

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Demolition of an existing agricultural building and erection of a dwelling (as an alternative to Prior Approval Ref. DC/25/0707)

at

Gorelands Farm
Stane Street
North Heath
Pulborough
West Sussex

On Behalf of
Mrs G Obbard

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is prepared in support of a demolition of an existing agricultural building and erection of a dwelling with associated parking. The application is submitted as an alternative to the dwelling granted consent under Prior Approval Reference DC/25/0707 (Class Q scheme).
- 1.2 This statement sets out the relevant background to assist the planning authority in its determination of the planning application. The statement includes a description of the site and its surroundings, relevant planning history, details of the proposed development, a summary of the planning policy context, and an appraisal of the scheme against all relevant planning considerations.

- 1.3 The application is supported by the following documents:

PLANS:

Drg No. 154_2501 – Site Location Plan

Drg No. 154_2502 – Site and Block Plans

Drg No. 154_2503 – Approved Scheme Plans

Drg No. 154_2504 – Approved Scheme Elevations

Drg No. 154_2505 – Proposed Floor and Roof Plans

Drg No. 154_2506 – Proposed Elevations

Drg No. 154_2507 – Existing Floor and Roof Plans

Drg No. 154_2508 – Existing Elevations

DOCUMENTS:

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Preliminary Ecological Assessment

Contamination Report

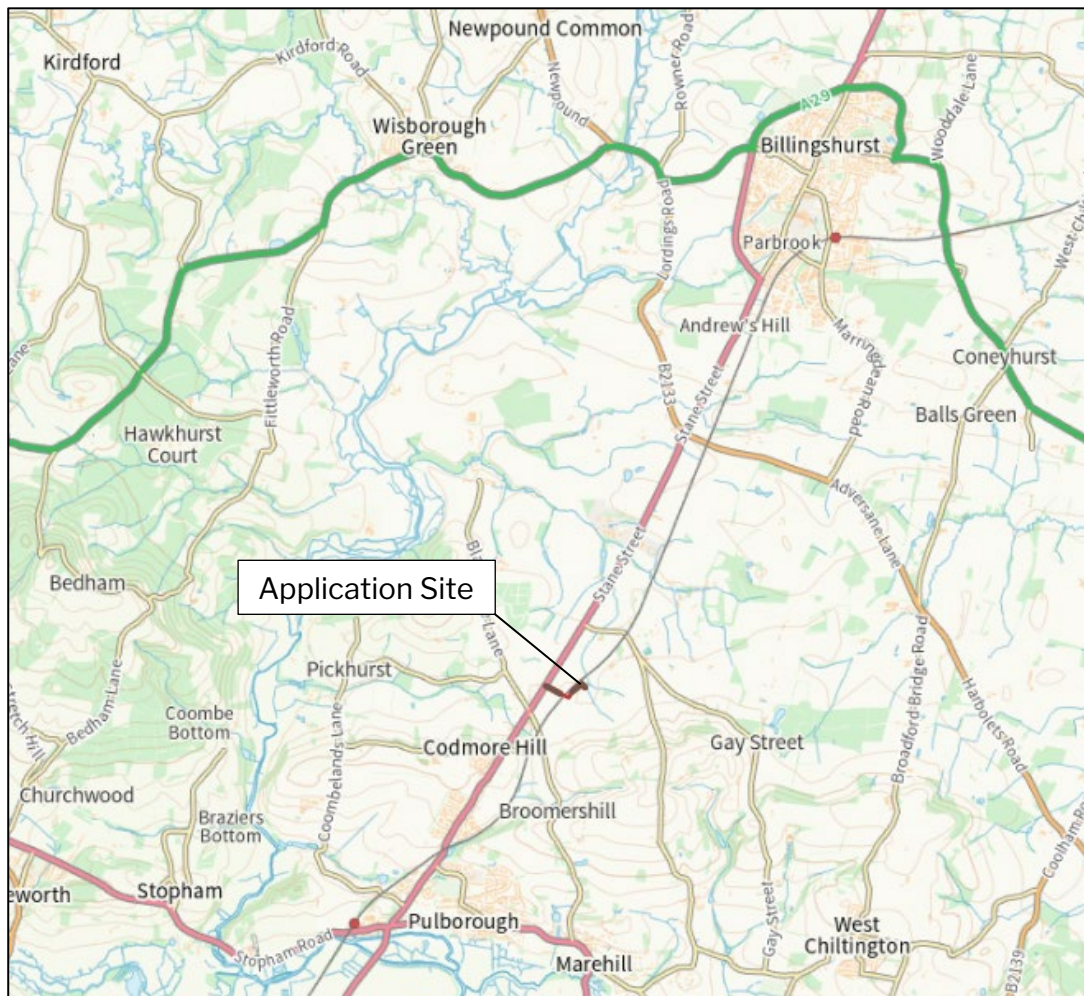
Application and Ownership Forms

CIL Forms

2 APPLICATION SITE

- 2.1 The application site forms part of Gorelands Farm which is an agricultural holding located in North Heath located approximately 1.5 miles to the North of Pulborough and 3 miles to the South of Billingshurst.

Figure 2.1 – Site Location



- 2.2 The site comprises an agricultural brick-built building which has a footprint of 73.44 sqm and had previously been used for lambing and the storage of equipment which was used to maintain the farm. To the rear of the agricultural building is a timber stable building which is subject to an approved demolition application DC/25/0861. The buildings are sited on an area of hardstanding and there is a moveable structure on skids also to the rear, but which was moved in 2023 but can still be seen on Google Earth as shown in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2 – Approved Class Q Building (A) and Structure (B) Approved for Demolition/Removal



- 2.3 The building's immediate surroundings are otherwise formed of concrete hardstanding on three sides (front, rear and northeast side). This extends to 6 metres from the rear elevation of the building, extending under the timber building which is approved to be demolished via DC/25/0681. There is a grassed field to the south-west. To the northwest and northeast are two small storage buildings. Beyond this are fields used for the grazing of the farm's livestock.
- 2.4 The site has an existing access on to Stane Street which serves the farm, the farmhouse and a further residential property known as Two Trees. As noted within the Officer's Report for DC/25/0707 "The site is accessed off Stane Street (A29), which is a highways-maintained road, via a surfaced access road that serves two other residential properties. The existing access is therefore suitable to serve an additional dwelling. The access has also facilitated the agricultural use and residential use without incident for years."

Figure 2.3 – Aerial Image of the Site



- 2.5 The site cannot readily be seen from Stane Street or public vantage points due to the established mature boundary hedging and trees screening the wider site and its distance from the main road.

Figure 2.4 – Site Access from Stane Street



Figure 2.5 – Contextual Aerial Image



- 2.6 The surrounding area has a semi-rural character. To the south lies Toat Car Wash and Café, which is allocated in the Pulborough Neighbourhood Plan (Reference PPNP27) for redevelopment as a mixed commercial and leisure scheme, while North Heath Service Station is located to the west. The immediate area comprises two detached dwellings and areas of open farmland. Scattered residential properties and commercial premises extend along Stane Street to the north towards Adversane and to the south towards Codmore Hill, where a Sainsbury's supermarket and a restaurant are located.

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

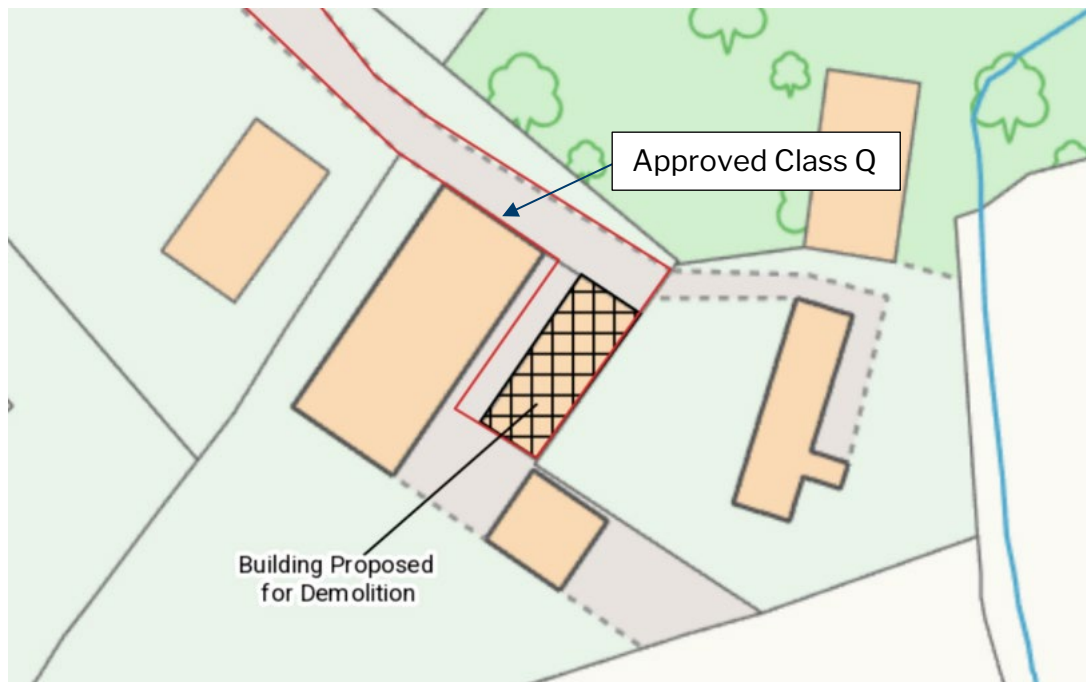
3.1 Planning History

3.1.1 The site has been the subject of planning application DC/25/0681 which was a prior notification for the demolition of the neighbouring stable building on site and more recently DC/25/0707 which sought Prior Approval for the conversion of the agricultural building to form one dwelling. Prior Approval was granted on 23rd June 2025 and Figure 3.1 below shows the approved plans which included a 4 metre extension on the rear elevation of the building.

Figure 3.1 – Approved Dwelling Plans



Figure 3.2 – Plans for Demolition Application DC/25/0681



- 3.1.2 The approval was subject to a pre-commencement condition relating to contamination which is the subject of a live Discharge of Condition application DISC/26/0107.

3.2 Planning Policy

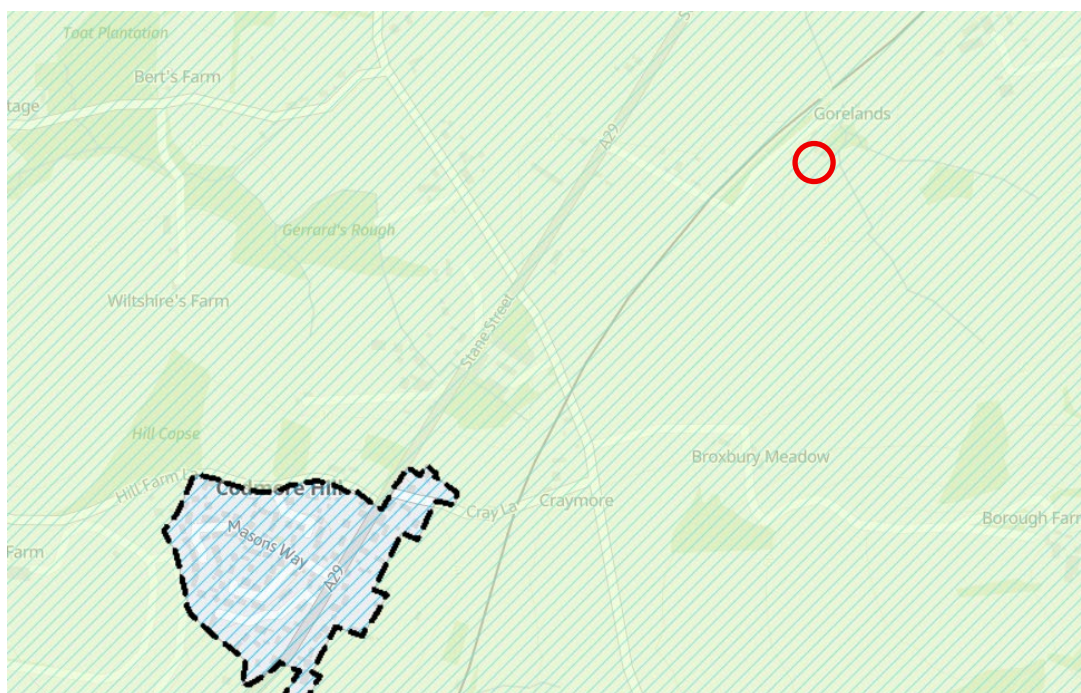
- 3.2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.2.2 The statutory Development Plan relevant to the site comprises the Horsham District Planning Framework (adopted 2015) and Pulborough Neighbourhood Plan 2015-31 (made 8th October 2025).
- 3.2.3 Material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).
- 3.2.4 Horsham District Council has prepared a replacement Local Plan with examination hearings due to resume in April. The policies contained within the replacement Local Plan have been reviewed, and no emerging policies are considered material to the determination of this application. Accordingly, limited weight is afforded to the replacement Local Plan at this stage.

3.3 Development Plan

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)

- 3.3.1 The accompanying Policies Map identifies the site as lying outside of the built-up area boundary and within a Bat Sustenance Zone.

Figure 3.3 – Horsham District Planning Framework Policies Map



- 3.3.2 Policy 1 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) requires the Council to take a positive approach when considering development proposals that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 3.3.3 Policy 2 states that development around the edges of existing settlements will be managed in order to prevent the merging of settlements and to protect the rural character and landscape. The provision of rural housing is supported where it will contribute towards the provision of affordable housing where there is a demonstrable need.
- 3.3.4 Policy 15 supports expansion where it is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement type. The development should demonstrate that it meets the identified housing needs or will assist the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services.

- 3.3.5 Policy 24 seeks to protect the high quality of the district's environment. Developments will be expected to minimise emissions including noise, odour, air and light pollution, and ensure that they are appropriate to their location, taking account of ground conditions and land instability.
- 3.3.6 Policy 25 states that the Council will support development proposals which protect, conserve and enhance the landscape and townscape character.
- 3.3.7 Policy 26 requires developments to be of a scale appropriate to the countryside character and location. Development will be considered acceptable where it does not lead 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.
- 3.3.8 Policy 31 states that development will be supported where it can demonstrate that it maintains or enhances the existing network of green infrastructure. Proposals that would result in the loss of existing green infrastructure will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that new opportunities will be provided that mitigates or compensates for this loss and ensures that the ecosystem services of the area are retained.
- 3.3.9 Policy 33 presumes in favour of the retention of existing important landscape and natural features, for example trees, hedges, banks and watercourses. Development must relate sympathetically to the local landscape and justify and mitigate against any losses that may occur through the development. The proposed scale, massing and appearance of the development should be of a high standard of design and layout and where relevant should relate sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the skyline and important views.
- 3.3.10 Policy 35 supports development it makes a clear contribution to mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change and to meeting the District's carbon reduction targets as set out in the Council's Acting Together on Climate Change Strategy, 2009.
- 3.3.11 Policy 37 states that all developments must be designed to encourage the use of natural lighting and ventilation. Measures which enhance the biodiversity value of a development should be incorporated. Satisfactory arrangements for the storage of refuse and recyclable materials should be an integral part of design.

Pulborough Neighbourhood Plan 2015-31 (made 8th October 2025).

- 3.3.12 Policy 1, *A Spatial Plan for the Parish*, states that development proposals located outside the built-up area boundary must comply with relevant development plan policies governing the control of development within the countryside.
- 3.3.13 Policy 15, *Design* requires all buildings to be well designed and sustainable, taking appropriate account of climate change. Development proposals, including alterations to existing buildings, must demonstrate an appropriate scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout, and use of materials that reflect the architectural and historic character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape, as detailed in the Pulborough Design Statement. The incorporation of biodiversity features within buildings, such as swift and bat boxes and hedgehog holes in fence lines, will be supported.

3.4 Material Considerations

- 3.4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and Pulborough Design Statement (2013) are also material considerations.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (NPPF)

- 3.4.2 The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking (paragraph 11).
- 3.4.3 There are three dimensions to sustainable development: social, economic and environmental (paragraph 8). Residential developments play an important role in the provision of sustainable development with the delivery of high-quality homes in the right location contributing towards the social, economic and environmental health of the District.
- 3.4.4 The NPPF states that development proposals which accord with the development plan should be approved without delay. Paragraph 11d states that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless:
- The application of policies in the framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

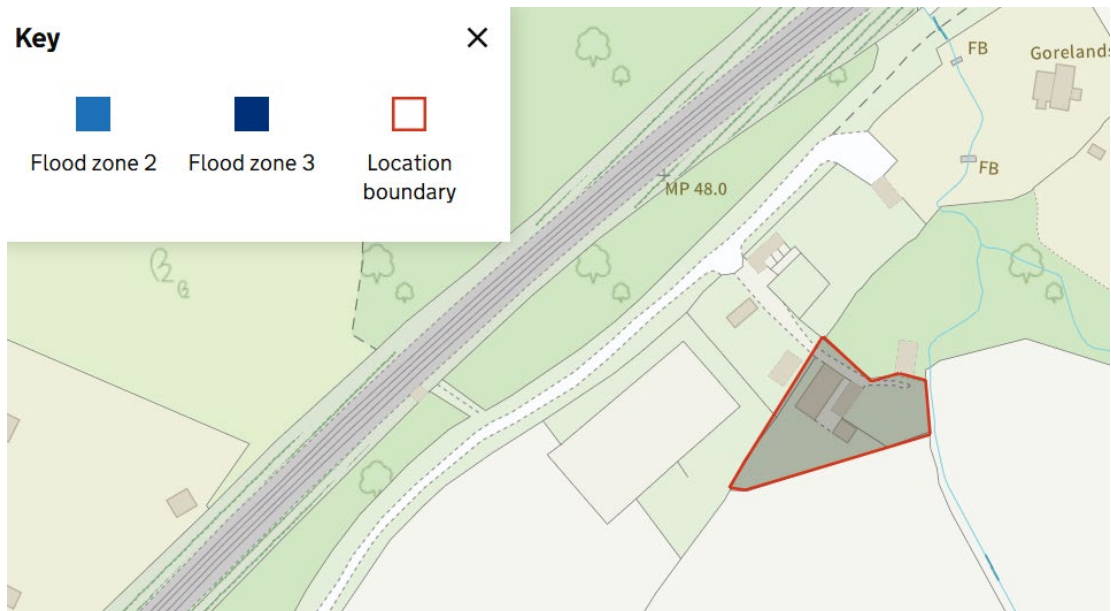
Pulborough Design Statement (2013)

- 3.4.5 The statement identifies the site as lying within Character Area 8 – Rural Pulborough. It describes the landscape as having altered little over time and mainly featuring fields with well-tended hedging and gently rolling hills. The built environment is described as also having changed little in recent years. The area is described as ‘classic rural’.
- 3.4.6 Small scale development within rural areas is required to be well integrated into the existing landscape contours and patterns of small woodlands plus hedgerows. The density and height of any development must be sensitive to its surroundings as well as adjacent buildings. Habitats and biodiversity must be conserved and managed.
- 3.4.7 All new developments should show their impact on the environment and services that exist.
- 3.4.8 Building materials must be sympathetic to existing buildings and the street scene. Good modern design is encouraged, especially when design features conserve energy.

3.5 Environmental Constraints

- 3.5.1 The site is located within Flood Zone 1 with a low probability of flooding.

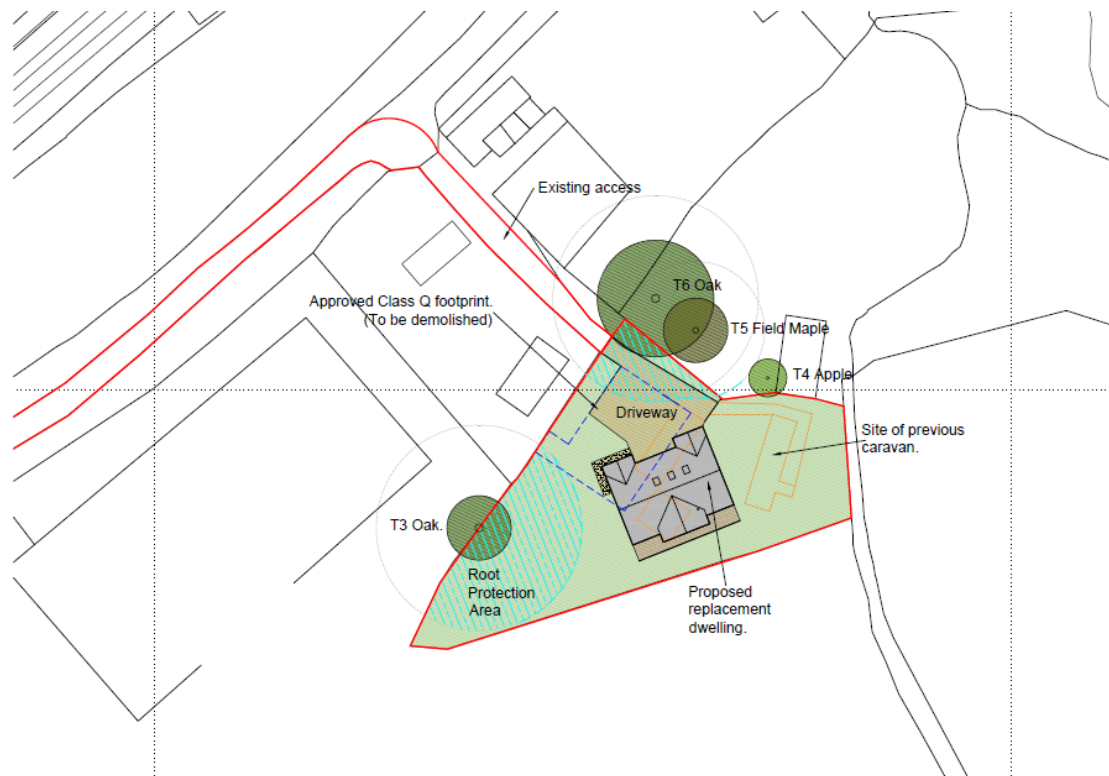
Figure 3.4 – Flood Map for Planning



4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

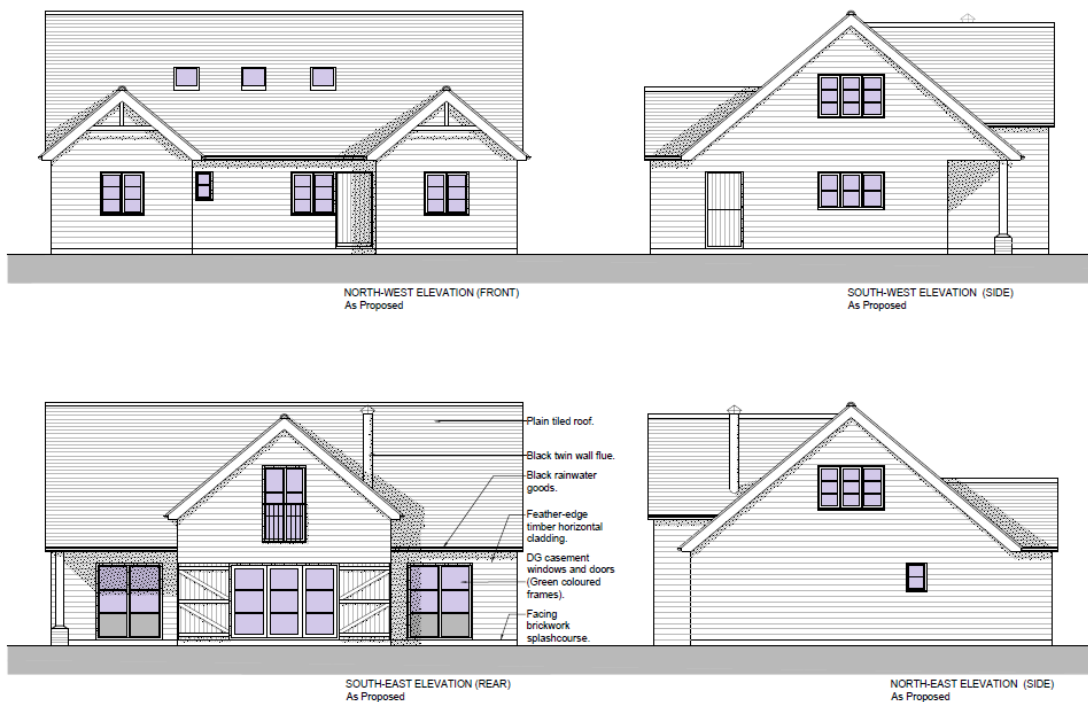
- 4.1 The proposed scheme seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing agricultural building and outbuilding on site and the erection of a new 1.5-storey dwelling designed in a barn-style form, reflecting the agricultural character of the surrounding rural area. This application is submitted as an alternative to the previously approved Prior Approval Scheme (Reference: DC/25/0707), which allowed for the conversion of an agricultural building into a two-bedroom dwelling with a footprint of 124 sqm.
- 4.2 The revised proposal will result in the complete removal of both the existing agricultural building and the adjacent outbuilding. In their place, a 1.5-storey, two-bedroom dwelling is proposed. The dwelling will be positioned between the combined footprint of the demolished structures and enable the dwelling to be moved outside of the root protection area. The remainder of the site will provide a driveway and garden area associated with the proposed dwelling.

Figure 4.1 – Proposed Layout Plan



- 4.3 The ground floor (approximately 102m² GIA) would provide the principal living accommodation, including an open-plan kitchen, dining and living area, together with a snug, study, utility/boot room, shower room and WC, arranged around a central staircase with access to an external patio area. The first floor (approximately 58m² GIA) would provide two bedrooms, each served by ensuite facilities, together with associated dressing and wardrobe space.
- 4.4 Externally, the dwelling would be finished in horizontal feather-edge timber cladding set above a facing brick plinth, with a plain tiled pitched roof, black rainwater goods and green casement windows and doors. The simple palette of materials and restrained detailing reflects the vernacular appearance of traditional agricultural buildings, ensuring the proposal integrates appropriately with the semi-rural character of the surrounding area.
- 4.5 The proposal will provide a total GIA of 160 sqm. Although this is an increase compared to the Prior Approval scheme, due to the demolition of the neighbouring outbuilding will only provide an increase of built form by 5 sqm which is a marginal 3.2%.

Figure 4.2 – Proposed Dwelling



- 4.6 The existing access from Stane Street will be retained and reused. Parking for residents and visitors will be provided on the existing area of hardstanding at the front of the property. A secure cycle store can be provided within the rear garden, and a bin storage is sited to the side of the property.
- 4.7 The orientation of the proposed dwelling and the integration of energy-efficient design features will optimise solar gain and natural ventilation. Sustainable construction methods and materials will be employed, contributing to improved energy performance over the approved conversion scheme.
- 4.8 Energy will be supplied to the dwelling via an air source heat pump.
- 4.9 The proposal does not require the removal of any existing trees and has been repositioned as opposed to the approved scheme to enable the required root protection area for the Oak trees located within the wider site. Sufficient space is available within the garden areas to allow for new native tree and shrub planting.

5 DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

5.1 Use

The proposed development seeks full planning permission for a new dwelling to replace the existing agricultural building and outbuilding on the site. The proposal would result in a change of use from agricultural to residential. The principle of residential use has already been established through the grant of Prior Approval under Reference DC/25/0707 pursuant to Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). A Discharge of Conditions application has also been submitted in respect of the pre-commencement conditions attached to that approval DISC/26/0107, which would enable the approved Class Q scheme to be implemented. Accordingly, there is a realistic and implementable fallback position for the delivery of a dwelling on the site, which is a material consideration in the determination of this application.

5.2 Amount

- 5.2.1 The new dwelling will be 1.5-storey with a gross internal area of approximately 160 sqm, including two bedrooms, open-plan kitchen, dining and living area, together with a snug, study, utility/boot room, shower room and WC. Although the internal floorspace is larger than that in the approved Class Q scheme, the overall built footprint on site will only provide a gain of 3.2% through the demolition of outbuilding located on site.

5.3 Layout

- 5.3.1 The proposed dwelling is to be sited on the footprint of the demolished buildings, utilising existing hardstanding areas. Private garden space will be located around the dwelling. Parking is provided at the front on retained hardstanding, and secure cycle storage and refuse areas are appropriately located to the rear and side, respectively.
- 5.3.2 The layout has been designed to maximise privacy, usability, and accessibility.

5.4 Scale

- 5.4.1 The dwelling is 1.5 storeys, modest in scale, and in keeping with the rural character of the area. Its proportions and height are designed to minimise visual impact and complement the scale of neighbouring properties and the surrounding countryside.

5.5 Appearance

- 5.5.1 The dwelling has been designed in a barn style form design using materials such as timber cladding and barn-style shutters. The plain tiled pitched-roof form integrates well into the landscape. The overall aesthetic echoes traditional agricultural buildings while delivering a high-quality modern dwelling.

5.6 Landscaping

- 5.6.1 The development retains existing trees removes large areas of hardstanding which is replaced by residential garden with soft landscaping which will enhance the visual and ecological value of the site.

5.7 Site Access

- 5.8 The site is accessed directly off Stane Street via an established access that serves two existing residential properties no changes to the access are required or proposed.

5.9 Parking

- 5.9.1 The development will provide on-site parking in line with the West Sussex Residential Parking Demand Calculator. Sufficient space is provided for residents and visitors on existing hardstanding at the front of the dwelling.

5.10 Public Transport and Services

- 5.10.1 While located in a rural area, the site lies approximately 1.5 miles to the north of Pulborough, which provides a range of services and facilities including a railway station, supermarket, doctors' surgery, school and pharmacy. In addition, several bus stops are located along Stane Street in close proximity to the application site, served by the 100 and 69 bus services, which provide connections to Billingshurst, Worthing, Horsham and Burgess Hill.

6 APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues in the consideration of the proposals are considered to be as follows:

- Principle
- Design and scale
- Layout
- Biodiversity net gain

6.2 These are discussed below.

Principle of Development

6.3 The principle of one dwelling on the site has been established through the Prior Approval (Reference: DC/25/0707). The fallback position is therefore a material consideration of significant weight, confirming the site's suitability for residential use.

6.4 Whilst the site is located outside the defined built-up area boundary of Pulborough in an area that the spatial strategy seeks to restrict development, it is the case that the strategy is now out of date given the Council's five-year housing land supply position. It is understood this now stands at less than one year which equates to a significant shortfall. The local plan is also more than five years old. As a result, policies relevant to the determination of the proposals are out of date because they are based upon assessments of housing need that are now not compliant with the NPPF. The proposals therefore fall to be considered against the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

6.5 The site is not situated within a protected area such as a National Landscape, the Green Belt, SSSI or National Park. There is therefore no conflict with paragraph 11d of the NPPF.

6.6 The proposal would deliver a 1.5-storey, modest sized dwelling, a form of housing not typically delivered as part of larger new-build housing developments. Policy 16 of the HDPF requires that new development provides a range of housing sizes, types and tenures to meet the district's needs, as identified in the most recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The proposal would therefore make a positive contribution to the District's housing stock, increasing choice and diversity in the types of homes available.

6.7 This support is particularly crucial in the current economic climate. Recent historic inflation has led to increased costs for raw materials, fuel, and energy. These rising costs, along with ongoing supply chain disruptions, have made construction more expensive, potentially hindering the Government's ability to meet its ambitious house building targets. Consequently, there is a growing need for planning policy to adopt a more flexible approach, especially in

areas like the Horsham district, where there is a clear shortfall and high demand for new housing.

- 6.8 The NPPF advises that planning authorities should support opportunities for sustainable development in rural areas and that proposals should be approved unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The site is not isolated in the context of paragraph 84 of the NPPF given its proximity to existing dwellings and road infrastructure.
- 6.9 The scheme would also accord with the three strands of sustainable development. It would be socially sustainable, providing a modest sized house in a district which has an unfulfilled need and a significant housing land supply shortfall of less than one year.
- 6.10 It would also be environmentally sustainable, avoiding land of the highest amenity and landscape value. It would also deliver significant biodiversity enhancement.
- 6.11 It would also be economically sustainable, providing construction and operational jobs. It will also help to support existing businesses to a small degree through increased spending.
- 6.12 In relation to the site's location, the NPPF acknowledges that rural locations will not have the same level of accessibility to services as urban locations. However, it does not preclude new housing in rural areas.
- 6.13 The proposed dwelling allows for an improved scheme and quality of accommodation and would also allow for better energy-efficiency with energy saving measures integrated into the design and construction materials.
- 6.14 Given the rural location and policy support for sustainable rural housing (HDPF Policies 1, 2, 15, and 26), the proposal is considered acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with other policy criteria, including design, environmental protection, and sustainability.

Design and Scale

- 6.15 The proposed dwelling has been sensitively designed to reflect the character of traditional rural buildings in both scale and appearance. The barn-style design, incorporating timber cladding, barn-style shutters and a modest 1.5-storey pitched roof form, ensures that the development responds appropriately to its countryside setting. The building's proportions and choice of materials are sympathetic to the local vernacular and are consistent with the guidance set out in the Pulborough Design Statement (2013), which states that building materials should be sympathetic to existing buildings and the wider street scene. The Design Statement also encourages good modern design, particularly where design features

contribute to energy efficiency.

- 6.16 The proposed footprint is aligned with that of the buildings it replaces, preserving the spatial character of the area and avoiding encroachment into undeveloped land.
- 6.17 Overall, the scheme achieves a high standard of design appropriate for its rural location, in accordance with HDPF Policies 25, 26, and 33.

Layout

- 6.18 The proposed layout makes efficient use of the previously developed footprint of the existing agricultural building and associated outbuilding, thereby avoiding unnecessary sprawl or the unjustified extension of residential curtilage into the surrounding countryside. The dwelling is positioned broadly on the footprint of the existing structures, ensuring that the development maintains a compact form and minimises its visual and spatial impact on the wider rural landscape.
- 6.19 The layout provides appropriate private amenity space to the sides and rear of the dwelling, offering a functional and well-proportioned outdoor environment for future occupiers. Opportunities also exist to enhance the site boundaries through additional landscaping and planting, which will assist in integrating the development into its rural surroundings. Car parking and refuse storage are discreetly accommodated within the site, and the proposal utilises the existing access, thereby limiting the need for additional hardstanding or changes to the established site arrangement.
- 6.20 Overall, the proposed layout reflects the principles of efficient land use and high-quality design, ensuring that the development integrates appropriately with the site and its surroundings in accordance with the design and layout objectives of the Horsham District Planning Framework and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 6.21 The proposal is for a self-build dwelling and is therefore exempt from the requirement to provide the mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) under the provisions of the Environment Act 2021 relating to Biodiversity Net Gain.
- 6.22 As the development meets the definition of self-build or custom housebuilding, it is not required to demonstrate biodiversity net gain through the statutory biodiversity metric.
- 6.23 Nevertheless, the proposal will seek to incorporate small biodiversity enhancements where possible, such as native planting and features for birds and bats, which will help support local biodiversity in line with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Trees

- 6.24 The development would not require the removal of any existing trees, and no trees within or adjacent to the site are subject to a Tree Preservation Order. The proposal also allows for the retention of the required tree buffer zone and the removal of areas of existing hardstanding, which will improve ground conditions for the existing trees located outside the application site but within the buffer zone. This represents an improvement compared to the fallback position established under application DC/25/0707. The approach is therefore consistent with the aims of Horsham District Planning Framework Policy 25 and Horsham District Planning Framework Policy 33, which support the protection and enhancement of natural features.

7 SUMMARY

- 7.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing agricultural building and outbuilding and the construction of a new 1.5-storey dwelling at Gorelands Farm, Stane Street, North Heath. The proposal is presented as a high-quality alternative to the previously approved Prior Approval Scheme (Reference: DC/25/0707), offering a more functional, energy-efficient and purpose-designed home while remaining closely aligned with the established built footprint.
- 7.2 The principle of residential development on the site is firmly established through the extant Class Q approval, which carries significant weight as a fallback position. Although the site lies outside the defined built-up area boundary, Horsham District Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, and the adopted Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) is now more than five years old. As a result, the most important policies for determining this application are out of date, and the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) is engaged.
- 7.3 The proposed dwelling has been sensitively designed to reflect the traditional rural character of the locality while incorporating modern sustainability measures, including energy-efficient construction and an air source heat pump. Its modest scale, appropriate siting, and restrained palette of materials ensure that the development integrates well with its surroundings and does not give rise to harm to landscape character, visual amenity, or neighbouring uses. The proposal also avoids the loss of trees, improves root protection conditions compared with the fallback scheme, and provides opportunities for biodiversity enhancement.
- 7.4 Overall, the development represents a sustainable, well-considered and context-appropriate alternative to the approved Class Q conversion. There are no adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme when assessed against the NPPF as a whole. The proposal therefore accords with national policy objectives and should be supported by the local planning authority.