

Planning Statement

Erection of 4no. lighting columns

Cordek, Spring Copse Business Park, Stane Street,
Slinfold

Prepared by

WPS Planning

Planning Statement
Cordek



Prepared by:	Doug Wright
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Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA	1
3.0 PLANNING HISTORY OF THE SITE	2
4.0 THE PROPOSAL	3
5.0 PLANNING POLICY	3
6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT	4
7.0 CONCLUSION	7

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 WPS Planning has been instructed to prepare and submit a Full Planning Application for the erection of 4no. lighting columns.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 The site comprises an established and well-functioning Business Park located on the eastern side of the A29 Stane Street, approximately 500 metres to the west of the village of Slinfold. The Business Park extends to an area of approximately 3.2 hectares and benefits from an existing access directly from the A29. The internal layout accommodates a mixture of commercial buildings, storage areas, and associated car parking, with a range of occupiers operating across light industrial, storage, and distribution uses. The site is well-defined and self-contained within clear physical boundaries, providing a coherent commercial enclave within the wider rural landscape.
- 2.2 The Business Park is positioned within a predominantly open countryside setting characterised by agricultural fields, woodland, and sporadic rural development. Existing buildings within the Park are generally of a modest scale and height, designed with simple, functional elevations typical of light industrial premises. This restrained built form, combined with the careful layout of structures within the site, ensures that the development remains largely unobtrusive in longer-distance views. The site sits on land that gently falls away from the A29, further reducing its visual prominence from the main road and surrounding viewpoints.
- 2.3 A substantial belt of mature vegetation provides an effective natural screen around the perimeter of the Business Park. Of particular note is the tree belt along the A29 frontage, which is protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). These trees form a continuous and well-established visual buffer that significantly contributes to the character of the area and assists in integrating the Business Park into the wider rural environment. Additional hedgerows and tree planting along the northern and southern boundaries reinforce this sense

of enclosure, ensuring the site sits comfortably within its setting without detracting from the rural landscape character.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The site has the following planning history:

- DISC/22/0229 - Approval of details reserved by conditions 3 and 4 to approved application DC/20/0279 - Permitted
- DC/20/0279 - Erection of B1/B8 industrial warehouse building and associated car parking, with underground cellular surface water attenuation storage & extension/alterations to existing hard-standing areas – Permitted
- DC/19/0453 - Fell 9 x Maple Trees and 3 x Lime Trees - Permitted
- DC/18/2023 - Variation of condition 1 to approved application DC/17/1955 (Demolition of three existing B1/B8 industrial/warehouse buildings (Units 3-7). Erection of two replacement B1/B8 industrial/warehouse buildings and extension/alterations to existing hardstanding area.) Alterations to floor plans and elevations and re-location and enlargement of external plant room - Permitted
- DC/17/1955 - Demolition of three existing B1/B8 industrial/warehouse buildings (Units 3-7). Erection of two replacement B1/B8 industrial/warehouse buildings and extension/alterations to existing hardstanding area - Permitted

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The application seeks planning permission for the erection of 4no. lighting columns.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that this should run through both plan-making and decision-taking. In terms of the determination of planning applications this should mean the approval of developments that accord with the development plan without delay, and that where the development plan is silent or relevant policies are out of date, that permission be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or policies of the NPPF indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 Sustainable development is seen within the NPPF as having three roles, namely an economic, social and environmental role which should be a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking.
- 5.3 The following sections within the NPPF are important factors in the assessment of the proposal:
- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
 - Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
 - Section 11 – Making effective use of land
 - Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places
 - Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Local Plan

5.4 In terms of the local planning policy context for the Application Site, the adopted Development Plan for the Horsham District is composed of the following relevant documents:

- Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) – Adopted November 2015.
 - Policy 1 - Sustainable Development
 - Policy 7 – Economic Growth
 - Policy 10 – Rural Economic Development
 - Policy 24 – Environmental Protection
 - Policy 25 – District Character and the Natural Environment
 - Policy 32 – The Quality of New Development
 - Policy 33 – Development Principles
 - Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets
- Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19)
 - Policy 1 - Sustainable Development
 - Policy 19 - Development Quality
 - Policy 20 – Development Principles
 - Policy
- Slinfold Neighbourhood Plan, June 2018
 - Policy 11 – Existing Employment Centre

6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 6.1 Paragraph 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) emphasises that “Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable.” This paragraph acknowledges the practical realities of rural enterprise and supports flexibility in allowing appropriately scaled development in non-urban settings where such proposals can enhance the functioning of local businesses and meet identified community needs. The principle therefore endorses measured growth in rural locations where the scheme can demonstrate environmental sensitivity and safeguard the local transport network, as is the case with the current proposal.
- 6.2 Policy 10 (Rural Economic Development) of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) similarly seeks to encourage sustainable rural economic development and enterprise throughout the district in order to generate local employment opportunities and deliver economic, social, and environmental benefits for rural communities. The policy supports development in the countryside where it maintains the character and distinctive qualities of the area while sustaining its diverse and productive economic activity. In this context, proposals that allow existing businesses to operate safely and efficiently, such as the installation of modest lighting to facilitate evening or early-morning operations, are consistent with the intent of the policy and represent a form of development that directly supports the continued prosperity of the local rural economy.

- 6.3 Likewise, Policy 31 (Rural Economic Development) of the emerging Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040 (Regulation 19 Proposed Submission) reaffirms this approach. It states that “Outside built-up area boundaries or secondary settlements, economic 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.” This policy recognises that appropriately designed rural enterprise has a vital role to play in the district’s future economic growth strategy, and that minor infrastructure additions which improve site safety and functionality, such as lighting, can assist businesses to thrive without adversely affecting landscape character or amenity.
- 6.4 The proposal seeks to erect 4no. lighting columns within the existing storage yard located on the western side of the wider business park. This area benefits from an extant planning permission for the erection of a B1/B8 industrial building together with associated car parking. The approved parking areas and the base of the building have been constructed and currently serve a dual purpose as a car park and open storage space for the business. To facilitate safe operation throughout the day and into the early evening hours, and to ensure that staff and visitors can navigate the site safely in low-light conditions, the installation of suitably controlled lighting is considered both necessary and proportionate. The lighting also contributes to the continued growth and efficiency of the business and the effective use of previously developed land within a designated employment location.
- 6.5 The proposal is therefore regarded as entirely appropriate to its setting and scale and would not generate adverse impacts upon the character of the surrounding countryside or the amenity of neighbouring dwellings. Given its limited height and contained position within the established business park, the lighting would not give rise to visual intrusion or light pollution to the wider area. Accordingly, the development would accord with Policies 7 and 32 of the HDPF and the overarching objectives of the NPPF in promoting safe, sustainable and well-designed employment sites.

- 6.6 Policy 33 of the HDPF seeks to ensure that new development does not result in unacceptable harm to the amenity of nearby occupiers through loss of privacy, overbearing impact, noise disturbance, or light pollution. It requires careful consideration of scale, orientation, and design to prevent undue effects on the living conditions of neighbouring residents.
- 6.7 In support of the application, a comprehensive Lighting Assessment has been prepared by 'Lightable' to demonstrate that the proposed lighting scheme has been designed with appropriate sensitivity to its rural context. The assessment confirms that the lighting will be both necessary and proportionate, with all fittings carefully directed and controlled to avoid unnecessary light spill, glare, and upward illumination. The design approach has been formulated to safeguard the character of the countryside and to protect the night-time sky from excessive illumination.
- 6.8 The assessment provides details on the exact location and design of the columns, the luminaire specifications, hours of operation, and the anticipated light distribution patterns. It also considers the relationship with the nearest residential properties in the context of the existing business park operations and background lighting levels. This ensures that the proposed scheme is contextually appropriate and does not introduce harmful or incongruous effects to its surroundings.
- 6.9 Following a thorough technical review, the Lighting Assessment concludes that the proposed scheme would not generate significant or harmful levels of illumination for the occupants of neighbouring dwellings or the wider area. Accordingly, the development would fully comply with Policies 7 & 33 of the HDPF and the relevant provisions of the NPPF, which seek to protect residential amenity while enabling appropriate economic growth.
- 6.10 The application site, occupied by Cordek, is positioned on the western edge of Spring Copse Business Park, immediately adjacent to the A29. The site is visually and physically separated from the main road by a substantial grassed verge and a well-established belt of mature trees that serve to screen the

business park from passing traffic. This vegetation not only softens the site's appearance in the landscape but also provides an effective acoustic and visual buffer, reducing potential glare or distraction for road users.

- 6.11 The existing trees and hedgerow planting significantly exceed the height of the proposed lighting columns, ensuring that the lights would not be visible from the A29 and would not create any form of visual disturbance or hazard to drivers. The lighting design also incorporates low-glare, directional fittings to minimise illumination beyond the operational yard area. On this basis, the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on highway safety and is fully compliant with Policy 40 of the Local Plan and the requirements of the NPPF in respect of safe and suitable access for all users.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 In summary, the proposed installation of four lighting columns within the established business park represents a modest and proportionate enhancement that will improve the safety, functionality, and efficiency of the existing operations. The lighting is carefully designed to be unobtrusive and to respect the rural character of the surrounding area, ensuring that it integrates sensitively with the existing built form and wider landscape setting.
- 7.2 The proposal accords with the overarching principles of the NPPF, which seek to support sustainable rural economic development and enable businesses to adapt and grow in suitable countryside locations. It also fully complies with Policies 7, 10, 32, 33, and 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework and emerging Policy 31 of the Local Plan, all of which collectively encourage well-designed, environmentally responsible development that supports continued rural employment and safeguards amenity and highway safety.
- 7.3 Overall, the development is a positive and policy-compliant form of enhancement that will enable the continued safe and efficient use of the site without generating harm to the landscape, neighbouring properties, or the local

transport network. The proposal therefore represents an appropriate and sustainable addition to the business park and should be supported accordingly.