shall be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (as also confirmed at paragraph 2 of the NPPF).
- 4.45 Specifically, Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that in dealing with planning applications, the

Authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan (so far as material to the application), a post examination draft neighbourhood development plan, any local finance considerations (so far as material to the application) and any other material consideration.

- 4.46 Section 38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides:

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

- 4.47 When considering whether or not a proposed development accords with a development plan, it is not necessary to say that it must accord with every policy within the development plan. The question is whether it accords overall with the development plan (see *Stratford on Avon v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* (2014)). Even if a proposal cannot be described as being in accordance with the

development plan, the statutory test requires that a balance be struck against other material considerations.

4.48 The Courts have emphasised that a planning authority is not obliged to strictly adhere to the development plan and should apply inherent flexibility (see *Cala Homes (South) Limited v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* (2011) and *Tesco Stores Ltd v Dundee City Council* (2012)).

4.49 More recently in *Corbett v Cornwall Council* [2020] the appeal court judge emphasised the importance of considering the plan as a whole when he said;

“Under section 38(6) the members' task was not to decide whether, on an individual assessment of the proposal's compliance with the relevant policies, it could be said to accord with each and every one of them. They had to establish whether the proposal was in accordance with the development plan as a whole. Once the relevant policies were correctly understood, which in my view they were, this was classically a matter of planning judgment for the council as planning decision-maker.”

4.50 Paragraph 3 of the NPPF confirms that the Framework should be read as a ‘whole’ and the Government’s National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) confirms that ***‘Conflicts between development plan policies adopted, approved or published at the same time must be considered in the light of all material considerations, including local priorities and needs, as guided by the National Planning Policy Framework’*** (paragraph 012 21b-012-20140306).

5.0 PLANNING POLICY APPRAISAL: USE, AMOUNT & SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT

The Principle of Development

- 5.1 NPPF paragraph 10 states ***‘So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11)’***. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development and development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay.
- 5.2 HDPF policy 1 states that when considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the NPPF. Therefore, planning applications that accord with the policies of the HDPF will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.3 The application site is located within the countryside. HDPF policy 26 seeks to protect the countryside from inappropriate development, however, certain forms of development are acceptable including development which is ‘essential’ to its countryside location and which meets certain criteria including where (inter alia) it ***‘supports the needs of agriculture or forestry’*** or where it enables ***‘the sustainable development of rural areas’***.
- 5.4 In this case, the proposed development will assist with economic diversification at New House Farm (thereby in turn helping to support the needs of agriculture) and it will help to sustain the sustainable development of the rural area by way of providing units suitable for small businesses which in turn helps to generate local employment.
- 5.5 In addition, HDPF policy 26 requires that proposals are of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location. Development will be considered acceptable where it does not lead, either individually or cumulatively, to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside and protects

and/or conserves, and/or enhances, the key features and characteristics of the landscape character in which it is located.

- 5.6 The proposed development for the creation of just four commercial units– the development is small in scale comprising a single building situated close to other built form including development adjoining the site to the west. The building will not therefore appear out of keeping with the context of the site’s surroundings.
- 5.7 Furthermore, the application site is not situated within remote countryside (the boundary of Horsham is nearby) and the proposal will not result in any significant or harmful intensification of activities within the countryside. The building is appropriately designed having regard to the rural setting and it will not adversely affect any key features and characteristics of the local landscape area.
- 5.8 The proposed development therefore complies with the principles of HDPF policy 26 which, in this case must also be read in conjunction with HDPF policy 10 and the NPPF

(addressed below) that both support rural economic development including via the construction of new buildings.

Rural Economic Development

- 5.9 The NPPF requires planning policies and decisions to help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt (paragraph 84). Within rural areas, the NPPF requires planning policies and decision to enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings (paragraph 88).
- 5.10 HDPF policy 10 supports sustainable rural economic development and enterprise within the District in order to generate local employment opportunities and economic, social and environmental benefits for local communities.
- 5.11 The policy states that:

‘In the countryside, development which maintains the quality and character of the area, whilst sustaining its

varied and productive social and economic activity will be supported in principle. Any development should be appropriate to the countryside location and must:

1. Contribute to the diverse and sustainable farming enterprises within the district or, in the case of other countryside-based enterprises and activities, contribute to the wider rural economy and/or promote recreation in, and the enjoyment of, the countryside; and either

a) Be contained wherever possible within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion or, in the case of an established rural industrial estate, within the existing boundaries of the estate; or

b) Result in substantial environmental improvement and reduce the impact on the countryside particularly if there are exceptional cases where new or replacement buildings are involved. New buildings or development in the rural area will be acceptable provided that it supports sustainable economic growth towards

balanced living and working communities and criteria a) has been considered first'.

5.12 Proposals should also demonstrate that car parking requirements can be accommodated satisfactorily within the immediate surrounds of the buildings or an alternative, logical solution is proposed.

5.13 Both the NPPF and HDPF policy 10 support the construction of new buildings for business and commercial use within rural areas. The proposed creation of commercial and storage units suitable for occupation by small businesses will help to support sustainable rural economic development and enterprise within the District including via the generation of local employment opportunities.

5.14 The proposed building is of a barn style design and its overall appearance and form is appropriate to the rural character of the area. Furthermore, adequate car parking (and turning) space is laid out in front of the proposed building and a suitable vehicle access can be achieved.

- 5.15 New landscaping is proposed including lawn areas and planting. This will help the new building integrate appropriately into its surroundings and improvements to the appearance of the site will be achieved. Overall, the proposed development is an appropriate form of development within the countryside and it is supported by both the NPPF and HDPF policies 10 and 26 together with HDPF policies 7 and 9 which support economic growth and employment development.

6.0 LAYOUT, DESIGN & APPEARANCE

Design and Amenity

- 6.1 The NPPF sets out that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Developments should be visually attractive and sympathetic to the local character of the surrounding area and should optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (paragraphs 131 and 135).
- 6.2 HDPF policy 32 requires high quality design for all development in the District. In addition, HDPF Policy 33 sets out the Council's key development control criteria and states that development should make efficient use of land, should not cause harm to neighbouring residential amenities, should be appropriate in scale, massing and appearance and be of a high standard of design. Development should also be locally distinctive in

character and should use high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping.

- 6.3 HDPF Policy 33 (text in bold italics) is addressed in detail as follows:

In order to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment developments shall be required to:

1. Make efficient use of land, and prioritise the use of previously developed land and buildings whilst respecting any constraints that exist.

- 6.4 The proposed development makes effective use of land and the appearance of the site significantly enhanced by a well-designed building and new landscaping. The proposal complies with criterion 1.

2. Ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land, for example through overlooking or noise,

whilst having regard to the sensitivities of surrounding development;

- 6.5 The proposed development is situated a sufficient distance away from residential properties and it is not therefore considered that any undue harm will be caused to neighbouring residential amenity. The proposal complies with criterion 2.

3. Ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of the development is of a high standard of design and layout and where relevant relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the skyline and important views;

- 6.6 The scale, massing and appearance of the proposed building is appropriate to the context of the site and the character and appearance of the area. The proposal complies with criterion 3.

4. Are locally distinctive in character, respect the character of the surrounding area (including its overall setting, townscape features, views and green corridors) and, where

available and applicable, take account of the recommendations/policies of the relevant Design Statements and Character Assessments;

- 6.7 As set out the proposed building is of an appropriate form, style and design to the rural area and it will be in keeping with the appearance of other buildings at New House Farm. No harm will be caused to the visual amenities of the countryside landscape or to the setting of the High Weald National Landscape. The proposal complies with criterion 4 together with HDPF policies 24, 25 and 30.

5. Use high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping; and includes the provision of street furniture and public art where appropriate;

- 6.8 The materials used in the construction of the proposed building will ensure that it integrates into its surroundings and it will be viewed in particular against the backdrop of the buildings to the west. The proposal complies with criterion 5.

6. Presume in favour of the retention of existing important landscape and natural features, for example trees, hedges, banks and watercourses. Development must relate sympathetically to the local landscape and justify and mitigate against any losses that may occur through the development; and,

- 6.9 The proposed development will not adversely affect any important trees or natural features and new landscaping will be carried out. The proposal complies with criterion 6.

7. Ensure buildings and spaces are orientated to gain maximum benefit from sunlight and passive solar energy, unless this conflicts with the character of the surrounding townscape, landscape or topography where it is of good quality.

- 6.10 It is proposed to install Solar PV panels to the front (east) facing roof slope of the building. There is no conflict with criterion 7 or HDPF policies 35, 36, 37 and 38.

Proposals will also need to take the following into account where relevant:

8. Incorporate where appropriate convenient, safe and visually attractive areas for the parking of vehicles and cycles, and the storage of bins/recycling facilities without dominating the development or its surroundings;

9. Incorporate measures to reduce any actual or perceived opportunities for crime or antisocial behaviour on the site and in the surrounding area; and create visually attractive frontages where adjoining streets and public spaces, including appropriate windows and doors to assist in the informal surveillance of public areas by occupants of the site;

10. Contribute to the removal of physical barriers; and,

11. Make a clear distinction between the public and private spaces within the site.

- 6.11 There is space within the site for the appropriate storage of waste and recycling together with car parking and turning areas. There is no conflict with any of the above criteria 8 – 11.

Ecology

- 6.12 NPPF paragraph 185 requires the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity. Paragraph 193 states that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should avoid significant harm to biodiversity which should be adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for. Development should not result in the loss of deterioration of irreplaceable habitats unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.
- 6.13 HDPF policy 31 also requires new development to demonstrate that it maintains or enhances the existing network of green infrastructure. Development proposals shall contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity and should create and manage new habitats where appropriate.
- 6.14 This planning application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA). The PEA identifies the likely ecological constraints associated with the proposed

development, sets out mitigation measures and opportunities to deliver ecological enhancements.

- 6.15 The proposed development will be carried out in accordance with the suggested mitigation measures within the PEA and the proposal complies with the relevant ecology policies of the NPPF and HDPF policy 31.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 6.16 Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) and the requirement for certain new development to achieve at least a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). This is addressed in the application submission with the BNG documents provided.

Water Neutrality

- 6.17 The application site falls within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone where Natural England have advised that water abstraction cannot be concluded to result in no adverse effect

upon the integrity of the Arun Valley Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area and Ramsar sites.

6.18 The Council previously advised that it is able to continue to determine most planning applications for householder developments (and some other minor proposals) as it is not considered that this type of development will have a significant effect, either individually or cumulatively, on the Arun Valley sites. In the case of other developments where an increase in water consumption is more likely, planning applications were required to be submitted with a water neutrality statement setting out the strategy for achieving water neutrality within the development.

6.19 However the Council is now no longer requiring applicants to demonstrate that new development is water neutral at planning application stage and therefore a Water Neutrality Statement is not needed. The proposal subsequently raises no conflict with NPPF paragraphs 193 - 195 and HDPF policy 31.

Heritage

6.20 The proposed building is situated away from the nearby listed buildings and on a separate parcel of land. It is not therefore considered that the building will adversely affect the significance and setting of these designated heritage assets.

6.21 In respect of archaeology, the Case Officer's report for application DC/22/1901 confirms 'no objection' from the Council's Archaeological Advisor. The proposed development is therefore considered to comply with the heritage policies of the NPPF and HDPF policy 34.

7.0 ACCESS AND CAR PARKING PROVISION

- 7.1 The NPPF sets out at paragraph 116 that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 7.2 HDPF Policy 40 requires (inter alia) new development to be appropriate in scale to the existing transport infrastructure. Development should also minimise the distance people need to travel. In respect of car parking, HDPF Policy 41 states (inter alia) that adequate car parking must be provided within new developments.
- 7.3 This planning application is accompanied by a Transport Statement. This sets out details of the local highway network, accident data, modal choices and accessibility (including by cycle and public transport).
- 7.4 In respect of the proposed vehicle access, the Transport Statement confirms that this can be installed with adequate visibility to meet the relevant highway standards.
- 7.5 In respect of car parking, the Transport Statement confirms that for the proposal requires 10 car parking spaces are required. The proposed development provides 12 spaces which is more than sufficient for staff and visitors. Cycle parking will also be provided.
- 7.6 Overall, the proposal complies with the NPPF and HDPF policies 40 and 41 in respect of highways and car parking matters.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 This Statement supports the construction of a single building comprising four small commercial units. A new vehicle access will be created to access the site from Old Crawley Road and 12 car parking spaces will be laid out together new landscaping.
- 8.2 The proposed development complies with the provisions of NPPF paragraph 88 and HDPF policy 10 which support sustainable rural economic development. In particular, NPPF paragraph 84 sets out that planning decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, including through the construction of well-designed new buildings.
- 8.3 The proposed building is of a high quality design which is appropriate to the rural character and appearance of the area and no harm will be caused to the visual amenities of the countryside landscape or to the setting of the High Weald National Landscape. The proposal will also not result in any harmful intensification of use and it is of a scale appropriate to

the countryside location. The proposal therefore also complies with HDPF policy 26 and is an acceptable form of development within the countryside.

- 8.4 Matters of ecology, sustainable construction, water neutrality, heritage and transport have been appropriately addressed and overall it is demonstrated that the proposal complies with the relevant policies of the NPPF and HDPF. Therefore, in accordance with paragraph 39 of the NPPF and HDPF Policy 1, planning permission should be granted for the sustainable development proposed.