



**READING
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Your Ref: DC/25/1023
Our Ref: 10841-aj

11 August 2025

For the attention of Alice Johnson

Horsham District Council
Albery House
Springfield Road
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 2GB

Dear Ms Johnson,

Site: Danefold House, Littleworth Lane, Partridge Green, West Sussex, RH13 8NA.
Application: DC/25/1023
Proposal: Relocation of existing farm yard manure storage, construction of a silage clamp and construction of a slurry lagoon incorporating importation and use of materials and all associated engineering works.

Thank you for your instruction dated 4 August 2025 requesting Reading Agricultural Consultants Ltd (RAC) comments on the above planning application.

In preparing this response I have had regard to:

- the application form and associated plans;
- a Planning Statement (PS) (undated); and
- the refused Prior Approval application DC/24/1873.

I have not visited the site or discussed the application with the applicant or the agent.

Background

1. Danefold Farm extends to 80 hectares (197 acres) which is used for livestock grazing and arable crop production.
2. The Planning Statement details that the applicant, Mr O Martin, currently keeps a herd of 240 cattle on site but that he is intending to increase numbers.



Reading Agricultural Consultants Ltd

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3. It is detailed in the PS that the Environment Agency found the farm to be non-compliant with the Water Resources (Control of Pollution) (Silage, Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil) (England) Regulations 2010 (SSAFO) in October 2024.
4. The current farm yard manure (FYM) store and slurry management system has been found to be a potential hazard which requires the replacement of the storage facilities.
5. The Prior Notification application (DC/24/1873) was refused as the proposed storage facilities would be sited within 400m of a protected building, being Eugenia House.
6. The applicant proposes the relocation of the FYM store and slurry lagoon and the construction of a silage clamp.
7. The PS details the engineering works required as part of the decommissioning and deconstruction and the relocation and construction of the new facilities with all materials brought onto site to be in compliance with the CL:aire DoWCoP protocol.

Relevant Planning Policies

8. National planning policy guidance for development in the countryside is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) updated in December 2024.
9. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out the core land-use planning principles that should be adopted and these expressly include:
 - A presumption in favour of sustainable development;
 - Positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of the area and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change;
 - Provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses;
 - Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; and,
 - Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission.
10. Section 4 requires that decision makers:
 - should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way; work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic; social and environmental conditions of the area;
 - seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
11. Section 6 of the NPPF is concerned with 'Building a strong, competitive economy' and at paragraph 85 it notes:

"planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt..."
12. At paragraph 88 'Supporting a prosperous rural economy' it notes:

"Planning policies and decisions should enable:

 - a) *The sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*

b) The development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses;...”

13. Policy 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (excluding South Downs National Park) deals with countryside protection and enhancement and states:

“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:

- 1. support the needs of agriculture or forestry;*
- 2. enable the extraction of minerals or the disposal of waste;*
- 3. provide for quiet informal recreational use; or,*
- 4. 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, including:

- 1. the development pattern of the area, its historical and ecological qualities, tranquillity and sensitivity to change;*
- 2. the pattern of woodlands, fields, hedgerows, trees, waterbodies and other features; and*
- 3. the landform of the area.”*

Appraisal

14. It is detailed that the current FYM storage and slurry lagoon at Danefold Farm requires replacement in line with SSAFO regulations, and that the Environment Agency considers the farm to be non-compliant with the current manure storage facilities.

15. It is understood that the applicant currently wraps silage bales in plastic and this is becoming uneconomical. RAC considers that the provision of a modern silage clamp will be a cost saving for the applicant, in addition to being more environmentally friendly and reducing the amount of plastic waste produced on the farm which is a potential hazard.

16. The proposed development has been designed with guidance from the Environment Agency and Catchment Sensitive Farming Officers.

17. RAC considers that the replacement FYM storage facilities and slurry lagoon facilities and the proposed silage clamp are appropriately designed for the agricultural activities on site and will allow for an expansion in farm livestock .

I trust these comments are helpful in your deliberations.

Yours sincerely,

Olivia Wojniak