South Downs
National Park Authority

Horsham District Council

Our Ref: SDNP/26/03861/ADJAUT
Contact Officer: Nicola Van Wunnik
Tel. No.: 01730 819240

9th October 2026

Dear Sir/Madam,

Neighbouring Authority Consultation

Applicant: Horsham District Council
Proposal: Adjoining Authority Consultation - Horsham District Council (DC/26/1432) - Change of use from barn / cattle shed to light industrial workshops with repairs to timber frame and plinth, alterations to roof form and external materials, re-instatement of doors, reinstatement and refurbishment of windows and door openings and new roof lights. Erection of new storage building. Provision of parking. (Retrospective) (Full Planning).

Location: Buncton Manor Farm, Steyning Road, Wiston, West Sussex

Thank you for your correspondence received 29 September 2026, consulting us as a neighbouring authority on the above noted development proposals.

Although the application site is located outside of the National Park, the Council has a statutory duty to consider the Purposes of the National Park when making its determination.

The two statutory purposes of the SDNP designation are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage,
- To promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of their areas.

If there is a conflict between these two purposes, conservation takes precedence. There is also a duty to foster the economic and social wellbeing of the local community in pursuit of these purposes.

Section 245 of the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (S.245 duty) amends and strengthens the Section 11A (2) duty of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 upon relevant authorities, which includes the National Park Authority itself, to 'seek to further the specified purposes of Protected Landscapes'.

The National Park's comments on the development are as follows:

Thank you for consulting the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) on the above application.

Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 strengthens the Section 11A (2) duty of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and requires all relevant authorities including neighbouring Local Planning Authorities to "seek to further the specified purposes of Protected Landscapes." The Government's 'Guidance for relevant authorities on seeking to further the purposes of Protected Landscapes', published 16 December 2024, sets out that this duty is active not passive and that,

as far as is reasonably practicable, 'relevant authorities should seek to avoid harm and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty, special qualities, and key characteristics of Protected Landscapes.' It is therefore incumbent on the Local Planning Authority, to give significant weight to the S.245 duty when determining applications.

Development within the setting of a National Park should be consistent with the section 245 duty, and section 19, part N4, paragraph 4 of the NPPF (2026), which relates to the setting of Protected Landscapes:

"Development proposals within the setting of Protected Landscapes should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the Protected Landscape."

It is therefore important to consider direct and indirect effects upon the National Park designated landscape and its setting as well as its special qualities. The LPA officers will therefore need to assess any impacts upon the National Park in order to address the above statutory duty.

The site is approximately 90m from the boundary of the National Park. The proposed development would be located in an area where there is pre-existing built form, and as such the development would likely result in minor impacts on the setting of the National Park.

The SDNPA would advise that any development within the setting of the Park should contribute positively to ecosystem services and to biodiversity net gain. Although the proposal is not subject to mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain, opportunities to deliver biodiversity enhancements should be incorporated into the proposal. Any new planting should comprise native, locally characteristic species to provide meaningful ecological benefits and reinforce local landscape character.

Consideration should be given to the protection of dark night skies, which are a special quality of the National Park. As the submission does not confirm whether external lighting is proposed, a condition restricting and controlling external lighting is recommended.

The proposal also includes rooflights within the main roof slope. While it is stated that the barn would be used during daytime hours only, the installation of automatic blackout blinds is recommended to minimise light spill during dusk and hours of darkness, particularly in the winter months.

Yours faithfully

[redacted]

TIM SLANEY
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South Downs National Park Authority

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