Horsham District Council

Safia Kausar
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Our ref: DC/24/1615
Your ref: APP/Z3825/W/25/3360078

Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk
Date: 26 March 2025

APP/Z3825/W/25/3360078 - Warren Wood Barn, Hammerpond Road, Plummers Plain, West Sussex, RH13 6PE

Dear Safia Kausar,

Following the submission of the appeal against the refusal of the Full Planning application for 'Installation of 4no. windows and 1no. dormer window to an existing forestry barn', the Local Planning Authority would refer the Inspector to the Delegated Report, and would like to reiterate the reasons for refusal as follows:

Reason for Refusal

1. *The development would introduce a series of window openings and a dormer window which would detract from and dilute the rural utilitarian character of the existing building, introduce features with of an overtly domestic character and appearance within this rural countryside location. The development is therefore contrary to Policies 25, 26, 30, 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), which state that development must be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location, conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and complement locally distinctive character. For similar reasons, the proposal does not align with Paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which identifies that countryside should be recognised for its intrinsic character and beauty, including trees and woodland.*

Policy 25 of the HDPF seeks that the natural environment and the local character of Horsham District including the landscape, the landforms and development pattern will be protected from inappropriate development. The policy aims to:

- Protects, conserves and enhances the landscape and townscape character, considering areas identified as being of landscape importance, the individual settlement characteristics, and maintains settlement separation.
- Maintain and enhances the Green Infrastructure Network and addresses any identified deficiencies in the District.
- Maintains and enhances the existing network of geological sites and biodiversity, including safeguarding existing designated sites and species, and ensures no net loss of wider biodiversity and provides net gains in biodiversity where possible.
- Conserve and where possible enhance the setting of the South Downs National Park.

Policy 26 of the HDPF requires development in the countryside be of a scale that is appropriate to its countryside character and location and not lead, either individually or

cumulatively, to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside. It also needs to be essential to its countryside location and to meet one of the following criteria:

- Support the needs of agriculture or forestry;
- Enable the extraction of minerals or the disposal of waste;
- Provide for quiet informal recreational use; or
- Enable the sustainable development of rural areas.

Policy 30 regards protecting the natural beauty and public enjoyment of the High Weald AONB and the adjoining South Downs National Park. These shall be conserved and protected against development which fails to respond actively to conserving, protecting or enhancing these protected landscapes/ Development proposals will be supported in or close to protected landscapes where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts to the natural beauty and public enjoyment of these landscapes.

Policy 32 and 33 of the HDPF seeks to ensure that development promotes a high standard and quality of design in order to enhance and protect locally distinctive characters. The policies also seek to ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of development 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.

The council recognises that the proposed are simple additions to the building, however given the number and the cumulative impact, it would be considered to detract from the utilitarian character of the barn. In addition, it is not thought that the design of the full height window to the northern elevation and the dormer are strictly necessary to the barn in order for it to function as a forestry barn.

The council is of the view that the proposed arrangement of windows and in particular the dormer window would introduce design elements that would be akin to a dwellinghouse. As such, this should be resisted on a forestry barn given the primary existing use and the protected landscape context in which it sits. Given this, it would be considered that the proposal would result in an inappropriate development in contradiction to HDPF Policies 25; 26; 30; 32; 33, detracting from the agricultural and utilitarian ethos of the barn which would thus appear insensitive to the protected landscape and its quality. The development therefore should be resisted.

Conclusion

The Council remains of the view that the scheme as submitted would be contrary to the relevant policies of the Horsham District Planning Framework and NPPF. The Inspector is therefore respectfully requested to dismiss the appeal. However, should the Inspector be minded to approve the appeal, a List of Suggested Conditions is attached to this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Applications Team
Horsham District Council

List of Suggested Conditions

1 **Approved Plans**

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

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).