



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/25/1992

St Andrews Farm, Andrews Hill, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9JS

DESCRIPTION:

Installation of a timber clad shipping container at the top of the farm to site an on farm milk station and vending machine, with an additional 1.5m area to the front of the container that will provide an undercover area for the container to be accessed.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/20/1318	Variation of condition 1 of previously approved application DC/18/1710 (Erection of an agricultural workers dwelling incorporating a farm office following the removal of a mobile home, storage container, sheds, stables and extension to existing bungalow) for external amendments, including the relocation of bifold doors to the front elevation and window to the rear, and alterations to the depth of the windows to the utility, bathroom and en-suite.	Application 23.10.2020	Permitted	on
DC/22/0402	Variation of Condition 1 of previously approved application DC/20/1318 (Variation of condition 1 of previously approved application DC/18/1710 (Erection of an agricultural workers dwelling incorporating a farm office following the removal of a mobile home, storage container, sheds, stables and extension to existing bungalow) for external amendments, including the relocation of bi-fold doors to the front elevation and window to the rear, and alterations to the depth of the windows to the utility, bathroom and en-suite)) to allow for the installation of an air source heat pump and other minor amendments to dwelling.	Application 20.04.2022	Permitted	on

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site is located on the western side of Stane Street. The site comprises of a working dairy farm, with associated dairy parlour, and ancillary buildings on the site, including an existing rural workers dwelling occupied by the applicant. The parcel of land in question is situated opposite the chalet bungalow, St Andrews. The parcel of land forms part of the existing farmyard which is enclosed by concrete panel wall. Access to the site is from Stane Street, and through the farm yard.

The application site is situated outside of the designated built-up area within the rural countryside setting. The site is positioned within the setting of the listed buildings within the vicinity to the north and east of the site. However, the site does not fall in a conservation area.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

The proposal seeks planning permission for the installation of a timber clad shipping container at the top of the farm to site an on-farm milk station and vending machine, with an additional 1.5m area to the front of the container that will provide an undercover area for the container to be accessed.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):

Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets

Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019 - 2031

Policy Bill 2: Housing design and character

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):

Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality
Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles
Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment
Policy 31: Rural Economic Development

Parish Design Statement:

Design Statement for the Parish of Billingshurst.

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 Conservation: No Objection – Satisfied the proposed structure will not harm the setting of the listed buildings in the vicinity.

HDC Environmental Health: No Objection - Due to location and nature of area this Department have no objections to this application, but we are mindful to the neighbouring dwellings close to the site.

However, in order mitigate any adverse environmental impacts, the applicant will need to exercise suitable controls in the following areas, and make recommendations for consideration by the Planning Department.

HDC Economic: No Objection - Our Economic Strategy indicates that we need to support our local businesses to become more productive and resilient to facilitate long-term economic growth. We support the business seeking to develop and diversify to ensure the business flourishes.

Newt Officer: No Objection - It is considered that the proposed development would present a low risk to great crested newts and/or their habitats. However, as the development is within the red Impact Risk Zone, as modelled by district licence mapping, and due to the pond within close proximity, recommend that the following informative should be attached to planning consent.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Representations:

2 letters for Support have been received from 2 separate addresses, supporting the application on the following grounds:

- Support Planning Application.
- It would be fantastic to buy local milk and support more farming. Driving past this farm multiple times a day and for many years, always wished to purchase some milk from them, especially from the beautiful cows they have and really hope this gets approved.
- A fantastic way to ensure the farmers get paid fairly, support local produce and reduce our food miles.
- The speed limit has already been reduced on the main road, so will be safe to enter and exit.

Parish Comments:

Billingshurst Parish Council: No Objection - the committee resolved to a NEUTRAL response to this application, in that they saw no cause for objection to the plans as submitted.

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 2015 (HDPF 2015) seeks to ensure that the development would contribute to the diverse and sustainable farming enterprises within the district. New buildings would need to be suitably located within the existing boundaries of the estate. The development should support the sustainable economic growth towards balanced living and working communities.

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 or the disposal of waste;
- Provide for quiet informal recreational use; or
- Enable the sustainable development of rural areas.

The application site is an established agricultural enterprise, with the supporting information explaining that the addition of the milk vending machine would assist in securing the future of the farm business. The submitted planning statement explains that the vending machine would assist in developing a more sustainable farm business by generating a diversified income stream.

Following consultation with the Council's Economic Officer it is acknowledged that the Council's Economic Strategy indicates that support should be given to the local businesses to become more productive and resilient to facilitate long-term economic growth. Therefore, this Local Planning

Authority will support this farm business in seeking to develop and diversify to ensure the business flourishes.

The proposal is clearly essential to the countryside location and would directly support the needs of agricultural activities already taking place at the site. The principal of the development is therefore considered acceptable and in accordance with the above 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.

Furthermore, Policy 34 of the HDPF seeks to maintain that new development would preserve, and ensure clear legibility of, locally distinctive vernacular building forms and their settings, features, fabric and materials.

Whilst the proposed timber clad container would be clearly visible from the highway, it would be viewed as part of an existing cluster of agricultural buildings, and in this immediate context would be of an appropriate siting, scale, form and design. The presence of an ancillary container building of this resulting scale would not be unexpected in a rural location such as this, especially a farm. The Council's Conservation Officer has raised no concerns; therefore it is considered that the proposed structure would not harm the setting of the listed building in the vicinity.

For the above reasons it is viewed that the proposal would not result in any adverse effects on the setting of the neighbouring listed building. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not have any adverse impact on the character or appearance of the site or the wider surrounding area, and is in accordance with the above policies.

Residential Amenity:

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 timber clad container and the resulting relationship with adjacent properties would be sufficient to prevent any unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity. Whilst the proposal would introduce an additional facility on site, in order to mitigate any adverse environmental impacts, the Council's Environmental Health Officer has recommended a number of conditions to ensure the applicant exercises suitable controls in the subject area. On that basis, the amenity impacts of the proposal are therefore considered acceptable and in accordance with the above policy.

Water Neutrality:

A 2021 Position Statement from Natural England identified that it could not be concluded with the required degree of certainty that new development in the Sussex North Water Supply Zone would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites. As a consequence, and to comply with the legal duties set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (known as the Habitat Regulations), all new development since has been required to demonstrate water neutrality.

On 31st October 2025 Natural England formally withdrew the 2021 Position Statement, citing a package of measures that they were satisfied would safeguard the Arun Valley sites. Principal amongst these measures is a reduction in the Southern Water abstraction licence 'by March 2026'. However, given the licence change has not yet taken place Horsham District Council, as competent authority under the Habitats Regulations, cannot yet be certain that new development will not result in adverse impacts on the Arun Valley sites.

To ensure development can come forward as water neutral in the meantime, the Council has agreed with Natural England to use the significant water savings made by Southern Water in 2024/25 through their programme of leakage reduction (amongst other measures). This has generated some 3,240,000 litres per day of water savings that can now be attributed to new development without increasing water abstraction in the Arun Valley beyond baseline. These savings were previously to be used to launch the Sussex North Water Certification Scheme (SNWCS), however following the withdrawal statement SNWCS will no longer be launching. Natural England standing advice dated 10 November 2025 raises no objection to using these savings to enable development to come forward. The standing advice clarifies that it functions as Natural England's formal response pursuant to Regulation 63(3) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 to all relevant planning applications which seek to achieve water neutrality using the above Southern Water savings.

Officers have undertaken an Appropriate Assessment which demonstrates that the anticipated increase in mains water consumption from this development, alongside all other development granted since the 31st October 2025, will not exceed 3,240,000 litres per day.

Accordingly, Officers consider that the proposed development will not have an Adverse Effect on the Integrity of the Arun Valley Site, either alone or in combination with other plan and projects, thereby complying with Regulations 63 and 70 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, HDPF Policy 31, and paragraph 193 of the NPPF.

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.

The Biodiversity Gain Plan must show how the development will achieve the required minimum 10% BNG using the statutory biodiversity metric tool, 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 (on unregistered sites) and significant on-site enhancements will be secured over this period by way of a Legal Agreement.

The Applicant has demonstrated that the development is exempt from the requirement to achieve a minimum 10% BNG by reason of:

- The development qualifies as 'de minimis' under Regulation 4 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024

Conclusions:

The proposal is considered to comply with relevant local and national planning policies and is therefore recommended for approval.

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:** Details of any proposed external security lighting should be submitted to the Local Planning prior to any development taking place.
- Reason: To safeguard the amenities of adjacent occupiers in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).
- 4 **Pre-Commencement Condition:** Details of any proposed external plant such as refrigeration motors should be submitted to the Local Planning prior to any development taking place.
- Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the locality in accordance with Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).
- 5 **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).
- 6 **Regulatory Condition:** The premises shall not be open for trade or business except between the hours of:
- Monday to Saturdays 0700-1900
 - Sundays and Bank / Public Holidays 0800-1800
- Reason: To safeguard the amenities of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).
- 7 **Regulatory Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall be used in association with St Andrews Farm (as so delineated on the location plan) as an agricultural enterprise and for no other purpose whatsoever without express planning consent from the Local Planning Authority first being obtained.
- Reason: The site is in an area where permission for development would not normally be permitted except where there is an overriding need in the interests of agriculture or forestry in accordance with Policy 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

Note to Applicant - Great Crested Newts

The applicant is reminded that, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to (amongst other things): deliberately capture, disturb, injure, or kill great crested newts; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place. Planning permission for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. Should great crested newts be found at any stage of the development works, then all works should cease, and a professional and/or suitably qualified and experienced ecologist (or Natural England) should be contacted for advice on any special precautions before continuing, including the need for a licence

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/25/1992

Schedule of plans/documents **approved:**

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Floor plan	Proposed	NONE	15.12.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed	NONE	15.12.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed	NONE	15.12.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed	NONE	15.12.2025
Supporting Statement	Heritage	NONE	15.12.2025
Block plan		NONE	15.12.2025
Supporting Statement	Planning	NONE	03.12.2025
Location plan		NONE	03.12.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Halima Chowdhury Date: 28.01.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 09.02.2026