

**APPELLANT'S REBUTTAL TO THE STATEMENT OF CASE OF
HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Site:

**Woodside Equestrian Centre, Forest Road,
Colegate, West Sussex, RH12 4TF**

Planning Application Proposal:

**Retention of top surface to majority of existing
hardcore area and its use for the parking of vehicles in
connection with the use of the equestrian centre and
resiting of lorry containers onto historic hardsurfaced
area**



Appellant:

Mrs S Novell

Agent:

**Stephen Jupp MRTPI
Chartered Town Planner**

These Final Comments are made in response to the evidence received on behalf of Horsham District Council provided to me by PINS by way of an email dated 26th November 2025.

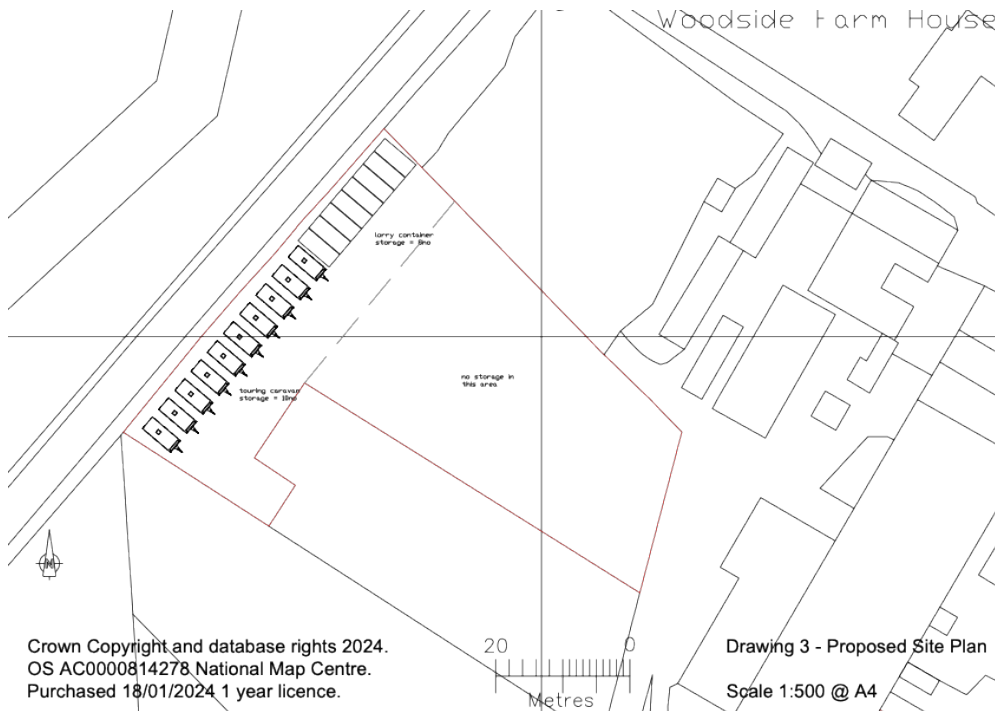
The Appellant has sought to avoid repetition of points made by in the Appellant's Appeal Statement of May 2026 and have not sought to respond to every single point raised by the Council within their evidence. The lack of a response to any particular point within the Council's evidence cannot be taken as agreement with it.

These submissions are made in the order that the LPA have set out their evidence., although the fact that they have 2no Sections 6 makes my rebuttal slightly more complicated.

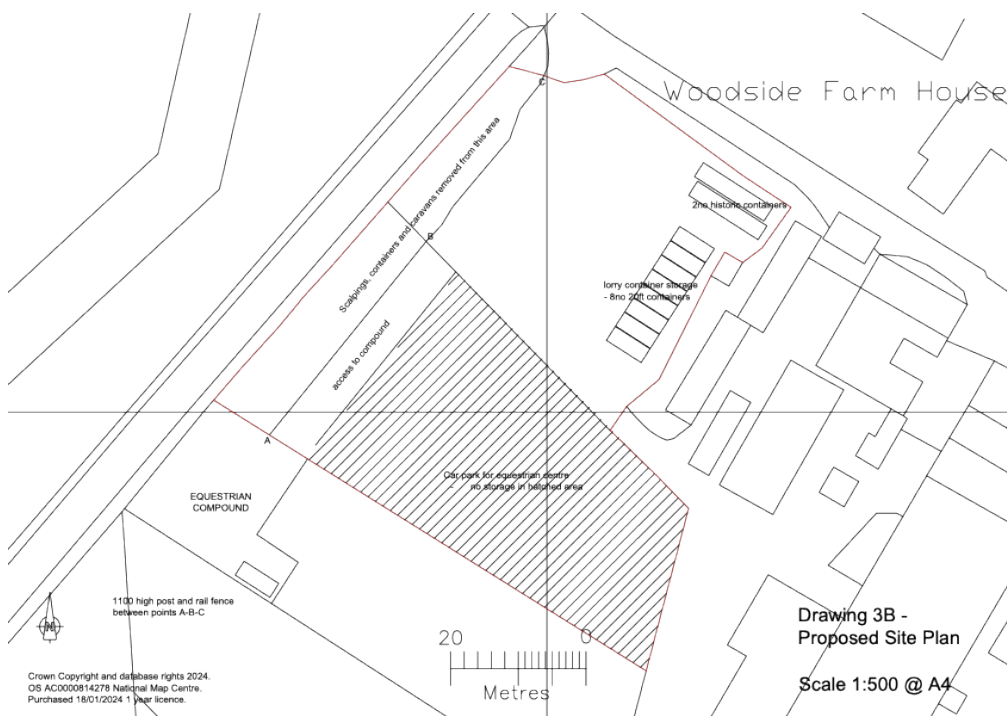
- 3.1 It is concerning that the LPA fail to mention the enforcement notice that was issued to remove the hardstanding and which was subsequently withdrawn when they became aware [through the appellants submissions in writing and with photographs] of a historic pre-existing hardstanding over the whole relevant area, such that they accepted that the requirement to remove the hardstanding was not achievable and any lesser requirement would leave a hardstanding surface remaining. Indeed these facts are illustrated in the description of the appeal development.
- 3.3 Whilst clearly the previous appeal remains a material consideration, this resubmitted scheme is significantly different to that previous appeal such that the weight to be attributed to the previous appeal must be reduced.
- 4.6 The site contains significant equestrian buildings and areas of hardsurfacing.
- 5.2 A more accurate description of the differences between the current and previous schemes is considered to be:
- Removal of all touring caravans;
 - Resiting of the 8no proposed containers from adjacent to the road to into the site, adjacent to 2no historic containers and just in front of a series of equestrian buildings;
 - Removal of existing hardstanding adjacent to the road;

- The recently topped surface [hatched on drawing 3B to be used as a car park for the equestrian centre;
- Bundle of supporting letters confirming essential needs to generate additional income and local needs for the storage and overriding need for more parking space for the equestrian centre – see photo at 1.8].

These significant differences are obvious in the comparison of the previous and current schemes as set out below:



Previous, dismissed, scheme



Current appeal scheme

Policy

- 6.3 It is plain beyond peradventure that Policy 10 is highly material and is complied with – the containers and the car park are ESSENTIAL in ensuring that the equestrian enterprise remains a viable use, and continues to provide a valuable equestrian facility. Accordingly, the development is related to an existing rural enterprise, in accordance with policy 10.
- 6.4 In respect of policies 25, 26 and 30, the development will both conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area and enhance the national landscape. I say the latter matter, simply because it will remove hardstanding adjacent to the road which could be used for purposes ancillary to the lawful equestrian use without the need for permission: for example the appellant could park horse box horses their or customers could park there without the need for planning permission.

Main Issue 1

Policy context 6.1-6.4 – see comments above on policy

- 6.5 The LPA seek to dismiss the economic benefits for the business yet surely that must form part of Policy 10 which seeks to support existing rural business. The evidence is clear both from the appellant and the accountant – namely, that without an additional source of income the equestrian business will not be able to continue.
- 6.6 The above essential need in order to enable to enable the existing business to continue not contested – the council's position [incorrectly] places little or no weight on that as a material consideration, when – as a matter of fact – economic considerations are an important material consideration, particularly with the emphasis in the NPPF for a prosperous economy including that of rural enterprises.
- 6.7 In the previous case there was significantly less information before the inspector on the essential need to find an alternative revenue source for the equestrian business.
- 6.8 Have the council forgotten about rural diversification? Is it not the process of generating additional income from non-traditional, non-agricultural

activities on rural land? The whole point of the containers – and there are ones that have been historically on the site and used by the appellant – is to provide a supplementary income source for the business. This, as the evidence demonstrates, is vital to enable the business to continue. The containers are used by local people / businesses. They are a form of rural diversification.

6.9 The LPA have submitted no evidence to demonstrate a material intensification of use. This can only relate to the 8 containers and considered against the considerable number of equestrian movements per day – in the region of 120-150; is very minimal since they generate on average 10-14 movements per day.

6.10 I refer back to my comment on rural diversification – something the LPA have ignored.

6.11 and 6.12 I have demonstrated above full compliance with policies 10 and 26 on the basis of an essential need to support an existing rural business – and that the renting of just 8 containers represents a clear example of rural diversification.

Main Issue 2: Character and appearance impact.

7.6 Again the Council present misleading evidence – the area of hardstanding for the car park [not the area on which the containers are to be sited] is historic as evidenced earlier – all the decision maker is considering is a fresh top surface – as a matter of fact the pre-existing surface will remain. It is against this fact that any character or appearance impact must be judged. Moreover, the use of the pre-existing surface for the parking of cars for use by the equestrian business could continue as it would not constitute a material change of use – it being an incidental activity arising from users of the equestrian centre visiting the premises.

7.9 There will be no views of the containers from outside the site and within it they will have the backdrop of larger equestrian buildings so are unlikely to be noticeable at all. The cars parked on the land are not development – they are an incidental use. The new top surface causes no more harm than the historic hard surface did when it was first placed there – there is only a slight difference now since the latest topping is fresh. As a result, I do not

consider that there is any erosion of the sites rural character no any introduction of inappropriate uses – the parking being an incidental use and the containers being rural diversification.

- 7.12 I accept that the previous scheme with a long line of both containers and caravans resulted in harm. That harm will not exist if the appeal development is allowed.

8 Response to Appellant's Case

I am satisfied that I have addressed this in the above comments so I will not repeat what I have already said.

That said I need to comment on 8.21. The site is characterised by a range of large industrial sized structures including containers – the containers do not introduce an alien element – indeed the vast percentage of farms will have some containers on site as they are helpful structures to use for storage. This is why the appellant has historically had 2no 40ft containers on the land.

9 Conclusions

There is an essential need to provide additional income for the business as set out in the accountant's letter of support along with the letters from the current renters of 6 of the 7 storage containers. This is a form of rural diversification in full compliance with Policy 10.

The Council's landscaping officer considers some minimal and localised harm to arise to the High Weald NL – but appears to have assumed that the touring caravans would remain on the site. In any event they consider that the planting of a native hedgerow along the roadside boundary would negate the limited and localised visual harm. They have clearly not been alerted to this incorrect assumption and it is disappointing that they have not been asked to comment, based on the correct facts. Their comments should be afforded very little, in any, weight due to this error.

I therefore consider that the appeal should be ALLOWED and that planning permission should be GRANTED.