Ms S Kausar
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Our ref: DC/24/1100
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Date: 10 March 2025

Dear Ms Kausar,

APP/Z3825/W/25/3358288 - Springfield Spring Gardens, Washington, PULBOROUGH, RH20 3BS

Following the submission of the appeal against the refusal of the full application for the use of a building as an agricultural barn, the Local Planning Authority would refer the Inspector to the Delegated Report, and would like to reiterate the reasons for refusal as follows.

Refusal Reason 1

"It has not been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that there is an essential need for the development, nor that the development has been designed to meet the needs of an agricultural use. The development would therefore be contrary to Policy 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)."

The Appellant's Statement of Case outlines that the agricultural barn is essential to the countryside location given the ongoing and long-established agricultural activities taking place on site and the wider holding, and that the barn would support the needs of agriculture, providing secure and dry storage for numerous and expensive equipment. The building is to be used for agricultural purposes only associated with the storage of equipment and machinery to be used for the maintenance and working of farmland under the ownership and leased by the Appellant.

The Appellant's Statement of Case continues that the Appellant farms an area of approximately 150 acres, primarily located to the north of the barn. The activities include the production of wheat, barley, maize, potatoes, straw and hay. The Appellant also has approximately 300 ewes. A portion of the goods produced by the Appellant is sold and/or used/processed for sale at the nearby Spring Garden Nursery Farm Shop to the east of the appeal site.

The Appellant's Statement of Case outlines that existing equipment and machinery is generally stored outside currently. The barn is orientated with the main access into the barn to the northern elevation, where the appeal barn can be accessed from the south via an existing access track and north via fields/paddocks with sufficient space available for tractors to manoeuvre. The barn is connected to the wider holding through established tracks and field accesses and these are sufficiently wide enough to provide access around the holding for tractors and larger equipment. Some of this equipment is also currently stored off-site. The Statement of Case concludes that it is not unreasonable to require storage of machinery close to where it is intended to be used. The subject building and wider holding would be appropriately accessible, with the barn being of an appropriate size and serving its intended purpose as agricultural storage.

Policy 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) states that outside built-up area boundaries, the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside will be protected against

inappropriate development. Any proposal must be essential to its countryside location, and in addition meet one of the following criteria: support the needs of agriculture or forestry; enable the extraction of minerals or the disposal of waste; provide for quiet informal recreational use; or enable the sustainable development of rural areas. In addition, proposals must be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location. Development will be considered acceptable where it does not lead, either individually or cumulatively, to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside, and protects, and/or conserves, and/or enhances, the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area in which it is located.

Policy ASH1 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan states that development proposals outside the built-up area boundary and the site allocations will not be permitted unless, among other things, they represent appropriate uses in the countryside, such as agriculture.

The Appellant has provided further information, in the form of annotated maps showing the location of farm accesses and the equipment being stored. Most of the equipment is located on land outside of the blue line indicating the land ownership of the Appellant, with some of the equipment seeming to be housed within a lean-to store and agricultural building. This information provides some context to the agricultural needs of the Appellant, with confirmation of the accesses available to manoeuvre equipment from the northern side of the barn to the wider land holding. On this basis, it is considered that sufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that the barn benefits from suitable access to the wider land holding, with the supplementary information also demonstrating the equipment and machinery and their current location. Based upon the additional information submitted, it is considered that the barn would meet the agricultural needs of the holding, in accordance with the above policy. Subject to the further information provided, the Council do not therefore wish to defend the reason for refusal.

It is however noted that the subject building currently includes a mezzanine level and associated facilities such as a kitchenette, office, and toilet/wash facilities. These are not shown on the proposed plans and would require removal in order to accord with the approved plans. The Inspector is requested to consider whether a condition could be reasonably applied to require this.

Yours sincerely,

Tamara Dale
Applications Team
Horsham District Council

List of Suggested Conditions

1 **Approved Plans**

2 **Regulatory Condition**: The building development hereby permitted shall be used for agricultural purposes only, as defined in Section 336(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Reason: The site lies in a countryside location where only development types specified in Policy 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) would normally be permitted.