



APPLICATIONS & APPEALS SERVICES

**DEMOLITION OF STABLE BUILDING.
CONSTRUCTION OF DETACHED SELF-BUILD
DWELLING, CREATION OF DRIVEWAY, PARKING
AND LANDSCAPING. USE OF A RETAINED
STABLE BUILDING AS GARAGE**

AT

**ASHFOLDS, HORSHAM ROAD, RUSPER,
WEST SUSSEX RH12 4QX**

PLANNING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

JULY 2026



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning permission is sought for the construction of a detached, two bedroom self-build dwelling on land at Ashfolds, Horsham Road, Rusper, RH12 4QX. The proposed dwelling will be accessed via the driveway which leads from the existing vehicle access to Ashfolds from Horsham Road to two stable buildings. The larger of these two stable buildings will be removed and the smaller stable building retained and used as a garage for the proposed dwelling.

1.2 This supporting Planning, Design and Access 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 The Statement will demonstrate that the proposed development accords with the relevant planning policies and is acceptable in all respects.

2.0 PHYSICAL CONTEXT

- 2.1 The application site comprises land at Ashfolds, a two-storey detached dwelling situated in extensive grounds to the west of Horsham Road. To the north west of the dwelling are two ancillary buildings - a detached annexe and detached triple bay garage with accommodation in the roof space.
- 2.2 To the western end of the residential gardens is a former sand school formed over an old tennis court together with two stable buildings (named stable 1 – to be demolished) and stable 2 (to be retained).



Figure 1 - Site location plan



Figure 2 Aerial view of site and Rusper © Google Earth)

- 2.3 There is a crescent shaped drive with access from Horsham Road at the northeast and southeast corners of the site. There is a further drive spurred from the southern side of the front drive which leads into the fields to the south, which are under the same ownership.
- 2.4 The site boundaries feature mature hedging and trees with some timber close boarded fencing along the north boundary. Thus, the site is well screened from the road and neighbouring fields and properties.

- 2.5 The site is situated 200m to the southwest of the built up area boundary defining Rusper. A public right of way (footpath 1494) runs parallel to the north boundary between the site and Dial Post Cottage, residential dwelling, and Dial Post Park and Court, a commercial estate.

- 2.6 The following are photographs of the application site:



Figure 3 - View from southern access point



Figure 4 - Access towards field



Figure 6 - view of dwelling from south



Figure 5 - View from Northern access point



Figure 7 - existing stable building



Figure 8 - Former tennis court / sand school



Figure 10 - Ashfolds and existing annexe



Figure 9 - Existing stable building



Figure 11 - Existing annexe and garage



Figure 122 - Gardens and garage block

3.0 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal is for the construction of a two bedroom, self-build dwelling (with study and a basement level) located on land to the west of Ashfolds. A large stable building (stable 1) will be removed as part of the proposal and a second, much smaller stable building (stable 2) retained and used for garage use.
- 3.2 The location of the sand school will be improved with its removal and the creation of a wild meadow and a new hedgerow will be planted to separate the curtilage retained for Ashfolds and the curtilage proposed for the new dwelling.
- 3.3 The proposed dwelling will be accessed via the existing vehicle access to Ashfolds from Horsham Road and the driveway which presently leads to the two stable buildings. This driveway will be extended towards the proposed dwelling and a new parking/turning area will be created.
- 3.4 The proposed dwelling is of a barn style design which will be finished in oak horizontal cladding above a brick plinth to the elevations and clay roof tiles.

- 3.5 The ground floor bedroom and ensuite are for the Applicant to be able to care for her elderly relative, in this case her mother who is 81.

Figure 14 – Proposed Block Plan



Figure 15- Proposed Elevations

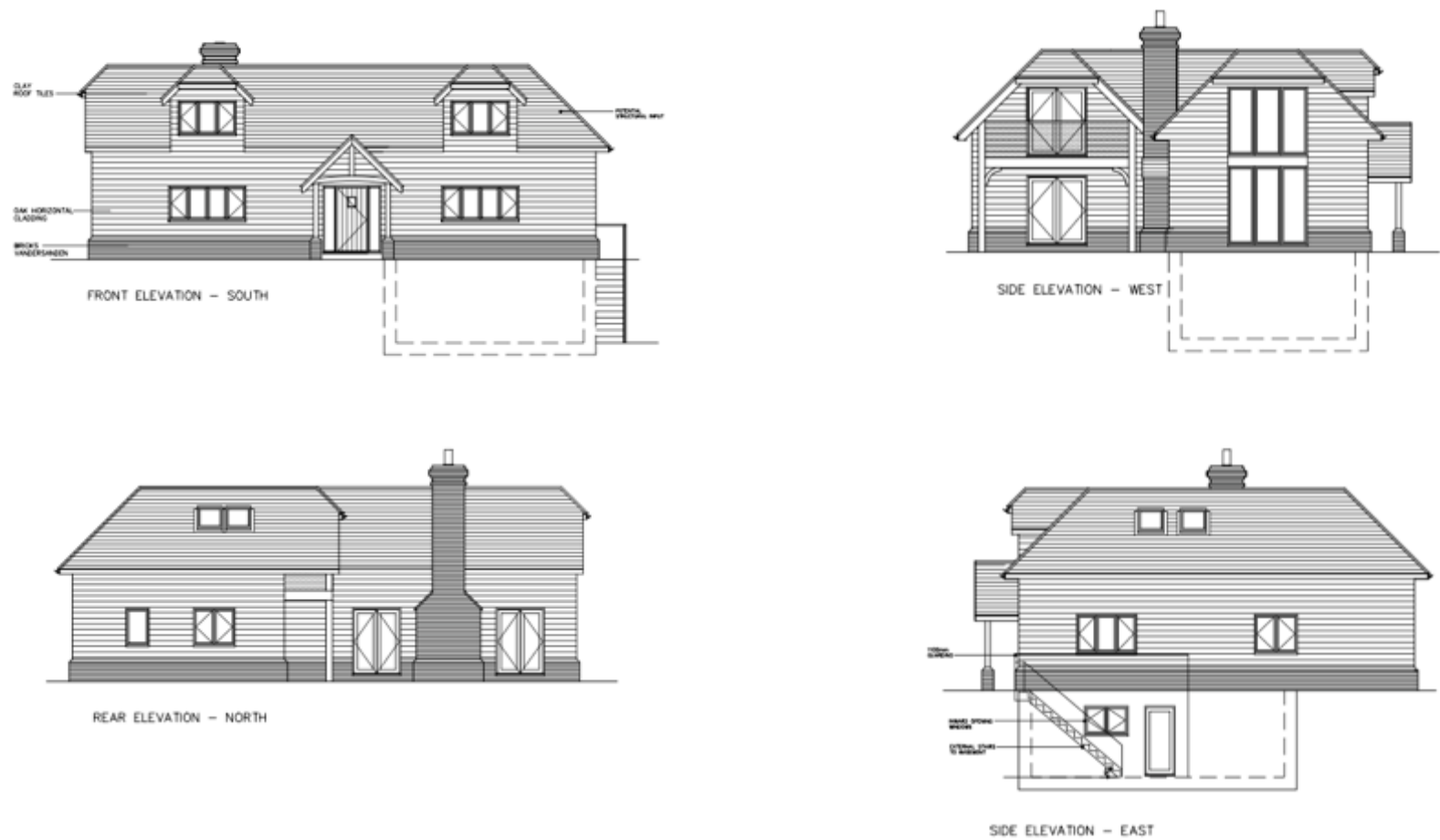
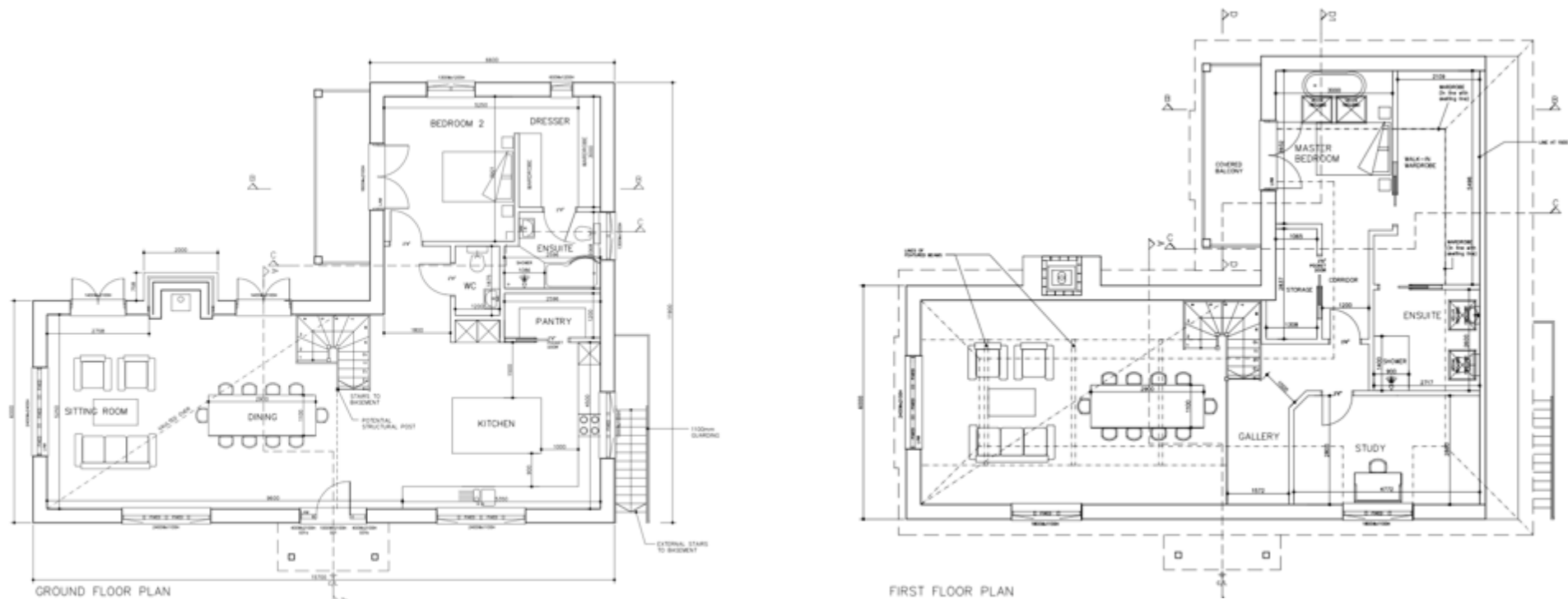
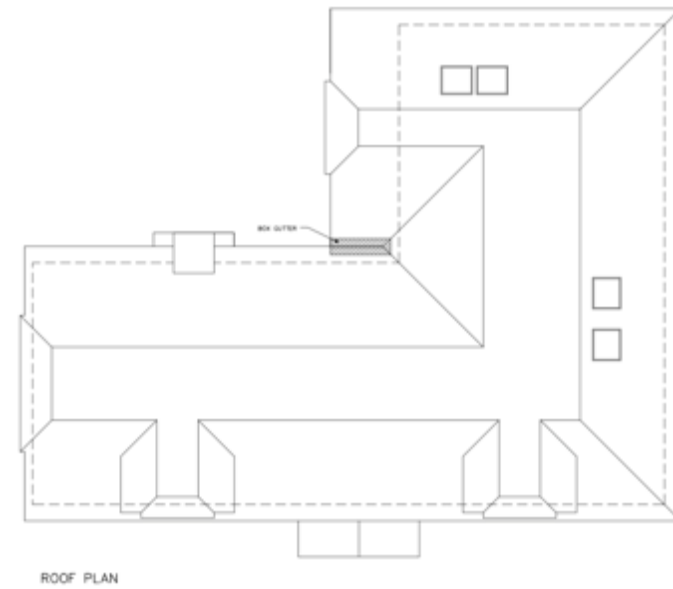
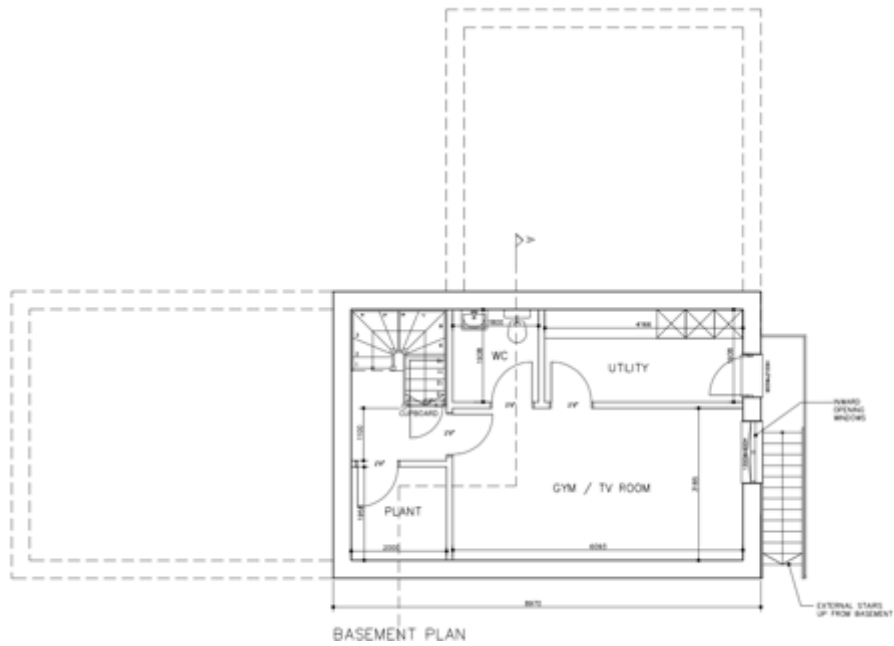


Figure 16: Proposed Floor Plans and Roof Plan





4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 The relevant planning history for the application site is as follows:

- DC/26/0713 – Demolition of existing residential annexe, and conversion of existing garage/outbuilding into a two bedroom dwelling with erection of extension. Planning permission refused 26 June 2026.
- DC/25/1256 – Erection of single storey rear extension and alterations to existing garage/outbuilding to convert to a single dwellinghouse. Refused 26.09.2025. Appeal dismissed 17 March 2026.
- DC/24/1896 – Erection of extension and alterations to barn style garage to form 1 no new dwelling. Demolition of annexe and erection of 1 no detached dwelling. Refused 24.02.2025.
- DC/20/1608 - Demolition of existing garages and construction of a replacement 3 bay garage and workshop with a home office above and installation of an external staircase. Permitted 26.10.2020.
- RS/13/95 -Use of garage as office - Permitted on 05.05.1995.
- RS/26/95 - Extension for office use - Permitted on 17.07.1995.
- RS/33/95 - Retention of garage and garden store - Refused 13.09.1995.
- RS/55/03-Removal of conditions 4 & 5 from RS/13/95 and conditions 3 & 4 from RS/26/95 relating to occupation of offices. Permitted 03.11.200

4.2 This planning application is in part a resubmission of application DC/24/1896 but which now proposes the construction of one self-build dwelling only in a similar location to the rear of Ashfolds. A separate planning application for the extension and alteration of the existing garage/outbuilding to form a dwelling was submitted under reference DC/25/1256. This application was refused by the Council on 26 September 2025 and the subsequent appeal was dismissed on 17 March 2026. A further application submitted under application DC/26/0713 was also recently refused.

4.3 The current proposed dwelling has been significantly reduced in size (particularly in respect of height and resulting bulk) to the dwelling previously proposed ('Plot 2') under application DC/24/1896. In addition, it is now proposed to remove the

larger of the two stable buildings which will help to offset the additional built form.

- 4.4 The proposed dwelling is also now re-orientated on site (its front elevation faces south) and positioned closer to the existing stable building. To enable a comparison between the two schemes, the relevant details of planning application DC/24/1896 (in respect of 'Plot 2') are included at Appendix NJA/1.

5.0 POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the Development Plan for the district includes the relevant policies of the adopted Horsham District Planning Framework 2015 and the Ruspur Neighbourhood Plan 2021.

5.2 In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and other national planning guidance are material considerations.

National Planning Policy Framework (the “NPPF”) 2024

Sustainable Development

5.3 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).

5.4 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’.

5.5 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'.***

5.6 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.

5.7 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).

5.8 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’.

Plan and Decision Making

5.9 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’.***

5.10 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’.

Housing Provision

5.11 Paragraph 61 states ***‘To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet as much as an area’s identified housing need as possible, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community’.***

5.12 Paragraph 62 states that to determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning practice guidance. Within this context, paragraph 63 requires the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community to be assessed and reflected in planning policies. These groups

include (inter alia) people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

5.13 In terms of the provision of affordable housing, NPPF paragraph 65 states that this should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer).

5.14 Paragraph 72 requires strategic policy-making authorities to have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment. Planning policies should identify a supply of specific, deliverable sites for five years following the intended date of adoption and specific deliverable sites or broad locations for growth for the subsequent years 6-10 and where possible, years 11-15 of the remaining plan period.

5.15 Paragraph 73 sets out that ***‘Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, are essential for Small and Medium Enterprise housebuilders to deliver new homes, and are often built out relatively quickly’.***

5.16 Paragraph 78 requires local planning authorities to identify and update annually a supply of specific, deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years’ worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. The supply of deliverable sites should include a buffer as set out at paragraph 78 a) – c).

5.17 To maintain the supply of housing, NPPF paragraph 79 sets out that local planning authorities should monitor progress in building out sites which have permission. Where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery has fallen below the local planning authority’s housing requirement over the previous three years, certain policy consequences should be taken into account as set out at paragraph 79 a) – c).

Rural Housing

5.18 In rural areas, NPPF paragraph 82 requires planning policies and decisions to be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing

should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities (paragraph 83).

- 5.19 Paragraph 84 states that planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated new homes in the countryside unless certain circumstances apply.

Highways and Car Parking

- 5.20 Paragraph 109 requires transport issues to be considered at the early stages of plan-making and development proposals.
- 5.21 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’***.
- 5.22 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.

- 5.23 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).
- 5.24 Paragraph 115 sets out that in assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that (inter alia), sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking into account the type of development and location together with a safe and suitable access to the site. Any significant impacts from the development on the transport network or highway safety shall be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach.

- 5.25 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

- 5.26 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.
- 5.27 Paragraph 125 states that planning policies and decision should encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land. Substantial weight should be given to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs. In addition, policies and decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings especially if this would help meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained.

- 5.28 Paragraph 128 requires local planning authorities to take a proactive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in place where this would help to meet identified development needs.

- 5.29 In terms of the density of new development, NPPF paragraph 129 encourages the efficient use of land taking into account a number of issues including the needs for different types of housing and other forms of development, the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens) and securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

Design

- 5.30 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).

5.31 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.

5.32 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

5.33 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.

5.34 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).

5.35 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

- 5.36 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. Paragraph 189 requires great weight to be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in national parks.

Habitats and Biodiversity

- 5.37 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.

- 5.38 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

- 5.39 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).

The Development Plan

5.40 As noted, the Development Plan is made up of the Horsham District Planning Framework 2015 and in this case the Ruspur Neighbourhood Plan 2021. Policies relevant to the proposal are set out below:

Horsham District Planning Framework 2015 (the “HDPF”)

- Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
- Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
- Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
- Policy 4 – Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion
- Policy 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
- Policy 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs
- Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
- Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
- Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
- Policy 27 – Settlement Coalescence
- Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
- Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development

- Policy 33 - Development Principles
- Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
- Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
- Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
- Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
- Policy 39 - Infrastructure Provision
- Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
- Policy 41 - Parking

Ruspur Neighbourhood Plan 2021 (the “RNP”)

- Policy RUS1 – Spatial Plan
- Policy RUS3 – Design
- Policy RUS5 – Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
- Policy RUS10 – Dark Skies
- Policy RUS11 – Promoting Sustainable Transport

Other material considerations

5.41 Other material considerations include:

- The National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (NPPG)
- National Design Guide (2021)

- Shaping Development in Horsham District Planning Advice
Note 2025

6.0 APPRAISAL

The Principle of Development

Location

- 6.1 Paragraph 83 of the NPPF states that ***‘To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby’.***
- 6.2 NPPF paragraph 84 continues that ***‘Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside’*** unless certain criteria apply. The term “isolated” is not defined within the NPPF, but the courts have confirmed that it should be given its ordinary objective meaning of remote and far away from other places, buildings and people, and separate or remote from a settlement, services, and facilities.
- 6.3 NPPF paragraph 63 requires the type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community to be assessed and reflected in planning policy. This includes people wishing to build their own homes.
- 6.4 In addition, NPPF paragraph 73 notes the importance of small and medium sized sites in helping to meet the housing requirement of an area and which are essential for small and medium sized house builders to deliver new homes. Such sites can also be built out relatively quickly.
- 6.5 HDPF policy 2 is the Council’s overarching policy that covers location and amount of development. The policy states that new development should be focused in and around the key settlement of Horsham, and to allow for growth in the rest of the district in accordance with the identified settlement hierarchy. The Council’s settlement hierarchy is set out at HDPF policy 3 and settlement expansion is referred to at HDPF policy 4.
- 6.6 Policy 3 confirms that development will be permitted within towns and villages that have defined built-up areas; with development in the countryside more strictly controlled through the provisions of Policy 4. This policy states that development outside of the built-up areas will only be supported where the

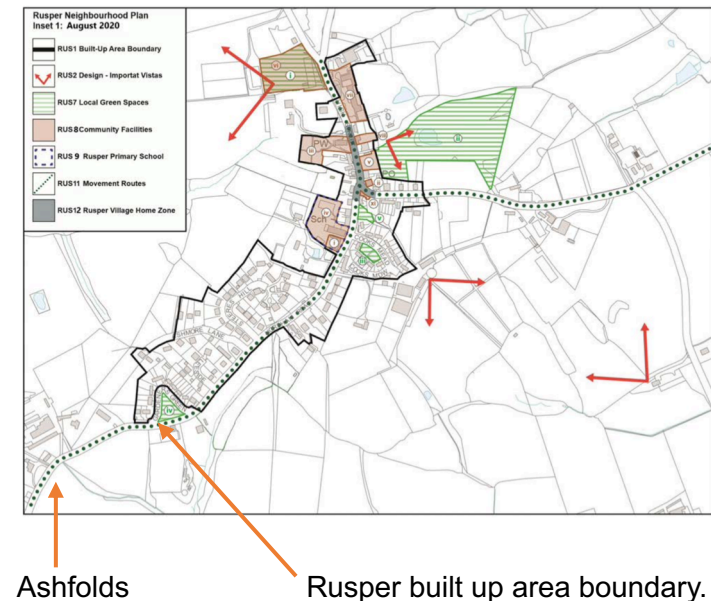
site is allocated in the Local Plan or in a Neighbourhood Plan and adjoins a settlement edge.

6.7 Policy RUS1 of the RNP defined the built-up area boundary for Rusper for the purpose of applying Policy 4 of the HDPF. Rusper is classified as a 'Smaller Village' under HDPF policy 3 which describes such settlements as ***'Villages with limited services, facilities, social networks but with good accessibility to larger settlements (e.g. road and rail) or settlements with some employment but limited services and facilities or accessibility. Residents are reliant on larger settlements to meet most of their requirements'***.

6.8 The above description is generic to all 'Smaller Villages' within the district however within Rusper, there are a number of amenities including a primary school, village hall, a public house, village shop (with post office), a church and a local bus service stopping in the village.

6.9 The Council's emerging Local Plan also identifies Rusper as a 'Small Village' (draft policy 2) with local services and facilities that can accommodate some growth in residential housing.

6.10 The application site is located outside of the defined built-up area of Rusper and is therefore within a countryside location. HDPF policy 26 seeks to protect the countryside against inappropriate development unless it is considered essential and appropriate in scale; whilst also meeting one of four criteria.



Ashfolds

Rusper built up area boundary.

Figure 18: Extract from the Rusper Neighbourhood Plan

- 6.11 However, as shown at Figure 18, Ashfolds is very close to the boundary of Rusper, situated just 200m away with dwellings and commercial properties within close proximity. There is an established building pattern between Ashfolds and the built up area boundary and given this spatial context, the new dwelling would not be “isolated” for the purposes of paragraph 84.
- 6.12 The site comprises a sand school and constitutes previously developed land (in accordance with the definition in the NPPF). There is a local bus service with a bus stop in the village together with a bus stop close to the entrance to Ashfolds. These bus stops serves the number 52 bus (operated by Compass Travel) which provides a Monday and Thursday bus service between Rusper and Broadbridge Heath (Tesco) via Horsham train station.
- 6.13 The site is located 800m from the centre of the village and there are pavements 200m to the north. In addition, occupiers of the proposed dwelling will be able to walk into the village via the footpath to the north of the site (see Figure 19), therefore avoiding the road completely.

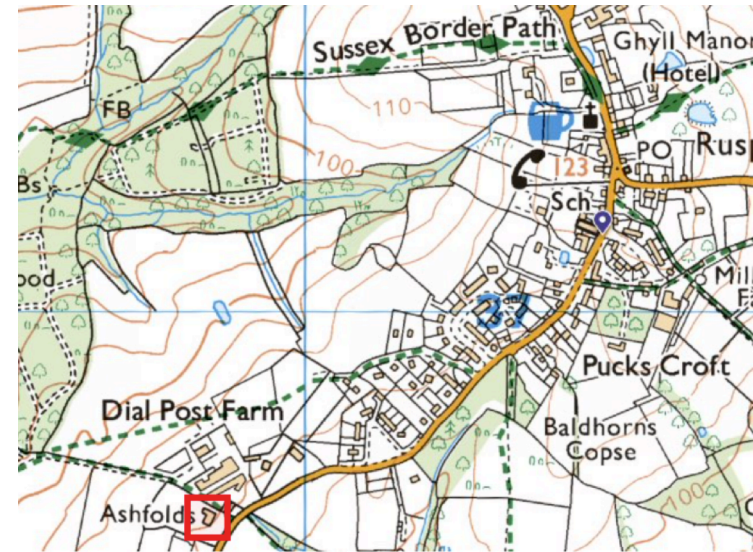


Figure 19 - Connection to Rusper by public footpath © OS Maps

- 6.14 Rusper is also an easy cycling distance from the application site. Horsham Road is a country lane subject to a 40 mph speed limit just outside of the site before dropping down to a 30 mph limit within the settlement. Thus, it would be possible for future occupiers to also cycle into Rusper.
- 6.15 The distance and setting of the site relative to Rusper would meet guidance relevant to walking and cycling as detailed in the Department for Transport publication LTN 1/04 – Policy, Planning and Design for Walking and Cycling which states:

‘3.10.3 There are limits to the distances generally considered acceptable for utility walking and cycling. The mean average length for walking journeys is approximately 1km (0.6 miles) and for cycling, it is 4km (2.4 miles), although journeys of up to three times these distances are not uncommon for regular commuters. The distances people are prepared to walk or cycle depend on their fitness and physical ability, journey purpose, settlement size, and walking/cycling conditions. Useful guidance on desirable, acceptable and preferred maximum walking distances for different purposes are included in Tables 3.2 and 3.3 of Providing for Journeys on Foot, IGT 2000’ (Table 3.2 shown in Figure 20):

- 6.16 As such, occupiers of the proposed dwelling will not be wholly reliant on the use of the private vehicle to meet day-to-day needs due to the short distance into the village, accessible via foot or cycle and the availability of some public transport options. The application site therefore offers an appropriate opportunity for small scale housing growth in a sustainable location.
- 6.17 Furthermore, NPPF paragraph 110 makes it clear that opportunities for sustainable transport will vary between urban

and rural areas. This makes some allowance for dependence upon private vehicles. It is also reiterated that NPPF paragraph 83 seeks to promote sustainable development in rural areas and in accordance with this, the provision of a new dwelling on the application site will help to maintain the vitality of the rural area in terms of the supply of a new home and use of facilities and businesses within the village.

Table 3.2: Suggested Acceptable Walking Distance.			
	Town centres (m)	Commuting/School Sight-seeing (m)	Elsewhere (m)
Desirable	200	500	400
Acceptable	400	1000	800
Preferred maximum	800	2000	1200

Figure 20: Table 3.2 of ‘Providing for Journeys on Foot’ IHT 2000

Housing Land Supply

- 6.18 The Council’s policies in respect of the supply and location of new residential development (HDPF policies 2, 3, 4, 15 and 26) are out-of-date on the basis that the HDPF is over five years old and because the Council is unable to demonstrate a five year supply of housing as required by the NPPF (paragraphs 72 and 78).

- 6.19 The Council's latest Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) 2024/25 (published 19 December 2025) confirms that the Council can demonstrate just 1.7 years' supply (a drop from 2.9 years when application DC/24/1896 was submitted). The latest Housing Delivery Test was published in December 2024 and this sets out that the Council scored 62% delivery against national housing targets.
- 6.20 The Council has published a Housing Delivery Test Action Plan (April 2025) which sets out how the Council will seek to ensure the delivery of new homes. This includes reference to the Council's Facilitating Appropriate Development (FAD) document (October 22) which has since been replaced by the Shaping Development in Horsham District Planning Advice Note (SDPAN) (September 2025).
- 6.21 It follows that the as the Council's policies in respect of the supply and location of new homes are out-of-date, they should be given less weight in the decision making process. The tilted balance of NPPF paragraph 11 d) is engaged and the proposal should instead be considered against the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 6.22 The Council is no longer requiring Applicants to demonstrate that new development will be water neutral. As such, there is no conflict with NPPF paragraph 11 d) (i) (i.e. the application of NPPF policies which protect areas or assets of particular importance do not provide a strong reason for refusing the development proposed).
- 6.23 This Statement further confirms that there are no other reasons or adverse impacts of granting planning permission for the proposal that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the provision of a new home of a high quality design, in a sustainable location and which makes effective use of previously developed land (11 d) ii).
- 6.24 The Government has set out a target of 1.5 million new homes to be built over the present Parliament. There is as such a significant need to build new homes and the proposal will make a small but important contribution towards the supply of windfall homes within the district helping to meet local needs.
- 6.25 Given the fact that the Council cannot demonstrate an appropriate supply of housing, the Council's Shaping Development Planning Advisory Note (SD PAN)

acknowledges that the Council is likely to receive applications for residential development outside of the defined built-up area boundaries and on unallocated sites.

6.26 The SD PAN (at paragraph 5.12) confirms that the Council will consider positively applications that meet all of the following criteria:

- ***‘The site adjoins the existing settlement edge as defined by the BUAB;***
- ***The level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement the proposal relates to;***
- ***The proposal demonstrates that it meets all local housing needs or will assist the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services;***
- ***The impact of the development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long-term development; and***
- ***The development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape character features are maintained and enhanced’.***

6.27 The criteria essentially follow the same principles of HDPF policy 4 with the exception that the SD PAN does not contain the same requirement for sites to be allocated for development in the Local or Neighbourhood Plan.

6.28 The SD PAN is guidance only, and having established that HDPF policy 4 is out of date (together with the Council’s other policies in respect of the supply and location of new homes), it is not considered that any significant weight should be given to the criteria in the SD PAN. Nevertheless, an appraisal is set out below:

6.29 It is reiterated that whilst the application site does not adjoin a settlement edge, it is very close to Rusper and visually appears to be connected to other development and the village. The site is in a suitable position to accommodate a new dwelling without resulting in significant or harmful conflict with the Council’s spatial strategy or the principles of the NPPF when considered as a whole.

6.30 In terms of criterion 2 of the SD PAN, the level of expansion, just one dwelling is small. The low density of development is

wholly appropriate to site's location, density and pattern of adjacent residential development.

- 6.31 The proposed development meets local housing needs in respect of the clear need for new housing within the district and the impact of the proposal will neither individually nor cumulatively prejudice comprehensive long term development. The proposal complies with criteria 3 and 4 of the SD PAN.
- 6.32 In respect of criterion 5 of the SD PAN, the application site is contained by an existing defensible boundary and the proposed dwelling will not harmfully encroach into open countryside.
- 6.33 Given the small scale of development proposed, the sustainable location of the application site, the lack of any harm caused to the visual amenities of the rural setting and countryside landscape (as further addressed within this Statement) and the high need for new homes within the district, there are clear justifications for granting planning permission in this case.

Case Studies

- 6.34 The following appeal decisions granted planning permission for the creation of single dwellinghouses within the HDC countryside. In the cases of Thornhill Stables, Cowfold Lodge and Marlpost Meadows in particular, weight was given to the Council's insufficient supply of housing and the provisions of NPPF paragraph 11 d). These cases are summarised as follows:
1. *DC/24/1486 – Land at Thornhill Stables, Billingshurst Road, Coolham*
- 6.35 Planning permission was granted at appeal on 28 October 2025 for the construction of a two storey dwelling on land at Thornhill Stables, near Coolham (see Appendix NJA/2).
- 6.36 The Planning Inspector did not find the appeal site to be in isolated countryside in the context of NPPF paragraph 84 but also did not consider the site to be in a suitable location having regard to local and national policy in respect of the accessibility of the site to services, facilities and employment opportunities.

6.37 However, when considering the proposal in the planning balance, the Planning Inspector found the following:

‘Balanced against the harm are a number of benefits. The overall housing supply remains significantly deficient, and the provision of an additional dwelling would make a meaningful contribution to addressing this shortfall. The Framework recognises that small sites can make an important contribution to housing supply and are often built out quickly. There would also be modest economic benefits during construction and through local spending, as well as a small contribution to housing diversity. While the scale of these benefits is modest given that only one dwelling is proposed, in the context of the current housing pressures, even a single additional home represents a valuable and positive contribution.

Taking all matters into account, the adverse impacts of granting planning permission would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole. Consequently, the proposal benefits from the presumption in favour of

sustainable development as defined in paragraph 11d of the Framework’.

2. DC/22/2250 - Cowfold Lodge Cottage, Cowfold

6.38 Planning permission was granted at appeal for the construction of a log style dwelling at Cowfold Lodge Cottage, near Cowfold (see Appendix NJA/3). Cowfold Lodge is located outside of the settlement boundary of Cowfold which it is reiterated is classed by the HDPF as a ‘Medium Village’ with a moderate level of services and facilities. The Planning Inspector found that the site was not in isolated countryside and that the appearance of the dwelling (a log cabin design) would not be inappropriate to the rural area and close to other buildings.

6.39 Whilst the Planning Inspector found that there would be some harm to the character and appearance of the area by way of a reduction in the openness of the countryside (and thereby resulting in conflict with HDPF policies 25, 26, 32 and 33), as the site is not isolated and the dwelling would not be unduly prominent, this harm would be modest.

6.40 In respect of location, the Planning Inspector found that the site would not be in a suitable location when judged against the policies of the HDPF but gave weight to the Council's deficient housing land supply situation. The Planning Inspector found that the proposed dwelling would contribute towards the much needed supply of houses noting that:

'Small sites can often be built-out relatively quickly and in this case the appellant intends to occupy the dwelling. There would be economic benefits arising from construction to spend in the local economy. Although these benefits are tempered by the small contribution that one house would make in the economic context of the current circumstances the additional dwelling would be valuable' (paragraph 24).

6.41 Importantly and having regard to the provisions of NPPF paragraph 11 d), the Planning Inspector found that the adverse impacts of granting planning permission would not significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits of an additional dwelling when assessed against the policies of the NPPF taken as a whole. As a result, the Planning Inspector in applying the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development

found that planning permission should be granted.

3. DC/22/0495 – Marlpost Meadows, Southwater

6.42 Planning permission was granted at appeal for the construction of a detached dwelling, outside of a built-up area boundary at Marlpost Meadows near Southwater (see Appendix NJA/4).

6.43 Marlpost Meadows is located approximately 1.5km from the village centre of Southwater (a 'Small Town/Larger Village', as per HDPF policy 3). In noting the provisions of NPPF paragraph 11 d) and the lack of a five year supply of housing within the District, the Planning Inspector found the proposal to be acceptable in the planning balance.

6.44 Limited weight was given to HDPF policy 26 in respect of development outside of built-up area boundaries on the basis that the housing shortfall dictates that those boundaries are out of date. The Planning Inspector found that the site's location outside of a settlement boundary did not therefore constitute a reason for refusing planning permission and found the proposal to be acceptable for the following reasons:

‘The proposal would increase the supply of housing in the District and help to address the identified shortfall in new homes. The benefits of a single dwelling are very modest, but cumulatively windfall sites have a significant influence on supply. The Framework explains that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built out relatively quickly. The land forms part of the curtilage of an existing dwelling in the countryside and it would qualify as previously developed land under the definition set out at Annex 2 of the Framework. The site has reasonably good accessibility to services and facilities within Southwater, despite its location outside of the built-up area’ (paragraph 17).

6.45 The Planning Inspector concludes that:

‘In the overall planning balance, I conclude that there are no adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The proposal would therefore constitute an acceptable form of development in terms of the Framework, and this would be a material consideration sufficient to outweigh the conflict with the

development plan arising from the location of development outside of settlement boundaries’ (paragraph 18).

4. DC/23/0627 – Wappingthorn Lodge, Steyning

- 6.46 On 10 December 2024, planning permission was granted at appeal for the extension and conversion of existing buildings at Wappingthorn Lodge into a dwelling (Appendix NJA/5). The main issue (having regard to the Council’s reasons for refusal) related to whether the proposed development would provide a suitable location for housing having regard to the Council’s spatial strategy.
- 6.47 The Planning Inspector found the proposal to conflict with the Council’s spatial strategy in terms of the site’s location but whilst future occupiers would have to travel by car to reach local services and facilities, the distance would be short. When considering the proposal in the planning balance, the Planning Inspector found that the level of harm and the level benefit carry a comparable level of weight and therefore (having regard to NPPF paragraph 11d), ***‘the adverse impacts of granting planning permission would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed***

against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. Consequently, the proposal benefits from the presumption in favour of sustainable development as defined in paragraph 11d of the Framework and the similar provisions in Policy 1 of the HDPF (paragraph 36).

5. *Other Appeal Decisions and HDC Planning Committee Decisions*

- 6.48 In considering the proposed construction at Hunter Oak, Faygate Lane, Faygate dated 11 September 2024 (Appendix NJA/6) the Planning Inspector concluded that:

‘16. The location of the proposed development within the countryside would be contrary to the spatial strategy, and would conflict with Policies 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the HDPF and the Facilitating Appropriate Development document. However, given the absence of a five-year HLS these policies may be considered out-of-date, and the conflict attracts very limited weight’.

- 6.49 A more detailed and highly critical assessment was set out by the Planning Inspector in his decision letter regarding the

proposed residential development at Horsham Golf Course (Appendix NJA/7). The Planning Inspector stated (inter alia) that the policies were out-of-date and should be given very limited weight being inconsistent with the NPPF. The harm associated with non-compliance should be balanced against the NPPF’s overall support for sustainable development and the policies to restrict development outside of the built-up area boundaries should be given very little weight (see paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of the appeal decision notice).

- 6.50 The Council concurred with this view in the Planning Committee report (Appendix NJA/8) recommending the approval of 43 dwellings at Millfields Farm, Rusper (DC/24/0699). It states:

‘It should, though, be noted that the Local Planning Authority is presently unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites, with the Council’s latest Authority Monitoring Report confirming 2.9 year housing land supply. This represents a substantial shortfall relative to the Council’s assessed housing need and significantly diminishes the degree of weight which can be attributed to conflict with existing spatial policy’.

6.51 Similarly, the Council's Planning Committee resolved to grant outline planning permission for the construction of two dwellings outside of the built-up area boundary at Potters Field, Mill Lane, Littleworth near Partridge Green (1.1km from the built-up area boundary) (DC/24/1887). It is noted that the Council's Planning Committee report (Appendix NJA/9) gives weight to the emerging Local Plan which identifies Littleworth as a 'Secondary Settlement', however, at the point of determination, the site was/is located within the countryside.

6. Sites and Decisions Close to Ashfolds

6.52 In the case of Old Park, Horsham Road, Rusper (DC/18/1997), the Council granted planning permission for the conversion and partial re-building of existing ancillary accommodation and extension to form four dwellings. This site is located approximately 0.4 miles to the south of Ashfolds and is therefore further away from Rusper and follows the approval of a similar scheme under reference DC/17/1415.

6.53 The Case Officer's report for the initial planning application in 2017 notes that **'Whilst the buildings are located outside of any defined built-up area boundary, the site is**

approximately 800m from the built-up area boundary of Rusper and are associated within an existing dwelling on the site'.

6.54 Whilst it is noted that applications DC/18/1997 and DC/17/1415 relate to the conversion and adaptation of existing buildings, it is still relevant to note that in granting permission for residential development at Old Park, the Council found the site to be in a suitable location for new residential development. These applications were both determined under the present HDPF and not only is Ashfolds much closer to Rusper than Old Park, but the Council also now has a **significant** under provision of housing.

6.55 The Council granted planning permission for the construction of a dwelling at Dial Post Farmhouse, Horsham Road, Rusper under applications DC/12/1345 (outline) and DC/12/2376 (reserved matters). Earlier, under application reference DC/07/2679 the Council had granted planning permission for the conversion of a former agricultural building into a dwelling at the same property. Dial Post Farmhouse is located a short distance to the north east of Ashfolds on the opposite side of Dial Post Park.

6.56 Details of Old Park and Dial Post Farmhouse are included at Appendices NJA/10 and NJA/11.

Sustainable Development

6.57 Given that the tilted balance at NPPF paragraph 11 d) is engaged in this case, it is reiterated that the proposal should be considered against the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out within the Framework. Having regard to the three key objectives of sustainable development set out at paragraph 8 of the NPPF, the proposed development complies as follows:

- a) an economic objective – the proposal will make a small contribution to the local building industry and associated trades in constructing the new dwelling. Furthermore, occupiers of the new dwelling will help to support local services and facilities. The proposal complies with the economic objective of sustainable development.
- b) a social objective – the proposal provides a suitable site for the creation of a new dwelling in close proximity to local services and facilities including schools and public

transport. The proposal will also make a small but important contribution to the supply of new homes within the district. The proposal complies with the social objective of sustainable development.

- c) an environmental objective – the proposal makes efficient use of previously developed land (see below) and no harm will result to the visual amenities of the countryside landscape. The proposed dwelling is sustainably located, it is of a sustainable design and no harm will be caused in respect of ecology and biodiversity. The proposal is considered to comply with the environmental objective of sustainable development. Matters of design, ecology and sustainable design are addressed in more detail in the following sections of this Statement.

Previously Developed Land

6.58 Paragraph 124 of the NPPF states that ***‘Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions’.***

- 6.59 NPPF paragraph 125 d) requires planning policies and decisions to promote and support the development of underutilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively. Paragraph 128 requires that a positive approach is taken to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, again, where this would help meet identified development needs.
- 6.60 In addition HDPF policy 2 (criterion 8) supports sustainable development including the encouragement of the **‘effective use of and by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided it is not of a high environmental value’**. Similarly, HDPF policy 33 (criterion 1) also requires developments to **‘make effective use of land, and prioritise the use of previously developed land and buildings whilst respecting any constraints that exist’**.
- 6.61 Having regard to the definition of ‘previously developed land’ (PDL) at NPPF Annex 2: Glossary, the application site comprises equestrian development and it is therefore considered to fall within the definition of PDL. In addition, residential gardens to dwelling situated outside of a built up area boundary are also considered to comprise PDL (see the case of Dartford Borough Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, 2017).
- 6.62 It is also relevant to note that the application site has historically had buildings on it/around it as demonstrated in the information provided at Appendices NJA/10 – NJA/12. As such, the application site has a long standing historic use, including new residential development. The proposal will make efficient use of land in accordance with Government and local planning policy without resulting in any harmful encroachment of built form into the open countryside.
- 6.63 The existing stable building to be removed is large and this will help to offset the new built form. For example, the external floor area of the stable to be removed is 144.54 sqm and the external floor area of the proposed dwelling is 133 sqm. This is not a significant increase in built form footprint on the site.

Design and Appearance

- 6.64 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).
- 6.65 Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the HDPF promote development that protects, conserves and enhances the landscape character from inappropriate development. Proposals should take into account landscape characteristics, with development seeking to provide an attractive, functional and accessible environment that complements the locally distinctive character of the district. Buildings should contribute to a sense of place, and should be of a scale, massing, and appearance that is of a high standard or design and layout which relates sympathetically to the landscape and built surroundings.
- 6.66 Policy RUS3 of the RNP states that proposals for new development must be of the highest design standards and will be required to reflect the character and scale of surrounding buildings. Proposals should, where appropriate, satisfactorily take account of the retention of key views of the street scene and out to the countryside.
- 6.67 The Council's reasons for refusal of application DC/24/1896 and the Case Officer's report have been taken into account in the redesigning of the proposed dwelling. None of the Council's reasons for refusal related specifically to the design of the dwelling but it is noted that the Case Officer's report raised concerns in respect of its siting, bulk, mass and scale and visibility from surrounding vantage points.
- 6.68 In particular, the Case Officer's report considered that the size of the proposed dwelling would compete with the principle frontage dwelling of Ashfolds and that **'due to its scale, bulk, massing and design'** would **'fail to reflect the built character and proportions of the nearby dwellings and the hierarchy of the site'**.
- 6.69 In response, the proposed dwelling has been reduced in scale so that it will not compete with Ashfolds in terms of its now more modest size including an altered and lowered roof design and re-orientation on the plot.

- 6.70 As a result, the proposed dwelling is of an appropriate and sympathetic design, scale and siting within the site to ensure that it will not appear as an unduly prominent feature within the countryside landscape or to views from the street scene. The dwelling is of a traditional barn style appearance with the first floor accommodation contained within the roof space of the dwelling. This provides a dwelling with a lower ridge height than previously proposed and one which would sit comfortably within the site.
- 6.71 The use of materials will be high quality, featuring timber cladding (above a brick plinth) and clay tiled roof which reflects the countryside setting and rural vernacular.
- 6.72 As set out, the dwelling will occupy land which has been previously developed. This coupled with the westward extent of development at the neighbouring business estate, Dial Post Park, would ensure that the development does not constitute an extension or encroachment of development into the countryside. As such, the layout of the development would be appropriate to this context.
- 6.73 Notwithstanding the above, given the sense of enclosure of the land around the site by way of the mature tree planting around

the boundaries, there would not be a material change to the overall character and appearance of the site when viewed from the public highway and footpath. On this basis, the proposed development is considered to accord with Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the HDPF.

Impact on Trees and Landscape

- 6.74 Policy 33 of the HDPF states that development should 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.
- 6.75 Policy RUS5 of the RNP states that proposals that protect, manage and enhance the rich natural features will be supported. Development proposals must ensure that the landscape schemes, layouts, access, and public open space provision contribute to the connectivity and maintenance of the Green Infrastructure Network where applicable.
- 6.76 The application site is defined for the most part by trees along the boundary, and this effectively screens the site from Horsham

Road and the public footpath to the north. The proposal would retain this vegetation, and operational development has been designed to stay outside the root protection areas of trees to be retained. Thus, the proposal would not affect the trees within and around the site and would not therefore have a material impact upon the landscape amenity and character of the surrounding area.

Residential amenity

- 6.77 Policy 32 of the HDPF states that development will be expected to provide an attractive, functional, accessible, safe, and adaptable environment that contributes a sense of place both in the buildings and spaces themselves.
- 6.78 Policy 33 of the HDPF continues that development shall be required to ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land.
- 6.79 The nearest residential dwellings are Dial Post Cottage to the northeast and the host dwelling, Ashfolds. The proposed dwelling has been appropriately positioned and orientated to ensure that it will not result in any harm to neighbouring

residential amenity including in respect of the host dwelling. A sufficient degree separation between the proposed dwelling and nearby dwellings will be provided and the construction of just one dwelling, will not result in any significant or harmful increase in noise and disturbance.

- 6.80 In respect of the living conditions of future occupiers of the proposed dwelling, the internal space is well laid out with high levels of natural lighting. Outside there will be ample, private amenity space and a high quality living environment will be provided. As no harm will be caused to neighbouring residential amenity, the proposal complies with HDPF policies 32 and 33.

Highways impact and Parking

- 6.81 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.
- 6.82 Policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF promote development that provides safe and adequate access, suitable for all users. Policy

RUS 11 of the RNP similarly requires that development should ensures safe access.

- 6.83 The proposal would result in a modest increase to the traffic generated by the site through the addition of just one, two bedroom dwelling. This would not result in a significant additional burden to the local road network. The plot is also arranged to ensure that vehicles could enter and exit the site in forward gear via the existing accesses, which provide suitable visibility. As such, the proposal would not result in harm to highways safety.
- 6.84 Although outside the defined built-up area, the site is just 800m from the Village Hall and Rusper Primary School, with pubs and other services just further. There are pavements leading into the village approximately 200m to the north, and as set out, there is a local bus stop outside of the application site and in the village.
- 6.85 It is reiterated that the proposal future occupiers of the dwellings would not be heavily reliant on the private car for transportation to and from the site with opportunities to walk and cycle into the village. This being the case, the development would be in a relatively sustainable location given the countryside context.

- 6.86 Sufficient space has been allocated to provide on-site parking for the new dwelling in accordance with adopted standards. There would also be sufficient space to include secure cycle storage to ensure that sustainable transport methods are promoted and encouraged.

Impact upon the Natural Environment and Biodiversity

- 6.87 NPPF paragraph 192 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. Similarly, HDPF policy 31 requires the protection and enhancement of biodiversity.
- 6.88 Policy RUS5 of the RNP sets out support for proposals that protect, manage and enhance the rich natural features of the Low Weald landscape and provide habitats for its diverse

species. All development should demonstrate biodiversity net gain for the Parish.

- 6.89 The application site comprises a former paddock with a sand school which is adjacent to a stable block and managed residential garden land at Ashfolds. Existing mature trees and planting around the site would be retained and enhanced by new planting including a wild meadow and new hedgerows.
- 6.90 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) (June 2025) and Bat Emergence Survey Report (July 2025) accompany this planning application and which are updated since the submission of application DC/24/1896 to address the Council's second reason for refusal.
- 6.91 The PEA confirms an initial impact assessment and recommendations are provided to reduce the proposed development's impact on wildlife as well as ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and planning policies. In particular, the PEA sets out the requirement to conduct bat surveys which have been carried out. The Bat Emergence Report confirms that following surveys of buildings 1 and 2 (the annexe and garage buildings at Ashfolds) no bats were found emerging from the buildings but activity was observed and

recorded around the gardens and to the west of the survey area. No further recommendations are made regarding further surveys or licencing.

- 6.92 The site is within the wildlife corridor area as shown in the RNP (Policy Map RUS5 C). The proposal would not interrupt the existing corridor and appropriate landscaping would ensure that the corridors are not interrupted as a result of the development.
- 6.93 The proposal is for a self-build dwelling, and given the site area, the proposal is exempt from the statutory biodiversity net gain requirements detailed in Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). Nevertheless, the enhancement measures detailed within the PEA would ensure that biodiversity net gain is achieved as promoted by the NPPF and Policy RUS5 of the RNP.

Water Neutrality

- 6.94 The application site falls within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone. Natural England issued a Position Statement in September 2021 for applications within this zone stating that it cannot be concluded with the required degree of certainty that new development in this zone would not have an adverse effect

on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites. Thus, development affecting sites where an existing adverse effect is known have previously been required to demonstrate that they will not contribute further to an existing adverse effect.

- 6.95 However, more recently, and since the determination of application DC/24/1896, Natural England has issued a Withdrawal Statement confirming that its Water Neutrality Statement of September 2021 has been withdrawn. As a result, Applicants are now no longer required to demonstrate that new residential development will be water neutral at planning application stage.

Climate Change

- 6.96 Policies 35, 36 and 37 of the HDPF require that development mitigates to the impacts of climate change through measures including improved energy efficiency, reducing flood risk, reducing water consumption, improving biodiversity and promoting sustainable transport modes. These policies reflect the requirements of Chapter 14 of the NPPF that Local Plans and decisions seek to reduce the impact of development on climate change.

- 6.97 The proposed dwelling is a Scandia Hus dwelling which are designed to be highly energy efficient and eco-friendly (please see Energy Statement). The Scandia Hus dwellings have a timber framed structure (sourced from sustainable forests) and triple glazed timber windows which help to create an air-tight structure with high levels of insulation and a resulting thermally efficient home.

- 6.98 The following will also be incorporated to reduce the impact of the development on climate change in accordance with local and national policies:

- full fibre broadband site connectivity
- dedicated refuse and recycling storage capacity
- cycle parking facilities and
- electric vehicle charging points

7.0 PLANNING BALANCE & CONCLUSION

7.1 This Statement supports the proposal for the construction of a barn style, self- build dwelling on land to the rear of Ashfolds, Horsham Road, Rusper.

7.2 Case law confirms when considering whether a proposal complies with a development plan, it is not necessary to say that it must accord with every policy of the development plan and the question is whether it accords with the development plan overall. In addition, paragraph 3 of the NPPF confirms that the Framework should be read as a 'whole' and the Government's Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) states that any conflicts between the development plan should be considered in light of all material planning considerations including local priorities and needs, as guided by the NPPF.

7.3 Therefore whilst the site is located outside of a built-up area boundary, it is necessary to consider the following aspects of the proposal in the planning balance:

- The Council's HDPF is over five years old and the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing as required by the NPPF. As a result, the Council's policies in

respect to the supply and location of new homes are out of date (HDPF policies 1, 2, 4, 4, 15 and 26) and the provisions of NPPF paragraph 11 d) and the tilted balance are engaged. This requires the proposal to be considered against the presumption in favour of the proposed development.

- In respect of NPPF paragraph 11 d) (i), there is no conflict in respect of protection of assets of particular importance. In respect of NPPF paragraph 11 d) (ii), the below confirms that there are no adverse impacts of granting planning permission that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the provision of a new home, of a high quality design in a sustainable location when assessed against the policies of the Framework as a whole.
- The proposal will make a small but important contribution towards windfall housing provision within the district. The cumulative provision of individual homes should not be under estimated as acknowledged by NPPF paragraph 73. The long term, continued lack of housing supply within the district undermines the Government's intentions to

'significantly boost' the supply of new homes (NPPF paragraph 61).

- NPPF paragraph 83 encourages the sustainable development of rural areas and sets out that housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Occupiers of the proposed dwelling will help to support local services and facilities within the rural community.
- NPPF paragraph 110 makes it clear that whilst the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth (and *significant* development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable), opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas. This should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making. The proposal is not for significant development and neither will it generate significant levels of vehicle movements.
- The application site is not located within isolated countryside the proposal will not result in unsustainable modes of travel, out of keeping with the character of the

area. The new dwelling will also not be remote from a settlement or other built form and it has been carefully designed to ensure that it is of a high quality construction and appearance and of an appropriate siting, height, scale and mass. As a result, there will be no harmful impact upon the rural character and appearance of Horsham Road or upon wider countryside views and special landscape qualities. The proposal does not conflict with HDPF policy 26 in this regard which seeks to protect the countryside from inappropriate development and it complies with HDPF policies 25, 32 and 33 and Neighbourhood Plan policy RUS3.

- The proposal makes effective use of PDL as encouraged by the HDPF and NPPF and an existing, large stable building will be removed. The proposal will not as a result in a significant increase in footprint built form on the application site. In addition, no harm will be caused to neighbouring residential amenity, ecology matters are appropriately addressed and the Council is no longer requiring Applicants to demonstrate water neutrality at planning application stage.

- The proposed dwelling is a self-build home, the provision of which is supported by the NPPF paragraph 63. This considers the need to provide a variety of size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community and including people wishing to commission or build their own homes. The provision of self-build/custom-build homes play an important role in the provision of new homes, offering choice and variety within the housing market and helping to meet housing need.

7.4 This Statement demonstrates that the proposal has addressed the Council's reasons for refusal of application DC/24/1896 and there are no adverse impacts of granting planning permission that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of a new home in a sustainable location which will make a small but important contribution towards the supply of much needed new homes within the district. Therefore, in accordance with paragraphs 11 and 39 of the NPPF and HDPF policy 1, planning permission should be granted for the sustainable development proposed.