Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/24/0504
Champions Farm, Storrington Road, Thakeham, West Sussex, RH20 3EF

DESCRIPTION:
Erection of extension to an existing agriculture winery barn.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/23/1687	Use of an existing agricultural barn as a winery for the processing and storage of grapes grown (Certificate of Lawful Development Proposed)	Application Permitted on 01.12.2023

SITE AND SURROUNDS
The application site is comprised of a 9.5ha vineyard which forms part of agricultural land owned by Champions Farm, Storrington Road, Thakeham. The site lies approximately 1.5km to the south-west of Thakeham and 2km north of Storrington and is within the countryside. The vineyard is on a sloping southerly facing hill which rises from 30m to 50m above sea level. The site is currently occupied by an existing barn in agricultural in use as an ancillary agricultural building, in connection with the Vineyard.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Planning permission is sought for the construction of an extension to the existing building to act as a temperature-controlled wine store, fermentation and bottling and labelling of wine. This would provide facilities ancillary to the current use of the building for viticulture purposes. The external appearance is designed to mirror the existing barn and will be clad in timber.

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 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 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction

Neighbourhood Plan:

Thakeham 6 – Design
Thakeham 7 – Heritage Assets
Thakeham 9 – Development in the Countryside

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:

HDC Tree Officer: No Objection - The proposal will have direct impacts on the landscape due to its close proximity to a mature tree belt, which is part of the field hedgerow network in the area. While public visibility is limited, the loss of edge trees is not expected to significantly affect the long-term integrity of the tree belt. The submitted tree report provides an accurate assessment of the species, size, and position of key landscape elements. It highlights that the proposed development will require the felling of mature trees and pruning for clearance due to the proximity of the building and associated hardstanding areas. If approved, a condition should be included to ensure compliance with the tree report and the implementation of tree protection measures to safeguard retained trees from potential harm.

HDC Environmental Health: Comment - Due to the location and nature of the area this department have no adverse comments to make regarding this application.

Parish Comments:

Thakeham Parish Council: No Objection - The proposal has raised significant concerns from TPC, primarily due to its location on Grade 2 listed agricultural land, which conflicts with the need for increased food security. Development on this land would breach several Thakeham Parish Neighbourhood Plan (TPNP) policies regarding design, development in the countryside, green infrastructure, and soil protection. The proposed access road and culverting could damage mature trees protected by TPOs, with potential negative effects on the local environment. There are also concerns about flooding and inadequate testing of water neutrality, as well as the lack of information on the impact of the development on local bat habitats and the Arun Valley conservation areas. Furthermore, TPC highlights the sustainability deficits in central Thakeham, such as limited facilities and poor transportation links, making residents heavily reliant on private vehicles. The proposed development, with 28 dwellings on just under 1 hectare, is considered overly dense, contrary to the TPNP policies and the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDC LP). There are also concerns regarding the affordability and suitability of the proposed housing mix. TPC concludes that the application fails to meet key planning policies and should not be supported.

Representations:
None received

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 10 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) addresses the sustainable use of land and emphasizes the importance of development that respects the character of the area while enabling economic, social, and environmental sustainability. This policy encourages development that contributes positively to rural areas, supporting businesses and growth while maintaining environmental and landscape quality. The proposed extension of the agricultural building to accommodate the established viticulture use directly aligns with this policy, as it facilitates the sustainable expansion of a rural business while respecting the countryside setting.

The proposal involves extending an existing agricultural building in association with the winery, which was approved under planning application Ref: DC/23/1687. The extension is essential to meet the operational needs of the winery, including the creation of a temperature-controlled wine store, fermentation area, and space for bottling and labelling. It is also intended to reduce reliance on mobile bottling plant machinery and off-site storage, contributing to a more efficient and sustainable operation. The development directly supports the growth of a rural business that contributes to the local economy and tourism, in line with Policy 10.

In addition to Policy 10, Policy 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework further supports the proposed development by focusing on countryside protection and enhancement. This policy states that outside built-up area boundaries, the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside will be protected against inappropriate development. Any proposal in the countryside must be essential to its location and meet one of the following criteria: support agriculture or forestry; enable mineral extraction or waste disposal; provide for quiet informal recreational use; or enable the sustainable development of rural areas.

The application for the extension meets the criteria of Policy 26, as it supports the established agricultural use (viticulture) and is essential to the continued operation and expansion of the winery. The proposed extension is designed to accommodate the needs of the existing winery and will not result in an overdevelopment of the site. The scale of the building is considered appropriate for the established activities and would not harm the rural character or appearance of the surrounding area. As the proposed development supports the existing use and does not significantly increase site activity, it is considered to be consistent with the aim of Policy 26 to protect the rural landscape while allowing for the sustainable growth of rural businesses.

Additionally, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides further support for rural development. Paragraph 84 of the NPPF highlights that planning policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of rural businesses, including through the development of new buildings or the conversion of existing structures. The proposed extension is in line with this guidance, as it supports the growth of a sustainable rural business and will contribute to the vitality and resilience of the local rural economy.

Paragraph 170 of the NPPF stresses the importance of safeguarding the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. In this case, the design and siting of the proposed extension have been carefully considered to minimize visual impact and ensure that the development complements the surrounding rural landscape. The scale and materials chosen for the extension are appropriate to the context, ensuring that the development does not detract from the natural environment.

The proposed extension is in line with Policy 10 by facilitating the sustainable growth of a rural business while respecting the local environment. The development also meets the requirements of Policy 26, as it is essential to the continued agricultural use of the site and would not harm the character of the countryside. The proposal enhances the operational efficiency of the established winery, reduces reliance on external storage and equipment, and ensures the long-term viability of the business.

The extension also aligns with the guidance in the NPPF, particularly in promoting sustainable rural business growth and protecting the character of the countryside. The development is not expected to significantly increase the level of activity at the site and is therefore unlikely to have a harmful effect on the rural landscape.

In conclusion, the proposed extension is considered to be acceptable in principle, as it complies with relevant local and national planning policies. The development supports the sustainable growth of a rural business, respects the countryside setting, and contributes positively to the local economy. It is therefore considered appropriate, subject to other material considerations such as impact on heritage, environmental factors, and local infrastructure.

Design and Appearance:

Policies 25 and 26 of the HDPF seek to protect the natural environment and landscape character of the District, including the landform, development pattern, together with protected landscapes and habitats. Development will be required to protect, conserve and enhance landscape and townscape character, taking account of areas or features identified as being of landscape importance, individual settlement characteristics and settlement separation.

Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF stipulate that new development should be of a high standard of design and layout, with regard to natural and built surroundings, in terms of scale, density, massing, siting, orientation, views, character, materials and space between buildings.

Policy 10 of the Thakeham Parish Neighbourhood Plan (TNP) (2017) provides that development proposals will be supported provided that they protect, retain and, wherever possible, enhance green infrastructure and valued landscape features, including *inter alia*, prominent ridges, public rights of way and their settings, hedgerow and copses and woods.

The extension as proposed would match the existing building in height, width and materials, will be built on existing concrete hardstanding, and is of a typical agricultural design and appearance. Given the existing arrangement and buildings, the proposal would be read in the context of existing built form, and it is not therefore considered that the proposed would have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of this rural area.

It is considered that the proposed building would be appropriate to its countryside setting and would not result in a significant adverse impact on the character or appearance of the area. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the HDPF.

Amenity Impacts:

Policy 33 of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.

It is considered that the siting and layout of the proposed and the significant separation distance from any neighbouring properties would be sufficient to prevent any unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity.

Water Neutrality:

The application site falls within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone as defined by Natural England draws its water supply from groundwater abstraction at Hardham. Natural England advises that plans and projects affecting sites where an existing adverse effect is known will be required to demonstrate

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 and ensure that water use is offset if required for all new developments within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone. It therefore needs to be demonstrated that the use of water in the supply area before the development would be the same or lower after the development otherwise mitigation measures are required to achieve water neutrality.

This application proposes an extension to an existing agricultural building that is required to facilitate the existing winery to act as a temperature-controlled wine store, fermentation and bottling and labelling of wine. The Planning Statement outlines that there would be no increase in the water usage on site as the proposal would accommodate the storing, bottling, fermentation and labelling. These activities would be ancillary to the established viticulture activities and could be undertaken without any specific controls. As such, it is considered that the proposal will not result in an increase in use of mains water due to the proposed use, which would result in a minor intensification of an existing agricultural practice.

It is considered that the proposed development would not result in a greater water demand than the existing situation. As such, there is no clear or compelling evidence to suggest the nature and scale of the proposed development would result in a more intensive occupation of the site necessitating an increased consumption of water that would result in a significant impact on the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The grant of planning permission would not therefore adversely affect the integrity of these sites or otherwise conflict with policy 31 of the HDPF, NPPF paragraph 193 and the Council's obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). This requires that development must achieve at least 10% BNG on all habitats within the development site.

The Applicant has submitted a Biodiversity Metric which demonstrates the statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation, where it is expected that the proposed scheme will result in a net gain of 0.37 (+10.36%) habitat units. The linear feature calculation for the proposed scheme expects a gain of 0.12 linear units. The current scheme satisfies the trading rules within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

In the event the application is approved, it is a condition of the planning permission that a Biodiversity Net Gain Plan, including a Metric Tool calculation, be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This should show how the development will achieve BNG and must demonstrate how the habitats will be managed and maintained for 30 years, starting from the date the development is completed. Off-site gains and significant on-site enhancements have been secured over this period by way of a s106 Legal Agreement.

Conclusions:

The proposal for the construction of an extension to an existing agricultural building would support the needs of the established winery activities and is considered acceptable in principle. The proposal would be of an appropriate design and appearance for its rural setting. Given the nature of proposal, the existing arrangement and its setting, it is not considered that the proposal would give rise to any noise issues or have a detrimental effect on nearby residential properties. The application is therefore considered to comply with the relevant policies of the Horsham District Planning Framework and is therefore recommended for approval.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

Horsham District Council has adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule which took effect on 1st October 2017.

It is considered that this development constitutes CIL liable development.

Use Description	Proposed	Existing	Net Gain
District Wide (Zone 1)	321.36	0	321.36
		Total Gain	**321.36**
		Total Demolition	**0**

Please note that the above figures will be reviewed by the CIL Team prior to issuing a CIL Liability Notice and may therefore change.

Exemptions and/or reliefs may be applied for up until the commencement of a chargeable development.

In the event that planning permission is granted, a CIL Liability Notice will be issued thereafter. CIL payments are payable on commencement of development.

Recommendation: Application Permitted

Conditions:

2 **Standard Time Condition**: The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3 **Pre-commencement Condition**: No development shall commence, including demolition pursuant to the permission granted, ground clearance, or bringing equipment, machinery or materials onto the site, until the following preliminaries have been completed in the sequence set out below:

(a) All trees on the site shown for retention on approved drawing number AR/144724 March 2024, as well as those off-site whose root protection areas ingress into the site, shall be fully protected throughout all construction works by tree protective fencing affixed to the ground in full accordance with section 6 of BS 5837 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations' (2012).

(b) Once installed, the fencing shall be maintained during the course of the development works and until all machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site.

(c) Areas so fenced off shall be treated as zones of prohibited access, and shall not be used for the storage of materials, equipment or machinery in any circumstances. No mixing of cement, concrete, or use of other materials or substances shall take place within any tree protective zone, or close enough to such a zone that seepage or displacement of those materials and substances could cause them to enter a zone.

Any trees or hedges on the site which die or become damaged during the construction process shall be replaced with trees or hedging plants of a type, size and in positions agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to ensure the successful and satisfactory protection of important trees and hedgerows on the site in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

4 **Regulatory Condition**: The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall strictly accord with those indicated on the approved plans and application form.

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

5 **Regulatory Condition**: The building 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 an area where, in accordance with Policy 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) development unrelated to an essential rural activity would not normally be permitted.

NOTE TO APPLICANT

Biodiversity Net Gain Condition

Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the "biodiversity gain condition" which means development granted by this notice must not begin unless:

(a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
(b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission is Horsham District Council.

This permission will require the submission and approval of a Biodiversity Gain Plan before development is begun.

For guidance on the contents of the Biodiversity Gain Plan that must be submitted and agreed by the Council prior to the commencement of the consented development please see the link: Submit a biodiversity gain plan - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements
There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These can be found at Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 74-003-20240214 of the Planning Practice Guidance, which can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain.

Irreplaceable habitat
If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans.

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/24/0504

Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Site plan	Habitats Plan	24523/P302	16.12.2024
Supporting Statement	Heritage Statement	NONE	02.07.2024
Supporting Statement	Biodiversity Impact Calculation Report	NONE	02.07.2024

Supporting Statement	Biodiversity metric	NONE	02.07.2024
Elevation & Floor plan	Existing	24523/P102	02.04.2024
Floor plan	Proposed roof	24523/P103	02.04.2024
Elevation plan	Proposed	24523/P104	02.04.2024
Supporting Statement	Arboricultural Report Winery	NONE	27.08.2024
Supporting Statement	Planning and Water Neutrality	NONE	02.04.2024
Location & Block plan		24523/P100	02.04.2024
Site plan	Proposed	24523/P101	06.12.2024
Site plan	Proposed Overall Site Plan	24523 P301	06.12.2024

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Shazia Penne Date: 17.02.2025

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 17.02.2025