

**Ford Farm
Ford Lane
Ashurst
West Sussex
BN44 3AT**

Air Quality & Emissions Mitigation Statement

PP-15004859

13th July 2026

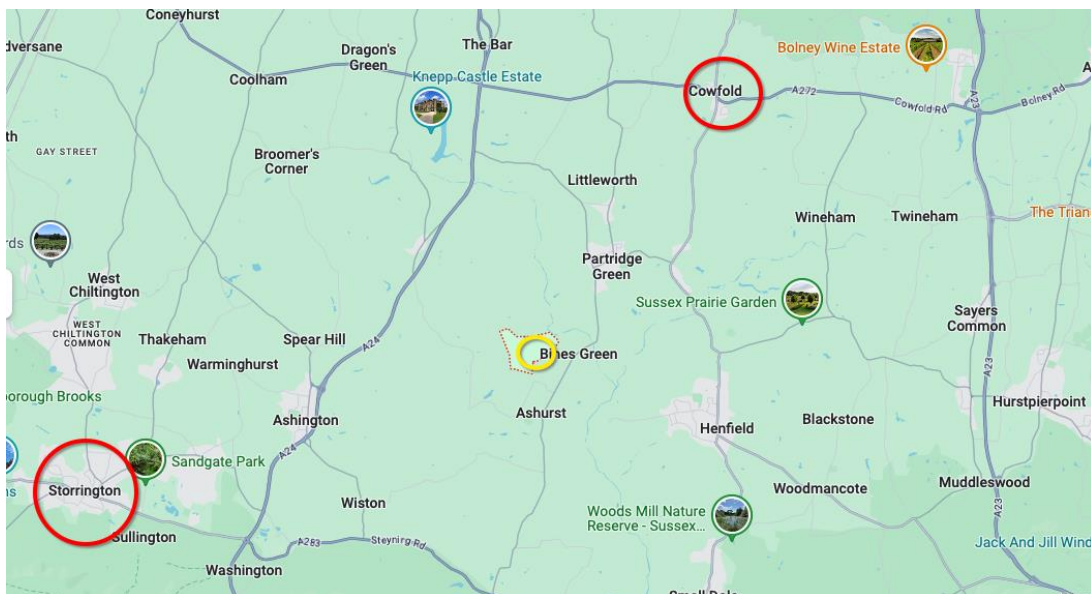
1. Introduction

1.1 Local Authorities across the United Kingdom are required to regularly review and assess air quality in their areas, and to determine if the air quality objectives set by the Government are likely to be achieved. Where exceedances are considered likely, the local authority must then declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and prepare an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) setting out the measures it intends to put in place in pursuit of the objectives.

1.2 The Annual Monitoring Report for 2023 concludes:

“Horsham district is primarily agricultural in character and does not incorporate a significant heavy industrial base or major transport hubs. Air quality in the majority of Horsham district is good however there are a few areas where elevated concentrations of pollutants occur.”

1.3 With regards addressing pollution only two Air Quality Management Plans (AQMP's) are in place: Cowfold and Storrington AQMA's exceed the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). The location of each is shown red below with the application site in yellow:



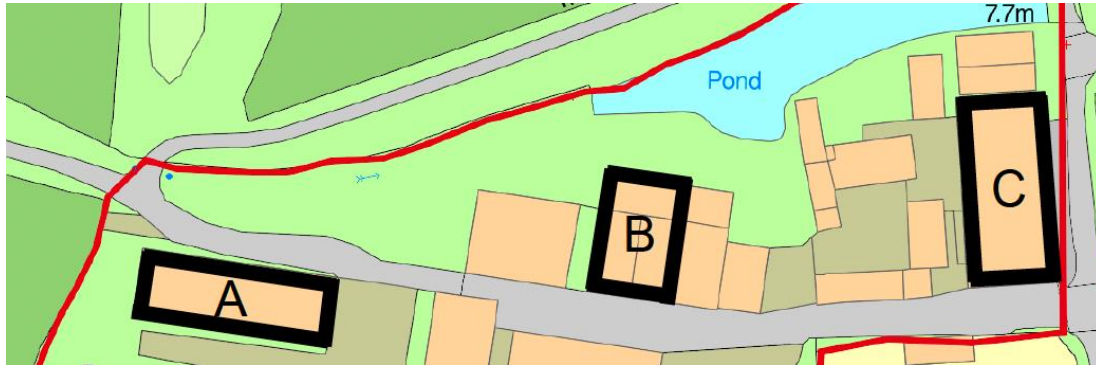
1.4 The preparation of a districtwide AQAP is ongoing and will be published following a public consultation. The new AQAP will present and discuss the last ten years' worth of monitoring data and modelling results for future NO₂ concentrations in the AQMAs and will contain a range of schemes and measures that Horsham District Council (HDC) wishes to take forward.

2. The Site Background of Vehicle Movements

- 2.1 The agricultural holding has undergone significant change since 1990 when it was primarily a cereal farm with some livestock (both cattle and horses). Since 1990, part of the land bordering the Honeypot Stream has been removed from hay and haylage production and left to nature as a rewilding project. Up until this point traffic flow, particularly heavy farm vehicles, would have been commonplace at the farm and nearby roads as part of its routine operation.
- 2.2 In 1999, Ford Farm changed its practice of farming in-house and engaged external contractors to continue the cereal farming. This naturally involved contractors bringing their own equipment to and from the farm on a very regular basis, in fact daily during drilling and harvesting. Furthermore, when one contractor used the crop as feed for their AD plant, the grain shed on Ford Farm became redundant for grain storage.
- 2.3 With regards activities at the site and pollution whilst in full agricultural use would have been the peak period for traffic and farm equipment having any risk of any impact on air quality.
- 2.4 Following planning approval, in December 2015, 47 acres of the land previously used for cereal growing was taken out of production and a solar farm built on the land.
- 2.5 In 2022, the contracts for remainder of the land which was used for cereal cropping were cancelled and the land is now used entirely for a central government countryside stewardship scheme to promote diversity. The remaining grassland continues to be used for horses and goats. This has significantly reduced the vehicle movements on and off the agricultural holding.
- 2.6 In May 2022, Ford Farm was one of the original participants in the river Adur and tributaries Restoration project which was established with funding from the central government and comprises about 238 landowners with land bordering this river system. As part of that project, the whole of the land bordering the River Adur and the Honeypot Stream which is part of the agricultural holding has been managed for the specific purpose of river restoration and habitat creation down the River Adur from the Knepp Estate to the Sea.

3. Current Use

- 3.1 The application pertains exclusively to Building C as shown below but an earlier application related to all three buildings. Building A and B have been in storage use for much longer that Building C the subject of this application:



Building C - Half used for storage of good to serve a retailer.



4. Proposed/Retropective Use

- 4.1 The buildings nearby have been used for different lengths of time but certainly several years making it impossible to obtain a 'baseline' level of pollutants with/without the use. However, Building C has not been in use long enough to be outside of planning enforcement regulations hence this application just for Building C.
- 4.2 Unlike applications where a use is 'proposed', and not yet in use, some meaningful effort can be made to gauge change in air quality. This is not the case here of course but the current occasional storage use would need to be weighed against the wider farmstead returning to agricultural use and deploying heavy farm machinery usually needing heavy machinery.
- 4.3 The former agricultural use would have given rise to high levels of heavy vehicle movements using the country lanes to access the farm. Whereas the current frequency of visits to and from the site is incredibly low with the buildings used for long term storage as opposed to a major distribution use.
- 4.4 The site does not generate employment directly and those using the units arrive from time to time and the site owner provides access. Except for these rare occasions frequency of use is low with a consequential lack of impact on air quality that cannot be measured but is self-evidently the case compared with regular use by heavy farm machinery.

5. Conclusion

5.1 The conclusions are:

- The site currently has low levels of traffic generated by a small-scale storage use.
- The scheme therefore is self-evidently less impactful on air quality than the farmstead returning to agricultural use and re-introducing heavy machinery for crop production.

5.2 That said, as a retrospective planning application, the scenario 'pre' and 'post' a planning decision would be the same. Whilst this report is relatively meaningless in many ways it will hopefully allow the LPA to press on and decide the application in the certain knowledge that the objective of maintaining acceptable air quality in Horsham will in no way be hampered by the grant of permission retrospectively for a use that has been in place for many years in any event.

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