



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/0755

Top Paddock Farm, Kerves Lane, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 6RJ

DESCRIPTION:

Prior notification for the creation of a new agricultural access track

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/26/0525	Prior notification for the creation of a new agricultural access track between two farm holdings.	Withdrawn 08.05.2026	Application	on
DC/22/0127	Removal/Variation of condition 7 of previously approved application DC/17/1166 (Proposed erection of a machinery/hay store, a building to incorporate a dairy parlour and milk processing facilities, associated hardstanding areas and access track) Relating to Pre-Occupation use.	Withdrawn 22.03.2022	Application	on
DISC/22/0061	Approval of details reserved by condition 7 to approved application DC/17/1166	Application 27.02.2024	Permitted	on
DISC/22/0306	Approval of details reserved by condition 3 to approved application DC/17/1166	Application 29.05.2024	Permitted	on
DC/25/0312	Siting of a timber clad building to house vending machines for the sale of meat and dairy products produced on the farm.	Application 30.05.2025	Permitted	on
DISC/25/0185	Approval of details reserved by condition Biodiversity Net Gain Condition to approved application DC/25/0312	Application 05.08.2025	Permitted	on

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

Top Paddock Farm is located to the south of Horsham on Kerves Lane. The site is located outside the built-up area boundary and not within a conservation area. There are several buildings on the holding. The farm is currently accessed via an access track off Kerves Lane. The total area of the entire agricultural unit is 275186.0 hectares and the total area of the parcel of land is 1 or more hectare.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION:

This notification seeks prior approval under Part 6 Class A of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (GPDO) for the creation of a new agricultural access track between two farm holdings.

The new access track will be 650m in length and 3m wide. The track will have a base of 150mm of Chalk and a 50mm top layer of Fittleworth Stone, in a yellow/brown colour.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework

Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF 2015):

Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development

Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection

Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
Policy 41 - Parking

Consultations

HDC Arboriculture: Advice

Arboricultural concerns are limited to the impacts on the woodland habitat (ecology) and the key rooting area of one hedgerow oak. Alterations to the specification and routing of the engineering works should be considered to limit impacts on the adjacent landscape features of merit.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY:

The application has been considered having regard to Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998, which sets out a person's rights to the peaceful enjoyment of property and Article 8 of the same Act, which sets out their rights in respect to private and family life and for the home. Officers consider that the proposal would not be contrary to the provisions of the above Articles.

The application has also been considered in accordance with Horsham District Council's public sector equality duty, which seeks to prevent unlawful discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people in a diverse community, in accordance with Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In this case, the proposal is not anticipated to have any potential impact from an equality perspective.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The main issue is whether prior approval is required for the proposed development under Part 6 Class A of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (GPDO).

Permitted Development

Class A of Part 6 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order as amended relates to *"the carrying out on agricultural land comprised in an agricultural unit of 5 hectares or more in area of –*

- a) *Works for erection, extension, or alteration of a building; or*
- b) *Any excavation or engineering operations, which are reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within that unit."*

The permitted development right is subject to a number of provisions and conditions. There is no apparent conflict with A.1 (a) through to (l).

The site comprises two farm holdings, one accessed from Sedgwick Lane and the other from Kerves Lane. The proposed access track is necessary for agricultural purposes, due to enabling the safe and efficient transfer of animals between the two farms. The application form states that current movement is weather dependent, and during wet periods, the ground becomes poached and compacted, leading to poor animal welfare and long-term soil damage. The proposed access track will allow machinery and livestock traffic to travel along a 3-metre-wide permeable track, protecting the surrounding land, improving biosecurity and ensuring year-round operational efficiency. There is no existing track connecting the two farms, so it is considered that the proposed track would be required for accessible travel between the holdings.

On the basis of the information provided, it is considered that the proposed agricultural building is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture.

Siting, Appearance and Means of Construction

Article A.2(2)(a)(i) of Class A Part 6 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO imposes a condition on permitted development to determine whether prior approval is required for the siting, appearance and means of construction of the private way.

The proposed access track would connect two farm holdings. The track would provide year-round access to each holding and reduce long-term soil damage and erosion caused by machinery. The track will be 650m in length and 3m wide, situated along the edges of fields to minimise encroachment onto the rest of the land and in order to reach each holding. The material of the track would be 150mm of Chalk and a top layer of 50mm Fittleworth Stone, in a yellow/brown colour. It is considered that the track will serve the two agricultural holdings sufficiently and provide the ability for stable movement.

The route of the agricultural access track includes sections that pass through and in relatively close proximity to a section of woodland shaw that clothes the banks of the local stream and is designated as Ancient Woodland (AW). To protect the Ancient Woodland, the proposed track will maintain a 15m buffer zone where possible. In the areas where the route must pass through the existing woodland track, the Applicant will employ a 'no-dig' construction method, involving laying a geotextile membrane directly onto the existing ground level to prevent soil compaction and root damage. Through the Ancient Woodland, the track will consist of MOT type 1 crushed stone instead of chalk to ensure a permeable surface that prevents silty runoff. To manage drainage, the track will be constructed with a slight camber to ensure rainwater run-off is distributed naturally across the adjacent pasture. HDC Arboriculture concerns were limited to the impacts on the woodland habitat, and it was considered that the 15m buffer was sufficient to prevent any harm to the Ancient Woodland, the material of the track would also be mindful of the ecological considerations. It is considered that these methods of construction would appropriately protect the Ancient Woodland.

Conclusion

The proposed track is considered to be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture. The proposal would be of a siting, appearance and means of construction that would be anticipated within an agricultural context and is considered appropriate within a rural context. For these reasons, it is recommended that Prior Approval is not required.

Recommendation: Prior Approval Not Required

POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

Statement pursuant to Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received, in order to be able to, where possible, grant permission.

Plans list for: DC/26/0755

Schedule of plans/documents **approved:**

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Supporting Statement	Planning Letter	NONE	11.05.2026
Elevation plan	Track Elevation Plans	NONE	11.05.2026
Location plan	Location Plan	NONE	03.06.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Bethan Tinning Date: 04.06.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 05.06.2026