Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/25/0639
Taintfield Farm, Kings Lane, Cowfold, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 8BD

DESCRIPTION:

Continued use of land for open storage purposes.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

N.A

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site is located to the north from Kent Street along a private access drive. The wider application site largely consists of agricultural use, with two barns, dilapidated stables and caravan located within the site. There is a Grade II listed building (Lydford Farmhouse) to the south of the application site and a PRoW to the east (approximately 60 metres away).

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

The application seeks a temporary planning permission for an open storage use for two years for the area shown in the Proposed site block plan. The open storage would be limited within the timber post and rail fence demonstrated on the map to the north of the agricultural barn. There would be two narrow gaps within the fence to accommodate vehicles to distribute and pick up from.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):
Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
Policy 7 - Strategic Policy: Economic Growth
Policy 9 - Employment Development
Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development
Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 28 - Replacement Dwellings and House Extensions in the Countryside
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 – Parking

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

Cowfold Neighbourhood planning
Have produced a e neighbourhood plan which have been subject to successful Examination but cannot proceed to Referendum because of the legal requirements in relation to Water Neutrality and the Habitat Regulations.

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:

Natural England: Standing Advice: -

It cannot be concluded that existing abstraction within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone is not having an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC/SPA/Ramsar sites. Developments within Sussex North must therefore must not add to this impact and one way of achieving this is to demonstrate water neutrality. The definition of water neutrality is the use of water in the supply area before the development is the same or lower after the development is in place.

To achieve this Natural England is working in partnership with all the relevant authorities to secure water neutrality collectively through a water neutrality strategy. Whilst the strategy is evolving, Natural England advises that decisions on planning applications should await its completion. However, if there are applications which a planning authority deems critical to proceed in the absence of the strategy, then Natural England advises that any application needs to demonstrate water neutrality.

Environmental Health: No objection [Summary]

No objection subject to conditions restricting elements of a B8 use that may otherwise result in an unacceptable impact to neighbouring amenity.

WSCC Highways officer: Advice [Summary]

Given the land would be used to store existing enterprises within the site, there are no concerns raised with regards to a material intensification of movements to and from the site.

No additional car parking is proposed, however the wider site could accommodate vehicles. No recorded collisions over the last 5 years.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Representations:

One letter of neutral comment has been received, raising the following considerations:

- Grade II listed building nearby and the site is visible from the listed building second floor window.
- Support of the landscaping
- The description of the application is general, and does not outline which items would be included in the storage
- Concern the application may result in additional traffic

HDC Compliance: Compliance have no comments to make

Conservation Officer: Satisfied the storage area will not harm the setting of the adjacent listed building.

Parish Comments:

Parish Council: Support

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:

Policy 7 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) states that sustainable employment development in Horsham District will be achieved by: allocating land for a high quality business park at Land North of Horsham; redevelopment, regeneration, intensification and smart growth of existing employment sites; the formation and development of small, start-up and move-on businesses by encouraging provision of small units through development proposals; encouraging sustainable local employment growth through Neighbourhood Development Plans; and identifying additional employment areas to meet the need for appropriate new business activity. In addition, Policy 9 of the HDPF states that the provision of small, start-up and move-on business units will be supported to enable them to reach their fullest potential.

Policy 10 of the HDPF states that 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: 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 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; or 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.

Furthermore, Policy 26 of the 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 of 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.

The site would temporarily be used for the storage of building materials limited to the applicant's business. The land itself would be considered a modest, where it is considered that given the existing use of the site for agricultural and equestrian purposes, the proposed use would not lead to an unacceptable intensification in activity within the countryside. The proposal would result in some economic benefits through the diversification of the rural economy. Overall, the proposed use is considered to accord with the relevant policies.

Design and Appearance:

Policies 25, 32 and 33 of the HDPF promote development that is of a high quality design, which is sympathetic to the character and distinctiveness of the site and surroundings. The landscape character of the area should be protected, conserved and enhanced, with proposals contributing to a sense of place through appropriate scale, massing and appearance.

Policy 34 of the HDPF outlines that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and the council will sustain and enhance its historic environment.

The change in appearance of the application site would be modest, with the site itself being sited within the context of a cluster of agricultural and equestrian buildings. The application includes some landscaping provision and would only be spotted in glimpses from the PRoW. It is not considered that the proposal would harm the special architectural or historic interest of the nearest listed building or its setting which is located some 80 metres from where the storage would occur and some 50 metres from the access to the site within the red line boundary. Overall, there are no objections in light of the proposed appearance of the site.

Residential Amenity:

Policy 33(2) of the HDPF states that development should consider the scale, massing and orientation between buildings, respecting the amenities and sensitivities of neighbouring properties.

The wider site is agricultural in use. The open storage use would be within the context of agricultural buildings and a disused equestrian barn and stables. It is not considered that an open storage of this nature would give rise to any unacceptable amenity impacts given the distances between the application site, nearest neighbour and the small scale of the development. Regardless, a condition will be attached regarding hours of operation.

It is also considered that any potential changes to traffic movements associated with the proposals would not be so significant as to result in any significant harm to neighbouring amenity above that that could already exist. As such, it is considered that the proposals would not result in significant harm to residential amenity which would warrant refusal of this application, subject to appropriate conditions. Overall, it is considered that the proposals would be in accordance with Policy 33(2) of the HDPF.

Highways Impacts:

Policies and 41 of the HDOF state that development will be supported if it provides safe and suitable access for all vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, public transport and the delivery of goods. Adequate parking and facilities must be provided within developments to meet the needs of anticipated users.

Given the established nature of the site, it is not anticipated that the use would result in an intensification in movements to and from the site in a manner that would result in adverse harm to the function and safety of the public highway network.

Water Neutrality:

The application site falls within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone as defined by Natural England which draws its water supply from groundwater abstraction at Hardham. Natural England has issued a Position Statement for applications within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone which states that it cannot be concluded with the required degree of certainty that new development in this zone would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites.

Natural England advises that plans and projects affecting sites where an existing adverse effect is known will be required to demonstrate, with sufficient certainty, that they will not contribute further to an existing adverse effect. The received advice note advises that the matter of water neutrality should be addressed in assessments to agree and ensure that water use is offset for all new developments within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone.

The proposed use would be limited to storage alone and would be for a temporary period of two years, where it is understood that the intention of the land owner would be to revert the land after this point back to agricultural use in relation to the vineyard. The details submitted indicate that there would be no staff facilities on site, with the nature of the use for storage only. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the water usage of the use would be nil. With the above in mind, the use of the site is considered water neutral. If a permanent permission were applied for, this approach would require revisiting.

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.

There would be no increase in footprint within the application such that the proposal would be exempt.

Conclusions:

In conclusion, the development is considered acceptable in principle and the proposal is not considered to result in harm to the character and appearance of the site, the wider countryside area or the amenities of neighbouring properties and users of land. In addition, the proposal would not result in an increase water demand from the Pulborough borehole. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with all relevant local and national planning policies. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation: Application Permitted

Conditions:

2 **Regulatory Condition**: The use of the site hereby permitted shall be for open storage purposes only, and the use of this land shall be discontinued, and all associated paraphernalia removed, and the land shall be restored to its former condition, on or before 16.06.2027 in accordance with a scheme of work submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The proposed development is not considered satisfactory as a permanent measure in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

3 **Regulatory Condition**: The hours of operation, including deliveries and dispatch, shall be restricted to 08:00-18:00 hours on Monday to Friday, from 08:00 to 13:00 hours on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and in accordance with policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) document (2015).

4 **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).

5 **Regulatory Condition**: The storage of materials hereby approved within the application site shall at no time exceed 3 metres in height.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and in accordance with policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) document (2015).

6 **Regulatory Condition**: No part of the site shall be fitted with mains water supply without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development is water neutral to avoid an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), Paragraphs 193 and 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

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/25/0639
(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
Location & Site plan	Location Plan, Site [Block] Plan, Photographs	PL01	17.04.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Hannah Darley Date: 12th June 2025

Authorising Officer sign/initial Tamara Dale Date: 12.06.2025