

Planning Statement

Including Flood Risk Assessment, Transport Statement & Energy Statement

For change of use of part of former agricultural and yard to commercial storage and bagging area.

at

Calcot Farm, Horsham Road,
Steyping, West Sussex, BN44 3AA



Date: 12th June 2026

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1. Executive Summary

- Skinner Holden Property Advisors have been instructed by Mr Richard Jesse to submit a planning application for the change of use of 161 metres² of an agricultural building and 179 metres² of an agricultural yard at Calcot Farm , Horsham Road, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3AA from an agricultural use to the bagging and storage and distribution of surplus soil improver (B2/B8).
- This Planning Statement is part of a comprehensive application. All the documentation has been provided for a full planning application.
- The site is within a large, multifaceted family farming enterprises in countryside around Calcot Farm, in the south of the Horsham District.
- As demonstrated and detailed in sections 6 and 7 of this Planning Statement, this application complies with Horsham Local Plan policies.
- The change of use of former agricultural building and adjacent yard to a bagging plant and distribution of surplus soil improver, at Calcot Farm, Horsham Road, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3AA is an appropriate development for this location and complies with the planning policies of the Horsham Local Plan.



Iain Skinner BSc(Hons), FRICS, FALA, MAPM.



RICS®



2 Planning Agent

- 2.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Iain Skinner BSc(Hons) FRICS, FALA, MAPM. Iain studied Agriculture at West Sussex College of Agriculture and Estate Management at the University of East London and gained an honours degree in Rural Enterprise and Land Management at Harper Adams University in Shropshire followed by intensive modules at master's level in planning and expert witness work.

He qualified as a Chartered Surveyor in 1995 whilst working at Freeth Melhuish in St Albans. In 2021 Iain became a Fellow of the RICS and in 2022 a Fellow of the Agricultural Law Association.

Iain's experience has included advising on and applying for planning permission for projects with the Ministry of Defence, Forestry England and Surrey County Council, as well as for private clients across England. Iain is now Principal of Skinner Holden Property Advisors and Planning Consultants, providing planning, valuation and strategic property advice to charities, trusts, government departments, companies and individuals across Southern England.

3 Introduction to the planning application

- 3.1 This report has been prepared to accompany the submission of a full planning application by Skinner Holden Property Advisors, on behalf of the Mr Richard Jesse, to Horsham District Council, for change of use of part of an agricultural building and yard at Calcot Farm, Horsham Road, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3AA, to a site for the storage of bagging equipment and bags for the bagging and distribution of surplus agricultural soil improver(B2/B8) as shown on the Site Plan included in this application.
- 3.2 The planning application addresses:
- The Background to the application.
 - The size and scale of the yard
 - The access arrangements of the development
 - Flood risk assessment
 - Transport
 - Other matters that the Horsham District Council require to be covered in a full application.
- 3.3 This Planning Statement outlines how the proposals are consistent with existing planning policies.

4. Background

- 4.1 Calcot Farm has been owned and managed by the Jesse family for over 50 years. Until about 5 years ago, Calcot Farm was integrated into the farming systems of New Wharf Farm, Upper Northover Farm and Northover Manor Farm. The family ran a 200+ cow dairy herd, producing bulk milk sold to one of the national milk processing firms, beef cattle and stores.

Calcot Manor Farm was where the beef cattle were raised and continue to be. Co-operation between the brothers and the farming operations remains close to this day.

- 4.2 Calcot farm is now highly diversified. The farm buildings have been used for (and obtained planning permission for) various commercial uses in the interim period.
- 4.3 The applicant has agreed, subject to planning permission, to work with Sussex Manures to improve the soils on his and his brothers' farms by using manure on the fields.
- 4.4 The site will only bag and distribute the surplus agricultural soil improver that is not suitable for agricultural use on the family holdings.

4.5 Statutory Designations

- 4.5.i The site is within the SSSI Impact Risk Zone of Chanctonbury Hill (4.4km) and Beeding to Newtimber Hill(5.5km) SSSIs.
- 4.5.ii The nearest listed buildings is Northover Manor (180m to curtilage, 190m to the Manor). The location of the agricultural building and yard is shielded from this property by distance, woodland and natural features.

5. The Proposals

- 5.1 This full planning application is for the change of use of 161 metres² of agricultural building and 179 metres² of agricultural yard at Calcot Farm, Horsham Road, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3AA, from agriculture to the, bagging storage and distribution of agricultural soil improver (within use class B2/8) and the siting of a mobile bagging plant, as shown in the photographs below.



The mobile bagging plant measures 3m wide by 6m long and stands 4m high. It will be located within the building.

The bagging plant will be loaded by a JCB Loadall or similar telehandler or tractor with front loader.

The bags used will be 1m³, four panel bulk bags moved with the same lifting equipment and some palletted bags.

- 5.2 The bagging plant likely to be operating for up to one day per week for up to 6 months. Deliveries will be with flatbed light vehicles of up to 3.5 tonne (Such as a Ford Transit). Deliveries will be made between Monday to Friday, 08:30 to 17:00 and occasionally on Saturdays. These will be as and when required.



- 5.3



The racking, shown here, will be inside the building and used to store the bagged product.

6. How the change of use of 161 metres² of building and 179 metres² of yard at Calcot Farm, from an agricultural use to the bagging, storage and distribution surplus soil improver (within use class B2/B8), complies with the Horsham Local Plan.

Policies are typed in italic Times New Roman font. Comments are in Arial font.

6.1 Horsham District Council formally submitted the Local Plan and supporting documents to the Planning Inspectorate. On Friday 16th December 2024 this process was paused by the Planning Inspector pending further information. No updates have yet been provided. The policies in the current plan are considered below.

6.1.1 The new Labour Government has made several statements regarding a new National Planning Policy Framework. On 30 July MHCLG launched a consultation on reforms to the NPPF. This was accompanied by a Written Ministerial Statement which made clear the Government's goal for universal coverage of ambitious local plans as quickly as possible.

In recognition that local authorities across England will have plans at various stages of development, transitional arrangements have been proposed in the consultation document. The transitional arrangements seek to balance keeping plans progressing to adoption with making sure they provide for sufficient new housing.

Proposed transitional arrangements will vary according to the stage the plan has reached within one month of publication of the revised version of the NPPF.

Plans at examination will be allowed to continue (and will be examined under the same version of the NPPF they were prepared under). However, where there is a significant gap of more than 200 dwellings between the plan's housing requirement and the new local housing need figure, authorities will be expected to begin a new plan at the earliest opportunity in the new system.

6.1.2. It is useful to consider the overarching objectives of the Current Local Plan. The relevant ones are:

Objectives

1. *Ensure that future development in the district is based on sustainable development principles that strike the correct balance between economic, social and environmental priorities and delivers living, working and balanced communities which contribute to community cohesion.*
2. *To meet employment needs, create opportunities to foster economic growth and regeneration, and maintain high employment levels in the district which help reduce commuting distances.*
5. *To promote a living and working rural economy where employment opportunities exist which reduce the need for residents to travel, including reducing commuting distances, and facilitate and promote innovation in business including such as high speed broadband.*

6.2 **Policy 7 - Strategic Policy: Economic Growth**

Sustainable employment development in Horsham district for the period up to 2031 will be achieved by;

- 2. Redevelopment, regeneration, intensification and smart growth of existing employment sites.*
- 3. The formation and development of small, start-up and move-on businesses, as well as home working and home based businesses, by encouraging provision of small units through development proposals.*
- 9. Identifying additional employment areas to meet the need for appropriate new business activity.*

6.2.a Calcot Farm has a mix of agricultural and commercial uses since the demise of the dairy farm on the site. The re-use of the existing infrastructure saves on the carbon and related emissions of new development.

The re-use of the agricultural building and small area of the yard creates a small area of commercial use, which are few and far between in Southeast England. This demand is borne out by Carter Jonas's 2024 Open Storage Update. There is an increase in demand, particularly for secondary sites; at the same time many secondary sites are being lost to residential development.

The scale of the change of use is ideal for a small start-up company, or one relocating to the area, such as the bagging operation of Sussex Manures.

The new use will facilitate the provision of a useful product to the horticultural and landscape businesses, within Horsham District and neighbouring districts, reducing overall travelling road miles. This operation, also supports the provision of a cost effective and sustainable solution for the management of horse manure from numerous equestrian businesses in Sussex and South Surrey.

6.3 **Policy 9 - Employment Development**

"This policy also seeks to ensure that there is flexibility in accommodating business needs in terms of commercial floorspace and allows for the development of small businesses which are playing an increasingly important part in creating a sustainable local economy."

Provision of small, start-up and move-on business units will be supported to enable them to reach their fullest potential.

6.3.a The scale of the change of use is ideal for a small start-up company, or one relocating to the area, such as the bagging of surplus soil improver of Sussex Manures.

The new use will help facilitate the sustainable management of horse manure from professional and leisure equestrian sites within Horsham District, reducing travelling road miles.



6.4 **Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development**

“Maintaining the rural economy through appropriate development will be considered positively where it can be shown to support the meeting of rural community needs, and enabling the rural towns and villages in the district to remain self sufficient and economically vibrant.”

“There is an ongoing need to maintain enhance the rural economy. This includes diversification of rural employment space and maximising visit spending through tourism across the district. The diversification of the use of farm buildings for communities and rural businesses will play a role in allowing local economies to continue to grow and expand and change to meet modern demands. This diversification allows for the positive reuse of buildings along with the sustainable use of resources which has less impact on the rural landscape.”

Sustainable rural economic development and enterprise within the district will be encouraged in order to generate local employment opportunities and economic, social and environmental benefits for local communities.

In the countryside, development which maintains the quality and character of the area, whilst sustaining its varied and productive social and economic activity will be supported in principle. Any development should be appropriate to the countryside location and must:

- 1. Contribute to the diverse and sustainable farming enterprises within the district or, in the case of other countryside-based enterprises and activities, contribute to the wider rural economy and/or promote recreation in, and the enjoyment of, the countryside; and either*
 - a. Be contained wherever possible within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion or, in the case of an established rural industrial estate, within the existing boundaries of the estate; or*
 - b. Result in substantial environmental improvement and reduce the impact on the countryside particularly if there are exceptional cases where new or replacement buildings are involved. New buildings or development in the rural area will be acceptable provided that it supports sustainable economic growth towards balanced living and working communities and criteria a) has been considered first.*
- 2. Demonstrate that car parking requirements can be accommodated satisfactorily within the immediate surrounds of the buildings, or an alternative, logical solution is proposed.*

Proposals for the conversion of rural buildings to business and commercial uses will be considered favourably over residential in the first instance.

- 6.4.a The re-use of the agricultural building and yard for the bagging and distribution of soil improver reduces road miles for collection and delivery and will make it more likely that operators are employed from the local area.

The loss of the financial viability of the dairy operation has left the Jesse without a sustainable use for the whole yard. The re-use of the compound will help to diversify the financial income of the business.

The enterprise brings flexible part time work to the area, particularly suited to farmers and farm workers.

The proposals are for a commercial use rather than a residential use.

6.5 Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection

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.*

6.5.a The proposed use is an appropriate re-use of redundant agricultural facilities, preventing the need for significant carbon emissions involved in the construction of new facilities.

6.5.b Usually only light vehicle will be used to transport surplus bagged soil improver out of the property, up to 3.5 tonne flatbed (Such as Ford Transits). Vehicle movements will be between 08:30 and 17:00 on Monday to Fridays and occasionally on Saturday mornings.

6.5.c on a normal day of deliveries there could be one vehicle running three return trips per day. In busy periods of early autumn and spring there may be days when two vehicles are used.

6.5.d Visibility from the access to Calcot Farm is excellent, as shown below:



Horsham Road looking North



Horsham Road looking South



6.7 Policy 33 - Development Principles.

In order to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment developments shall be required to:

- 1. Make efficient use of land, and prioritise the use of previously developed land and buildings whilst respecting any constraints that exist;*
- 2. Ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land, for example through overlooking or noise, whilst having regard to the sensitivities of surrounding development;*
- 3. Ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of the development is of a high standard of design and layout and where relevant 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;*
- 4. Are locally distinctive in character, respect the character of the surrounding area (including its overall setting, townscape features, views and green corridors) and, where available and applicable, take account of the recommendations/policies of the relevant Design Statements and Character Assessments;*
- 5. Use high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping; and includes the provision of street furniture and public art where appropriate;*
- 6. 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; and,*
- 7. Ensure buildings and spaces are orientated to gain maximum benefit from sunlight and passive solar energy, unless this conflicts with the character of the surrounding townscape, landscape or topography where it is of good quality.*

6.7.a

1. The proposed re-use of the site makes efficient use of previously constructed facilities and prioritises the use of previously developed land whilst respecting any constraints that exist.
2. The fact that the built environment will not change, avoids unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land.
3. The scale and massing of development will not change.
4. The character of the development will not change.
5. The building materials of the development will not change.
6. All local features will remain unchanged.
7. The orientation of buildings and structures will not change.

6.8 **Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change**

Development will be supported where it makes a clear contribution to mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change and to meeting the district's carbon reduction targets as set out in the Council's Acting Together on Climate Change Strategy, 2009. Measures which should be used to mitigate the effects of climate change include;

- 1. Reduced energy use in construction;*
- 2. Improved energy efficiency in new developments, including influencing the behaviour of occupants to reduce energy use;*
- 3. The use of decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy supply systems;*
- 4. The use of patterns of development which reduce the need to travel, encourage walking and cycling and include good accessibility to public transport and other forms of sustainable transport; and*
- 5. Measures which reduce the amount of biodegradable waste sent to landfill.*

6.8.a

1. There will be no energy use in construction as the proposals re-use existing facilities.
2. The proposals will improve energy efficiency as it will provide a base closer to Equestrian centres and markets for product than the existing Sussex Manures' base.
3. The re-use of this site will reduce the need to travel with the laden lorries across Sussex in order to start the road gritting service.

6.9 **Policy 36 Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use**

Energy hierarchy

All development will be required to contribute to clean, efficient energy in Horsham based on the following hierarchy:

- 1. Lean – use less energy – e.g. through demand reduction*
- 2. Clean – supply energy efficiently – e.g. through heat networks*
- 3. Green – use renewable energy sources*

Energy Statements All applications for residential or commercial development must include an Energy Statement demonstrating and quantifying how the development will comply with the Energy Hierarchy.

6.9.a **Energy Statement**

This proposal will use less energy than previous years' of operations in and around Horsham District.

6.10 **Policy 37 Sustainable Construction**

Proposals must seek to improve the sustainability of development. To deliver sustainable design, development should incorporate the following measures where appropriate according to the type of development and location:

- 1. Maximise energy efficiency and integrate the use of decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy;*
- 2. Limit water use to 110 litres/person/day;*
- 3. Use design measures to minimise vulnerability to flooding and heatwave events;*
- 4. Be designed to encourage the use of natural lighting and ventilation;*
- 5. Be designed to encourage walking, cycling, cycle storage and accessibility to sustainable forms of transport;*
- 6. Minimise construction and demolition waste and utilise recycled and low-impact materials;*
- 7. Be flexible to allow future modification of use or layout, facilitating future adaptation, refurbishment and retrofitting;*
- 8. Incorporate measures which enhance the biodiversity value of development.*

All new development will be required to provide satisfactory arrangements for the storage of refuse and recyclable materials as an integral part of design. New homes and workplaces should include the provision of high-speed broadband access and enable provision of future technologies where available.

6.10.a

1. The proposal will minimise the fuel used by the vehicles, by centralising the distribution site.
2. n/a
3. The site is outwith any flood zones.
4. The site is open.
5. n/a
6. The re-use of the site in its present form minimises demolition and construction waste.
7. As there are no changes it provides ultimate flexibility for future uses.
8. By using previously developed site, the proposals minimise any negative impact on biodiversity.



6.11 Policy 39 Strategic Policy: Infrastructure Provision

- 1. The release of land for development will be dependent on there being sufficient capacity in the existing local infrastructure to meet the additional requirements arising from new development, or suitable necessary mitigation arrangements for the improvement of the infrastructure, services and community facilities caused by the development being provided.*
- 2. Where there is a need for extra capacity, this will need to be provided in time to serve the development or the relevant phase of the development, in order to ensure that the environment and amenities of existing or new local residents is not adversely affected.*
- 3. To ensure required standards are met, arrangements for new or improved infrastructure provision, will be secured by planning obligation / Community Infrastructure Levy, or in some cases conditions attached to a planning permission, so that the appropriate improvement can be completed prior to occupation of the development, or the relevant phase of the development.*

6.11.a

1. The junction of the existing access track with the public highway has excellent visibility and the local road network is suitable for the vehicles to be used.
2. No extra capacity is required.
3. N/A

6.14 Policy 38 Strategic Policy:- Flooding

1. *Development proposals will follow a sequential approach to flood risk management, giving priority to development sites with the lowest risk of flooding and making required development safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Development proposals will;*
 - a. *take a sequential approach to ensure most vulnerable uses are placed in the lowest risk areas.*
 - b. *avoid the functional floodplain (Flood zone 3b) except for water-compatible uses and essential infrastructure.*
 - c. *only be acceptable in Flood Zone 2 and 3 following completion of a sequential test and exceptions test if necessary.*
 - d. *require a site-specific Flood Risk Assessments for all developments over 1 hectare in Flood Zone 1 and all proposals in Flood Zone 2 and 3.*
2. *Comply with the tests and recommendations set out in the Horsham District Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).*
3. *Where there is the potential to increase flood risk, proposals must incorporate the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) where technically feasible, or incorporate water management measures which reduce the risk of flooding and ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere.*
4. *Consider the vulnerability and importance of local ecological resources such as water quality and biodiversity when determining the suitability of SuDS. New development should undertake more detailed assessments to consider the most appropriate SuDS methods for each site. Consideration should also be given to amenity value and green infrastructure.*
5. *Utilise drainage techniques that mimic natural drainage patterns and manage surface water as close to its source as possible will be required where technically feasible.*
6. *Be in accordance with the objective of the Water Framework Directive. and accord with the findings of the Gatwick Sub Region Water Cycle Study in order to maintain water quality and water availability in rivers and wetlands and wastewater treatment requirements.*

- 6.14.a The Environment Agency's Long Term Flooding Risk Map shows The Flood risk from both surface water and rivers and sea are not rated (ie below Very Low). Flooding from surface water is difficult to predict as rainfall location and volume are difficult to forecast. In addition, local features can greatly affect the chance and severity of flooding.

A building and yard for the bagging and storage of surplus soil improver as proposed is a Low Risk building for flooding purposes.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Having carefully studied;

- The Horsham Local Plan policies
- The situation of the building and yard within the holding.

This report concludes that the change of use from an agricultural store use to the bagging, storage and distribution of surplus soil improver (within use class B2/B8) described within this application will:

- positively contribute towards the sustainable management of the by-products of equestrian businesses in the area,
- diversify the income for the holding and
- complies with the prevailing planning policies of the Horsham Local Plan.

8. Photographic Schedule



Two easterly bays.
Viewed from the south.



Two easterly bays.
Viewed from the southwest.



Hard-standing and eastern gable end of the building.