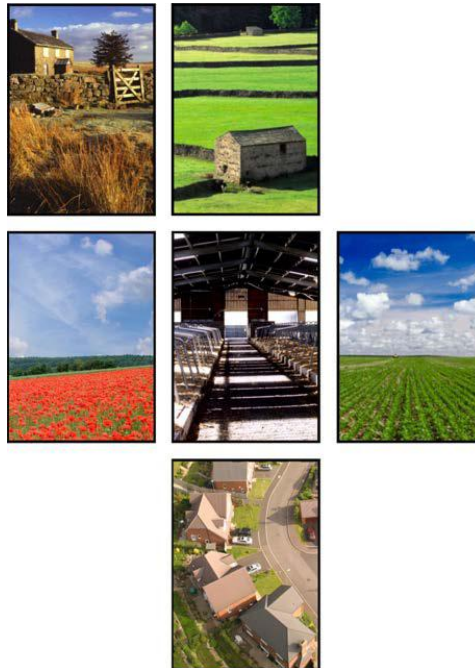


PLANNING STATEMENT
Proposed Temporary Rural Workers Dwelling and Agricultural Building
Land at Princes Barn
Adversane Lane
Billingshurst
West Sussex RH14 9EH
Applicant: Mr Rodd Vodden

Town and Country Planning Act 1990
General Permitted Development Order 2015



The objective for rural business is to sustain a balanced outcome, a delicate relationship between productive activity which includes farming and rural enterprise and the conservation of the environment both historic and landscape needs to be maintained. The rural economy is a constantly changing paradigm and should be nurtured, supported and promoted because it forms the core of the nation.

1. Introduction

We act for Mr Rodd Vodden in preparing and submitting this Planning Statement in support of a planning application for:

- A temporary rural worker's dwelling;
- An agricultural building for the storage of machinery, feed, fencing equipment and agricultural supplies.

The application relates to an established agricultural holding extending to approximately 95 acres (38.44 hectares) at Princes Barn, Adversane Lane, Billingshurst.

The holding supports an expanding enterprise comprising approximately 140 farmed fallow deer, together with associated grazing, livestock management and agricultural operations.

The application should be considered against:

- National Planning Policy Framework (2026);
- Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015;
- Horsham District Planning Framework;
- emerging Horsham Local Plan;
- agricultural welfare legislation and best practice.

2. The Holding

The holding extends to approximately 38.44 hectares (95 acres). The land is actively farmed and operated as a commercial agricultural enterprise centred upon the breeding, management and husbandry of approximately 140 fallow deer. Unlike conventional livestock enterprises, deer farming requires specialist husbandry techniques owing to the behavioural characteristics of the species.

Government guidance recognises that fallow deer are highly strung animals requiring careful supervision, specialist handling facilities and competent stockmanship. Daily inspection and continual observation are essential to safeguard animal welfare.

The enterprise has reached a scale whereby permanent on-site management has become operationally necessary.

3. Description of Development

Planning permission is sought for:

- a temporary rural worker's dwelling;
- an agricultural building providing secure storage for:
- tractors;
- ATV vehicles;

- trailers;
- fencing equipment;
- handling equipment;
- veterinary supplies;
- feed;
- tools;
- machinery;
- general agricultural storage.

The building will also provide a secure location for expensive agricultural equipment that currently has limited protection.

4. Existing Site

Historically the site accommodated agricultural buildings associated with the former agricultural use.

Although those buildings have since been removed, the site clearly represents land that has previously been developed for agricultural purposes and therefore differs materially from undeveloped countryside.

The proposal occupies the footprint and operational centre of the existing farm and does not represent encroachment into open countryside.

The proposed development therefore makes efficient use of land already associated with the agricultural enterprise.

5. National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (2026) places significant weight upon:

- supporting sustainable rural businesses;
- strengthening the rural economy;
- supporting food production;
- agricultural diversification;
- efficient use of land;
- previously developed land;
- Grey Belt policy where appropriate.

Paragraphs relating to the rural economy recognise that planning decisions should enable the development and expansion of agricultural businesses.

The proposal directly supports these objectives. Without suitable accommodation the efficient management of the holding becomes increasingly difficult.

6. Grey Belt / Previously Developed Land

Although the site lies within the countryside, the location has historically contained buildings and has operated as the established centre of the agricultural holding. Consequently the proposal is concentrated around an existing developed farmstead rather than representing isolated sporadic development within open agricultural land.

Should the Local Planning Authority consider Green Belt policy relevant, the proposal also reflects the objectives underpinning the revised Grey Belt approach within the NPPF by making effective use of previously developed land without materially affecting openness or the wider purposes of Green Belt designation.

The proposed building and dwelling are compactly arranged adjacent to existing operational infrastructure.

7. Agricultural Need

The proposed dwelling is required solely to meet the functional requirements of the agricultural enterprise.

The enterprise currently comprises approximately 140 fallow deer, requiring continual husbandry throughout the year.

Government guidance identifies several aspects of deer husbandry requiring continual attendance including:

- daily inspections;
- welfare monitoring;
- handling during calving;
- treatment of injuries;
- emergency veterinary intervention;
- feeding;
- fencing inspections;
- emergency management.

The Code of Recommendations specifically requires competent stockmanship, regular inspection and rapid response where welfare issues arise. The Code also recognises that fallow deer are naturally nervous animals which require careful handling by experienced stockmen.

Unlike sheep or cattle, deer can rapidly panic, injure themselves, escape fencing or become distressed if problems are not addressed immediately.

The need for continual supervision is therefore considerably greater than many traditional grazing enterprises.

8. Functional Need

The applicant must be present on the holding at all times for reasons including:

- calving;
- emergency veterinary treatment;
- escaped livestock;
- storm damage;
- fallen trees;
- fencing failures;
- water supply failures;
- predator attacks;
- security incidents;
- animal welfare emergencies.

A response time measured in minutes rather than hours is often essential. Living elsewhere would materially compromise both animal welfare and the efficient operation of the business.

9. Security

Security represents a significant operational issue. The holding contains valuable machinery and specialist deer handling equipment.

The applicant has experienced repeated attempts by unauthorised travellers to gain access to the site. The proposed agricultural building will provide secure storage for:

- machinery;
- trailers;
- agricultural equipment;
- veterinary supplies;
- fuel;
- feed.

The presence of an on-site rural worker also provides natural surveillance of the holding. This significantly reduces the likelihood of theft, vandalism and trespass.

Experience throughout rural West Sussex demonstrates that isolated agricultural holdings are increasingly vulnerable to organised rural crime. The proposal therefore provides substantial security benefits for both the holding and neighbouring landowners.

10. Agricultural Building

The agricultural building is entirely appropriate within an established agricultural enterprise. Its purpose includes:

- machinery storage;
- livestock equipment;

- handling race equipment;
- fencing materials;
- feed;
- maintenance equipment;
- workshop area.

The building will improve operational efficiency whilst reducing deterioration of expensive agricultural equipment through external storage. It also enables compliance with recognised welfare standards by ensuring equipment is readily available during emergencies.

11. GPDO Considerations

The proposal has been designed having regard to the principles contained within Class A, Part 6 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

Although planning permission is sought as part of this application because of the associated dwelling, the scale, purpose and function of the agricultural building are wholly consistent with the type of agricultural development envisaged under Part 6. The proposal therefore reinforces the genuine agricultural nature of the enterprise.

12. Horsham Planning Policy

The proposal accords with the objectives of the Horsham District Planning Framework by:

- supporting rural employment;
- supporting agriculture;
- promoting sustainable rural businesses;
- strengthening the rural economy;
- protecting agricultural investment;
- ensuring high standards of animal welfare.

The development remains modest in scale and is directly related to the existing holding. No urbanising features are proposed beyond those necessary for the agricultural enterprise.

13. Housing Land Supply

It is noted that Horsham District Council is currently unable to demonstrate a deliverable five-year housing land supply.

Consequently, the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the NPPF carries significant weight.

Whilst this application is primarily agricultural rather than residential, the absence of a five-year housing supply is a material consideration that reinforces the need for planning decisions to positively support sustainable development where no unacceptable planning harm would arise.

The proposal delivers a genuine rural worker's dwelling tied to an established agricultural enterprise and therefore contributes to sustainable development objectives without prejudicing the character of the countryside.

14. Landscape Impact

The dwelling and agricultural building are positioned adjacent to the operational centre of the holding. The siting minimises visual impact by:

- consolidating development;
- avoiding unnecessary encroachment;
- retaining the wider openness of surrounding fields;
- utilising an existing developed farmstead.

Appropriate landscaping can further soften the appearance of the development.

15. Sustainability

The proposal represents sustainable rural development because it:

- supports food production;
- strengthens a viable agricultural enterprise;
- improves animal welfare;
- reduces unnecessary travel;
- improves security;
- supports the rural economy;
- utilises an existing farmstead location;
- protects valuable agricultural investment.

16. Conclusion

This proposal represents a well-planned and proportionate response to the operational needs of an established agricultural enterprise.

The applicant farms approximately 38.44 hectares (95 acres) and manages a commercial herd of approximately 140 fallow deer, an enterprise requiring continual supervision, specialist husbandry and rapid response to welfare issues. Government guidance emphasises that deer require competent stockmanship, regular inspection and prompt intervention where welfare concerns arise.

The proposed temporary rural worker's dwelling will enable the applicant to provide the level of on-site management necessary for animal welfare, security and the efficient operation of the holding. The accompanying agricultural building will provide secure storage for machinery, equipment and livestock-related infrastructure, addressing operational needs and reducing the risk of theft and vandalism following previous attempts by travellers to gain unauthorised access to the site.

The proposal is located adjacent to the existing operational farmstead on land that has historically accommodated agricultural buildings, making efficient use of an established developed area while minimising impact on the wider countryside. It accords with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026), the Horsham development plan and the principles of Class A, Part 6 of the General Permitted Development Order 2015. Taken as a whole, the proposal constitutes sustainable rural development that supports agriculture, rural employment, animal welfare and the local economy. There are no overriding planning reasons that justify withholding planning permission, and the application is therefore respectfully recommended for approval.

Planning Policy Compliance Matrix
Proposed Temporary Rural Worker's Dwelling and Agricultural Building
Princes Barn, Adversane Lane, Billingshurst, West Sussex RH14 9EH

Policy	Policy Objective	Compliance
NPPF 2026 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	Planning decisions should positively support sustainable development.	The proposal supports an established agricultural business, safeguards livestock welfare, supports food production and rural employment. No significant environmental harm would arise.
NPPF 2026 – Building a Strong Rural Economy	Support the sustainable growth and expansion of agricultural businesses.	The development directly supports the expansion and efficient operation of a viable deer farming enterprise over 38.44ha (95 acres).
NPPF 2026 – Sustainable Rural Businesses	Enable agricultural businesses to grow through appropriate development.	The proposed dwelling and agricultural building are essential infrastructure supporting an existing rural enterprise.
NPPF 2026 – Rural Workers' Dwellings	Recognises that isolated homes in the countryside may be justified where there is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work.	The management of approximately 140 fallow deer requires continual supervision, emergency attendance, welfare inspections and security. A functional need exists.
NPPF 2026 – Effective Use of Land	Encourage efficient use of previously developed land where appropriate.	The application is centred upon a former agricultural building complex and therefore utilises land previously developed for agricultural purposes.
NPPF 2026 – Grey Belt Principles (where applicable)	Previously developed land within the Green Belt/Grey Belt should be positively considered where openness is preserved.	Development is concentrated adjacent to the former farmstead and results in minimal additional encroachment into open countryside.
NPPF 2026 – Supporting Agricultural Productivity	Planning should support food production and modern farming.	The proposal enables efficient livestock management, improves welfare standards and secures the future viability of the holding.
Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) – Rural Housing	Temporary dwellings may be justified where a new or developing agricultural enterprise demonstrates	The application seeks a temporary dwelling to establish the enterprise before any permanent accommodation is considered.

Policy	Policy Objective	Compliance
	an essential functional need.	
Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 – Schedule 2, Part 6 Class A	Supports agricultural buildings reasonably necessary for agriculture on holdings exceeding 5 hectares.	The holding extends to 38.44 hectares. The proposed building is entirely agricultural in function and consistent with the objectives of Class A, notwithstanding that full planning permission is sought alongside the dwelling.
Horsham District Planning Framework – Strategic Policy 26 (Countryside Protection)	Development in the countryside should support rural uses and protect landscape character.	The proposal is directly related to agriculture and is positioned adjacent to the operational farmstead, limiting landscape impact.
Strategic Policy 9 – Rural Economic Development	Encourage sustainable rural enterprises and agricultural businesses.	The proposal allows the continued growth of an established agricultural business while safeguarding employment and investment.
Strategic Policy 25 – Natural Environment and Landscape Character	Protect landscape quality whilst allowing appropriate rural development.	The development is modest in scale, uses an existing farmstead location and can be assimilated through landscaping.
Strategic Policy 33 – Development Principles	High quality development respecting local character.	The buildings are agricultural in appearance, proportionate and functional.
Emerging Horsham Local Plan	Support rural businesses and productive agricultural land.	The proposal is wholly consistent with the emerging policy direction supporting sustainable rural enterprises.
Animal Welfare Code for Farmed Deer	Deer require competent management, regular inspection and rapid response to welfare issues.	The need for an on-site rural worker is reinforced by Government welfare guidance requiring continual observation and experienced stockmanship.
Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1968	Promote high standards of livestock welfare.	The proposal assists compliance by ensuring continual supervision and immediate response to emergencies. The statutory welfare code emphasises that good stockmanship is fundamental to protecting farmed deer.
Five-Year Housing Land Supply	Where a Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a five-year	Horsham's inability to demonstrate a five-year housing supply is a material consideration supporting sustainable

Policy	Policy Objective	Compliance
	housing land supply, the presumption in favour of sustainable development carries increased weight.	development. Whilst this is not a market housing proposal, the policy context weighs in favour of granting permission where no demonstrable harm exists.

Functional Need Cross Reference

Operational Requirement	Planning Justification
Daily inspection of 140 fallow deer	Animal welfare legislation and Government Code of Practice require regular inspection and competent management.
Calving	Immediate attendance required during the calving period.
Injured livestock	Rapid veterinary intervention reduces suffering and mortality.
Escaped deer	Immediate attendance prevents public safety risks and stock losses.
Storm damage/fencing failures	Continuous supervision protects livestock and neighbouring land.
Security	On-site presence deters theft, vandalism and unauthorised access.
Machinery protection	Proposed agricultural building provides secure storage for valuable equipment and reduces rural crime risks.
Traveller incursions	Previous attempts to access the holding demonstrate the need for continual site security and surveillance.

Overall Planning Balance

Benefits	Weight
Supports an established agricultural enterprise	Very Significant
Essential rural worker's accommodation	Very Significant
Improves animal welfare	Very Significant
Government support for agriculture	Significant
Complies with Part 6 Class A principles	Significant
Supports the rural economy	Significant
Previously developed farmstead location	Moderate to Significant
Improved rural security and reduced theft	Moderate
Consolidates development adjacent to the existing farmstead	Moderate
Horsham's lack of a five-year housing land supply (material consideration)	Moderate

Overall Conclusion

When considered against the development plan as a whole, the National Planning Policy Framework (2026), the principles of Part 6 Class A of the GPDO 2015, Government guidance on rural workers' dwellings, and the statutory welfare requirements applicable to farmed deer, the proposal demonstrates strong policy compliance. The essential functional need for an on-site rural worker, combined with the operational requirement for a secure agricultural building, the use of an established farmstead location with a history of agricultural development, and the wider benefits to the rural economy and animal welfare, provide compelling planning grounds for approval.