



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/0414

Land To The West of Horsham Road, Horsham Road, Steyning, BN44 3AA

DESCRIPTION:

Creation of new access to Kilham Barn and adjoining residential property.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/21/0933

Prior Approval for the erection of an agricultural building.

Prior Approval Not Required
on 11.06.2021

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site comprises approximately 0.31 hectares of land situated to the west of the B2135 Horsham Road and to the south of the applicants' residential property. It forms part of a wider agricultural holding and has historically been used for the storage of agricultural equipment and for the production and storage of hay bales, functioning as a central operational area for the farm.

The site currently obtains access from an existing track directly from Horsham Road, which is shared with Calcot Farm under an easement arrangement. The existing access serves agricultural machinery, Kilham Barn (approved under reference DC/21/0933) and the associated residential property. The site is located in a rural countryside setting, approximately 1.5 miles north of Steyning.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

Creation of a new vehicular access from Horsham Road (B2135) to serve Kilham Barn, associated agricultural land and the adjoining residential property, including installation of an access gate and associated works.

The proposal is for a new private farm and residential access directly from Horsham Road. The access would serve the agricultural building, farmland and dwelling within the applicants' ownership and provide a safe and reliable year-round means of access.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):

Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development

Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character

Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection

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 37 - Sustainable Construction

Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport

Neighbourhood Plan:

The Steyning Neighbourhood Plan was formally made at Full Council on Thursday 7 September 2022.
SNDP1 – Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity
SNDP3 – Contribution to Character

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (2017)
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (2017)

Parish Design Statement:

Planning Advice Notes:

Facilitating Appropriate Development
Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

REPRESENTATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES

Where consultation responses have been summarised, it should be noted that Officers have had consideration of the full comments received, which are available to view on the public file at www.horsham.gov.uk

Consultations:

HDC Arboricultural officer: No Objection

No arboricultural concerns. The development proposal incurs the loss of a section of native roadside hedgerow. This removal could be mitigated by replacement planting with native species if acceptable in other landscape impact terms.

The nearest mature oak tree, within the property curtilage, will not foreseeably be indirectly impacted upon by the required engineering works and associated process.

Ecology Consultant: Objection

Reviewed the Protected Species Walkover Survey (AEWC Ltd., December 2025), relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected and Priority species and habitats and the identification of proportionate mitigation.

Not satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available for determination of this application and recommend that further information on Hazel Dormouse is required to make this proposal acceptable prior to determination.

Re-consultation received (23.07.2026): No Objection

Reviewed the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy and Protected Species Walkover Survey (AEWC, July 2026) and is satisfied that sufficient ecological information has been provided to determine the application. Previous concerns regarding potential impacts on hazel dormouse have been addressed through additional information and a precautionary method statement, and the proposed mitigation measures are considered adequate.

Supports the precautionary measures for reptiles and other mobile protected and Priority species, including hedgehogs, and recommends these are secured by planning condition and implemented in full. Subject to the recommended mitigation measures, the development is not expected to result in unacceptable impacts on designated sites, protected species, or Priority habitats, and can be considered acceptable in ecological terms.

NatureSpace: No Objection

Considers that, although further survey work for great crested newts (GCN) is not required given the applicant's confirmation that the slurry pit remains in active use, precautionary measures are necessary because of the proximity and connectivity of ponds to the north of the site.

Recommend that an informative be attached to any planning permission reminding the applicant of their legal obligations regarding GCN under wildlife legislation, and that works cease should GCN be encountered. In addition, mitigation measures should be implemented throughout construction, including maintaining vegetation at a maximum height of 30mm, storing demolition materials in skips rather than on the ground, covering or ramping any open trenches overnight, and storing building materials on pallets to reduce the likelihood of GCN using the site for shelter or becoming trapped.

WSCC Highways: More Information

Reviewed the proposed new access onto Horsham Road and raised concerns regarding visibility. Based on recorded 85th percentile traffic speeds of approximately 51mph, DMRB CD109 guidance requires visibility splays of around 151-152m using "Desirable Minimum" standards. The submitted scheme demonstrates visibility splays of only 116-117m, assessed against "Absolute Minimum" standards. The LHA has therefore requested further information on whether greater visibility can be achieved at the proposed access without relying on third-party land and has also asked for the maximum achievable visibility at the existing access point to enable a comparison of highway safety impacts.

Re-consultation received (03.08.2026): No Objection

In summary, the LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 116), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Representations:

None Received

Parish Comments:

Steyping Parish Council: No Objection

Member Comments:

None received

HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY:

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

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

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development:

The application site lies outside the defined built-up area and is therefore situated within the countryside for planning policy purposes. Policy 26 of the HDPF seeks to protect the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside from inappropriate development. The Policy requires development outside built-up area boundaries to be essential to its countryside location and to satisfy one of a number of identified criteria, which expressly include development that supports the needs of agriculture. Development must also be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location, avoid a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside, and protect, conserve and/or enhance the key characteristics of the relevant landscape character area.

Currently the site relies upon an existing entrance from Horsham Road which is also used by Calcot Farm under an easement arrangement as stated within the Planning Statement. The site requires vehicles to cross a substantial area of land without the benefit of a defined access track in order to reach the barn.

The proposed access would provide a safe, dependable and properly constructed year-round route between Horsham Road, the agricultural land and Kilham Barn.

The proposed development is directly associated with an established agricultural holding and is required to provide an independent and reliable means of access to Kilham Barn, the adjoining agricultural land and the applicants' residential property.

Kilham Barn benefits from prior approval for an agricultural barn under reference DC/21/0933 which is currently under construction, to provide covered storage for agricultural machinery, vehicles and hay bales currently stored outdoors. The proposed access is therefore intended to provide access to this building and would serve the the continued operation of the established agricultural enterprise and the effective use of an authorised agricultural building.

Accordingly, the proposed development is considered acceptable in principle. The proposal therefore accords with Policies 10 and 26 of the HDPF and with the NPPF's support for sustainable rural and agricultural businesses.

Design and Appearance:

Policy 26 of the HDPF seeks to protect the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside. Development outside defined built-up area boundaries should be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location and should protect, conserve and/or enhance the key features and characteristics of the landscape.

Policies 25, 32 and 33 of the HDPF seek to ensure that development promotes a high standard and quality of design in order to enhance and protect locally distinctive characters. The policies also seek to ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of development relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the skyline and important views

The proposed development is modest in its nature and extent and comprises the formation of a new vehicular access from Horsham Road, together with an associated access track and gate. The proposal would involve the partial removal of the roadside hedging.

The proposed gate would measure approximately 5 metres in width and would be of a form and appearance comparable with other agricultural field accesses and gates found along Horsham Road and throughout the surrounding countryside. The width is required for operational purposes linked with the agricultural holding, allowing tractors, trailers and other agricultural machinery to safely enter and leave the site. The gate would be set back approximately 12 metres from the carriageway edge, allowing agricultural vehicles towing trailers to leave the B2135 before stopping to operate the gate. The access would be surfaced with non-migratory material, thereby providing an appropriate and functional rural access while preventing loose material from being carried onto the highway. The partial removal of the hedgerow is not considered to result in significant harm to the rural character and visual amenity of the rural locality.

As such, having regard to the limited scale of the works, their agricultural purpose and the established rural character of the locality, the proposal would not result in an urbanising or visually intrusive form of development. The proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside and is therefore considered to accord with Policies 25, 26, 32, and 33 of the HDPF and the relevant provisions of the NPPF concerning good design and the protection of the natural environment.

Residential Amenity:

Policy 33 of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.

There are no third-party residential properties in close proximity to the proposed access, with the applicants' property being the nearest dwelling. Accordingly, having regard to the nature of the development, the existing agricultural use of the site and the separation from neighbouring residential properties, the proposal would not result in unacceptable impacts through noise, disturbance, loss of privacy or other effects upon residential amenity. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in residential amenity terms and would, through the separation of existing vehicle movements, provide an improvement over the existing shared-access arrangement.

Highways Impacts:

Policy 40 and 41 of the HDPF seeks to direct development to areas which are integrated with sustainable transport networks, encourage sustainable transport choices and ensure that new development is safe for all modes of transport, including vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. In addition, proposals should minimise conflict between traffic, cyclists and pedestrians.

The highway implications of the development have been considered in detail through the submitted Technical Note, visibility-splay information and swept-path analysis. The Locals Highways Authority (LHA) has subsequently reviewed the amended information. The existing access is a single-width residential and agricultural entrance which does not enable tractors and private vehicles to pass simultaneously. This can result in vehicles having to wait for the access to become clear. Furthermore, the submitted highway evidence identifies that the existing access is constrained in visibility terms.

The proposed access has been positioned at a location capable of providing materially improved visibility. The LHA consultation response confirms that visibility splays of approximately 2.4m x 115.9m to the north and 2.4m x 116.6m to the south would be available at the proposed access point. Importantly, the LHA confirms that these splays can be provided either within maintained highway land or land within the applicants' control.

The LHA expressly considers this to represent an improvement over the existing access arrangement. This is an important material consideration in favour of the proposal. Rather than simply creating an additional point of access onto Horsham Road, the scheme would redistribute existing vehicle movements to an access at which substantially improved visibility can be secured and maintained.

The suitability of the access for the vehicles likely to use it has also been demonstrated through vehicle swept-path analysis. The LHA has reviewed these drawings and confirms that they demonstrate that a variety of different vehicle types can safely access and egress the site. The proposal would not generate a material increase in vehicle movements. Instead, it would redistribute existing trips associated with the applicants' agricultural land, Kilham Barn and dwelling from the existing shared entrance to the proposed dedicated access.

The development is therefore considered to provide safe and adequate access, in accordance with Policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF.

Ecology:

Policy 31 of the HDPF, Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity, seeks to maintain and enhance the District's biodiversity and green infrastructure. Development proposals should protect existing

biodiversity features and avoid adverse impacts upon habitats and protected species, with appropriate mitigation provided where necessary.

The application is supported by a Protected Species Walkover Survey prepared by AEWC in December 2025, which assesses the site for the potential presence of protected species, species of conservation concern and habitats of conservation importance.

The ecological assessment identifies the site as largely comprising grassland and an area of unsealed hardstanding, with native hedgerows along the eastern and northern boundaries. Having considered the habitats present and their potential to support protected species, the assessment concludes that no further ecological surveys are required.

Notwithstanding this conclusion, appropriate precautionary measures are recommended during construction. These include the preparation and implementation of a precautionary working method statement in respect of hazel dormouse and reptiles. Further recommendations include minimising and carefully controlling lighting, undertaking any necessary hedgerow clearance outside the breeding bird period and following good construction practice.

The development has been designed to minimise impacts upon existing ecological features. The submitted topographical survey confirms that no significant trees or hedgerows would be adversely affected by the proposal. Furthermore, no new external lighting is proposed or required, thereby avoiding unnecessary illumination of boundary vegetation and limiting potential disturbance to nocturnal wildlife.

Subject to the implementation of the precautionary measures identified within the ecological assessment, the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact upon protected species or habitats of ecological importance. The development is therefore considered acceptable in ecological terms and accords with Policy 31 of the HDPF.

Water Neutrality:

There is no clear or compelling evidence to suggest the nature and scale of the proposed development would result in a more intensive occupation of the site necessitating an increased consumption of water that would result in a significant impact on the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The grant of planning permission would not therefore adversely affect the integrity of these sites or otherwise conflict with policy 31 of the HDPF, NPPF paragraph 193 and the Council's obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):

Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) mandates that every development must achieve at least a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) (unless the development qualifies as exempt under the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024) and that every planning permission granted for the development of land in England shall be deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that development must not be begun unless a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority and the planning authority has approved the Plan.

The Biodiversity Gain Plan must show how the development will achieve the required minimum 10% BNG using the statutory biodiversity metric tool and must demonstrate how the habitats will be managed and maintained for 30 years, starting from the date the development is completed. Off-site gains (on unregistered sites) and significant on-site enhancements will be secured over this period by way of a Legal Agreement.

The application is supported by a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment prepared by AEWC, dated December 2025, together with the relevant Biodiversity Metric. The assessment calculates the pre-development and post-development biodiversity value of the site using the Defra Statutory Biodiversity

The proposed development incorporates on-site habitat creation and enhancement measures. These include the planting of approximately 50 metres of new native hedgerow and the enhancement of approximately 0.2 hectares of modified grassland along the eastern boundary from poor to moderate condition.

The grassland enhancement would be achieved through re-seeding and appropriate ongoing management to improve its species diversity. The submitted BNG Assessment confirms that the proposed measures are sufficient to offset the loss of baseline habitats arising from the development and that the applicable biodiversity metric trading rules have been satisfied.

The statutory metric demonstrates that the development would achieve an estimated 13.91% net gain in habitat units. In addition, the hedgerow calculation identifies an increase of 0.14 hedgerow units, equivalent to a 10.22% net gain.

The development would therefore deliver measurable biodiversity enhancement within the application site, with both habitat and hedgerow gains exceeding the 10% biodiversity net gain requirement. The proposed habitat creation and enhancement measures would ensure that the ecological value of the site is improved as a consequence of the development.

Accordingly, the proposal would achieve the required Biodiversity Net Gain through on-site measures and is considered acceptable in biodiversity terms.

Conclusions:

The proposed access is considered acceptable in principle and would support the continued operation of the agricultural holding while providing a safer and more practical access arrangement. The development would preserve the rural character and appearance of the area and would not result in harm to residential amenity or ecology. The scheme would also deliver the required Biodiversity Net Gain. The LHA raises no objection, concluding that the proposed access represents an improvement over the existing arrangement and would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety. Overall, the proposal accords with the relevant policies of the HDPF and the NPPF, and planning permission should therefore be granted.

Recommendation: Application Permitted

- 2 **Standard Time Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 3 **Pre-Commencement Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (the HMMP), prepared in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan and including:

- (a) a non-technical summary;
- (b) the planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan; and
- (c) the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan from the completion of development.

has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

The created and/or enhanced habitat specified in the approved HMMP shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved HMMP. Any proposed or retained planting, which within a period of 5 years after the completion of development, dies, is removed, or becomes seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 4 **Regulatory Condition:** The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall strictly accord with those indicated on the application form and approved plans.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 5 **Regulatory Condition:** No external lighting or floodlighting shall be installed other than with the permission of the Local Planning Authority by way of formal application.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the locality and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 6 **Regulatory Condition:** All mitigation measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy (AEWC, July 2026) and the Protected Species Walkover Survey (AEWC, July 2026) as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

This will include the appointment of an appropriately competent person e.g. an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) to provide on-site ecological expertise during construction. The appointed person shall undertake all activities, and works shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To conserve protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

NOTE TO APPLICANT

Biodiversity Net Gain Condition

Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the "biodiversity gain condition" which means development granted by this notice must not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission is Horsham District Council.

This permission will require the submission and approval of a Biodiversity Gain Plan before development is begun.

For guidance on the contents of the Biodiversity Gain Plan that must be submitted and agreed by the Council prior to the commencement of the consented development please see the link:

[Submit a biodiversity gain plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain).

Statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These can be found at Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 74-003-20240214 of the Planning Practice Guidance, which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>.

Irreplaceable habitat

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans.

NOTE TO APPLICANT

The applicant is advised that in addition to obtaining planning permission that they must also obtain formal approval from the highway authority to carry out the site access works on the public highway. The granting of planning permission does not guarantee that a vehicle crossover licence shall be granted because the highway license process considers wider factors than are considered by the Highway Authority at planning stage.

Additional information about the licence application process can be found at the following web page:

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-network-permits-and-licences/highway-licences/west-sussex-county-council-licences/dropped-kerbs-or-vehicle-crossovers-for-driveways/>

NOTE TO APPLICANT

The applicant is reminded that, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to (amongst other things): deliberately capture, disturb, injure, or kill great crested newts; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place. Planning permission for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. Should great crested newts be found at any stage of the development works, then all works should cease, and a professional and/or suitably qualified and experienced ecologist (or Natural England) should be contacted for advice on any special precautions before continuing, including the need for a licence.

Additionally, all vegetation within the works area shall be maintained at a maximum height of 30mm until construction is completed through regular mowing or grazing in order to discourage great crested newts from using the site. All works shall be carried out in accordance with the following measures:

- Any demolition materials should be stored in skips or similar containers rather than in piles on ground
- Any trenches left overnight should be covered or provided with ramps to prevent great crested newts from becoming trapped.
- Any building materials such as bricks, stone etc. should be stored on pallets to discourage great crested newts from using them as shelter.

POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

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

Plans list for: DC/26/0414

(The approved plans will form Condition 1 on the Decision Notice of all Permitted applications)

Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Supporting Statement	Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy by Animal Ecology & Wildlife	25-086-BES-V1	07.07.2026

