



Applications & Appeals Services

**APPEAL UNDER S.78 OF THE
TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990**

STATEMENT OF CASE

in respect of

**Construction of 1no. self-build dwelling and conversion of
existing barn to form home office. Construction of associated
driveway.**

at

Town Barn, Dragons Green Road, Shipley, RH13 8GQ



Appellants: Mr & Mrs Allen

LPA Ref: DC/26/0766

September 2026

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I hold a Bachelor of Science with Honours Degree and Post Graduate Diploma from the University of Wales, College of Cardiff, in City and Regional Planning and have been a Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute since 1999.

I have over 25 years of experience in Town Planning and have held senior positions in Local Government the most notable being Head of Development Control at Arun District Council. I have worked for national planning consultancies and also held the position of Planning Manager for a house building firm.

For a number of years I have been the Director of NJA Town Planning Ltd and undertake the full range of planning work across a wide geographical area serving the needs of private individuals, private estates and commercial businesses.

I am familiar with the appeal site, the Local Planning Authority and its policies.

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APPENDICES

NJA/1 – Land to the north of Cowfold Road, Coolham, appeal decision

NJA/2 - Horsham Golf Club, appeal decision

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This appeal is against the refusal of planning permission by Horsham District Council, as Local Planning Authority, for **“Erection of 1no. self-build dwelling and conversion of existing barn to form home office. Construction of associated driveway.”** at Town Barn, Dragons Green Road, Shipley, RH13 8GQ. NJA Town Planning Ltd has been instructed by Mr & Mrs Allen to appeal against this refusal of planning permission by the Council.

2.0 APPEAL SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 Town Barn is a timber framed, traditional barn located within the countryside and accessed off Dragons Green Road. The barn comprises a corrugated roof and predominantly horizontal timber boarding to the elevations. Further details on the history and structure of the barn are included within the Heritage Report (Chilcroft Heritage Planning, May 2026).
- 2.2 The barn is situated adjacent to a field gate and close to the road. Land to which the barn relates extends to the north and north west and which is defined by hedgerows and mature trees.
- 2.3 Town Barn is located within the countryside, approximately 2 miles to the south west of Southwater. There is sporadic residential and other development north and south along Dragons Green Road and Marlpost Road which leads into Southwater.

Figure 1: Aerial image (Google Maps extract) of the site:



2.4 The following are photographs of Town Barn and the site:





3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY AND POLICY

Planning History

3.1 The following is the relevant planning history for Town Barn:

- DC/04/2051 – Conversion of barn into 1 residential dwelling. Planning permission granted 26 January 2005.
- DC/09/1514 – Conversion of redundant barn to 1 residential dwelling as per previous consent DC/04/2051. Application withdrawn 19 October 2009.
- DC/09/2155 – Renewal of existing consent (DC/04/2051) for conversion of redundant barn to (2-bed) residential use. Planning permission granted 18 January 2020.
- DC/19/2307 – Notification for the change of use of the existing barn to provide a wedding venue for use by the Sussex Produce Company. Objection 09 December 2019.

3.2 The application subject of this appeal (DC/26/0766) was determined by the Council on the 29 July 2026. The application was refused for the following reasons:

1. **The proposed dwelling would result in a new residential development in the countryside, in a location remote from everyday services and facilities, where future occupiers would be heavily reliant on private vehicle use. By reason of its isolated and prominent siting within an undeveloped agricultural field, the development would erode the rural character of the area and would not represent a form of development that is essential to a countryside location. The proposal fails to accord with the established spatial strategy for directing development to sustainable locations and is not supported by any site allocation within the development plan. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to Policies 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), and Policy Ship HD1 of the Shipley Neighbourhood Plan (2021).**
2. **The proposed dwelling, by virtue of its isolated and prominent position within an open agricultural field, would introduce an incongruous form of development that would detract from the rural character, landscape quality and visual amenity of the countryside. The scale and siting of the development, in an area with limited existing built neighbouring form and**

little natural screening, would result in harm to the character and appearance of the landscape and would fail to respect the prevailing development pattern. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to Policies 32, 33 and 25 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (August 2026)

- 3.3 The Council's Case Officer's Report assesses the proposal under the NPPF 2024 version which has since been updated by the newly published Framework on 17 August 2026, after the determination of the planning application.
- 3.4 The Appellant's Planning, Design and Access Statement provides a full assessment of the proposed development under the previous NPPF for the Planning Inspector's information. This Statement of Case addresses the Council's reasons for refusal against the new August 2026 version. The key NPPF policies most relevant to the proposed development when considered as a whole are set out below, although this Statement of Case focuses on the most relevant policies in respect of the Council's reasons for refusal:

Decision-making policies

- DM1: Preparing development proposals
- DM2: Information requirements
- DM3: Determining development proposals
- DM4: Emerging development plan policies
- DM5: Development viability
- DM6: Use of planning conditions and obligations
- DM7: Relationship with other regulatory regimes

Achieving sustainable development

- S1: Positive plan-making
- S2: Producing a spatial strategy
- S3: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- S4: Principle of development within settlements
- S5: Principle of development outside settlements
- S6: Neighbourhood plans and the presumption

Meeting the challenge of climate change

- CC2: Mitigation of climate change
- CC3: Adaption to climate change

Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

- HO1: Assessing the need for homes
- HO2: Setting requirement figures for homes
- HO3: Providing land for homes
- HO5: Meeting the needs of different groups
- HO6: Planning for a diverse mix of sites
- HO7: Meeting the need for homes
- HO7: Providing affordable homes
- HO11: Isolated homes in the countryside
- HO13: Build out of residential and strategic sites

Making effective use of land

- L1: Planning for effective use of land
- L2: Making effective use of land
- L3: Achieving appropriate densities

Achieving well-designed places

- DP3: Key principles for well-designed places
- DP4: The design process

Promoting sustainable transport

- TR3: Locating development in sustainable locations
- TR4: Street design, access and parking
- TR6: Assessing transport impacts
- TR8: Public rights of way

Pollution, public protection and security

- P2: Ground conditions
- P3: Living conditions and pollution

Managing flood risk and coastal change

- F4: Flood risk for decision-making
- F5: The sequential test
- F6: Development in areas at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea
- F7: Ensuring development is safe from flooding
- F8: Sustainable drainage systems and watercourses

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

- N2: Improving the natural environment
- N3: Trees in new development
- N6: Areas of particular importance for biodiversity and geodiversity

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

- HE4: Securing the conservation of heritage assets
- HE5: Assessing effects on heritage assets
- HE7: Decisions on non-designated heritage assets

3.5 NPPF paragraph 7 confirms that the Framework should be read as a whole. It states that ***‘Some of these policies should also indicate how much weight the government would expect a particular consideration to be given, including cases where it is appropriate to give substantial weight to certain benefits, and the limited circumstances in which it is expected that permission should be refused’.***

3.6 An example of where ‘substantial weight’ should be given is where the benefits of providing homes will contribute towards meeting the evidence accommodation needs of the community (NPPF policy HO7).

The Development Plan

- 3.7 The Development Plan comprises the Horsham District Planning Framework adopted in 2015 (the HDPF) and in this case the Shipley Neighbourhood Plan 2019 – 2031 which was ‘made’ on 23 June 2021. The Council’s reasons for refusal refer to the following policies of the HDPF and the Neighbourhood Plan:

HDPF (2015)

- Policy 2: Strategic Development
- Policy 3: Development Hierarchy
- Policy 4: Settlement Expansion
- Policy 25: District Character and the Natural Environment
- Policy 26: Countryside Protection
- Policy 32: The Quality of New Development
- Policy 33: Development Principles

Shipley Neighbourhood Plan (2021)

- Ship HD1: New Housing Development

- 3.8 A full range of relevant policies of the HDPF and Neighbourhood Plan which are relevant to the consideration of the proposal overall are set out within the Planning, Design and Access Statement.

Emerging Policy

- 3.9 The Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040 was formally submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in July 2024 for public examination. Hearings commenced, however in April 2025 the Planning Inspector found that the Duty to Co-operate had not been met and raised significant soundness concerns in relation to the Plan’s housing requirement and spatial strategy. As a result, the Planning inspector recommended that the Council withdraw the Plan.

- 3.10 Matters have since progressed and in January 2026 a Planning Inspector was appointed to conduct a new examination of the Horsham Local Plan 2023-2040. Examination re-commenced with final hearings in October 2026 and adoption presently anticipated for January 2027. In addition, and following the Government's changes to the Local Plan process and requirements, Horsham District Council has been mandated to start a new Local Plan as well, at the same time. As such, the Council presently has an emerging Local Plan at Examination stage, in addition to commencing work on a new style Local Plan.
- 3.11 At this stage however, the HDPF remains the adopted development plan relevant to the determination of this appeal together with the Shipley Neighbourhood Plan.

Housing Land Supply

- 3.12 NPPF policy PM2 requires Local Plans to set out a positive vision and spatial strategy which supports the delivery of the spatial development strategy for their area, setting out specific proposals to meet development needs and for conserving and improving the environment.
- 3.13 In setting out a spatial strategy, policies for the minimum amount of development must be provided, land allocations and broad locations for growth for a period of no less than 10 years from the point of adoption of the Local Plan.
- 3.14 Similarly, NPPF policy S1 requires the development plan to positively for future growth and change by seeking to meet the development needs of their area, as a minimum. For spatial development strategies, and for Local Plans where a spatial development strategy is not in place, policy S1 states that this means providing for objectively assessed needs for housing, business and other uses as well as needs that cannot be met in neighbouring areas.
- 3.15 In respect of housing, NPPF policy HO1 requires the preparation of spatial development strategies and Local Plans where a development strategy is not in place to be based upon a housing need assessment that established the overall number of homes needed in an area as a minimum over the plan period, using the standard method.

- 3.16 NPPF policy HO2 states out that the housing requirement figure should reflect the extent to which the identified needs of the area can be accommodated over the plan period as a minimum and be higher than the overall figure identified in the local housing needs assessment where appropriate.
- 3.17 In providing land for homes, NPPF policy HO3 states that Local Plans should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites to meet or exceed the housing requirement figure and pitch and plot requirements for their areas over the plan period. In relation to housing this means providing:
- i. 'A supply of specific deliverable sites for five years following the intended date of adoption of the plan, with an appropriate buffer (as set out in Annex D); and*
 - ii. A supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth for the subsequent years 6 to 10 and, where possible, for the remaining plan period, where the plan covers more than 10 years'.*
- 3.18 NPPF paragraph 8 at Annex D: Housing calculations and supply provides further guidance and states that Local Planning Authorities should identify and updated annually a supply of specific deliverable sites. This should be sufficient to meet a minimum of five years' worth of housing, assessed against their housing requirement in the development plan, or against their local housing need (calculated using the standard method) where the development plan housing requirement is more than five years old (with an appropriate buffer – NPPF Annex D paragraph 9).
- 3.19 In the case of Horsham District Council, the present HDPF was adopted in 2015. It is therefore significantly over five years old and it does not take into account the current standard method in its policies relating to the supply of new homes (specifically HDPF policy 15).
- 3.20 In addition, the Council's most recent Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) for 2024/25 (published on 19 December 2025) states that in accordance with the (former) NPPF, the standard method calculates the local housing need (at December 2025) to be 1,338 per year. This equates to 6,690 for the five-year period (1 April 2025 – 31 March 2030). However, as Horsham District has a 62% result from the 2023 Housing Delivery Test

results, a 20% buffer must be added to this figure and this results in a total five year supply requirement of 8,028 (see paragraphs 3.21 – 3.26 of the AMR).

- 3.21 Paragraph 3.40 of the AMR confirms that the Council can only demonstrate a **housing land supply of 1.7 years** and as such, it is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply as required by the NPPF. Specifically, the supply deficit is 5,286 homes which is significant (see table 6 of the AMR).
- 3.22 The under provision of housing within the Horsham district has persisted for some time - the Council's AMR for 2023/24 set out a 1 year supply of housing and the AMR for 2022/23 set out 2.9 years' supply.
- 3.23 The Council is therefore unable to demonstrate a five year supply of housing as required by the NPPF and the consequences of this are addressed at Section 4 in response to the Case Officer's report.

Shaping Development in Horsham District Planning Advice Note September 2025

- 3.24 The Shaping Development in Horsham District Planning Advice Note (SD PAN) was approved by the Council on 17 September 2025. The SD PAN supersedes the Council's former Facilitating Appropriate Development (FAD) which was published in 2022.
- 3.25 The SD PAN is now a material consideration in determining planning applications. It sets out the Council's aspirations for how development comes forward and the weight that can be given to current local planning policy within the context of legislation, national planning policy and guidance.
- 3.26 The Council's SD PAN acknowledges that the Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of housing and that it has produced a Housing Delivery Action Plan.
- 3.27 Subsequently, the SD PAN confirms the following:

'Because of the circumstances in which the Council finds itself, and notwithstanding the current requirement of all new development to demonstrate that it is water neutral, HDC expects to receive planning applications proposing

development in locations and of types not supported by the HDPF, the emerging Local Plan or in Neighbourhood Plans.

HDC will continue to act in a proactive manner by supporting sustainable development that both delivers the development to meet identified needs and ensures that other objectives are met. To demonstrate this, HDC has produced this document to provide clarity in its approach and guidance to those who engage with the planning system in Horsham' (paragraphs 1.8 and 1.9).

- 3.28 The SD PAN sets out at paragraph 2.4 that in the absence of a five year housing land supply and/or where Housing Delivery Test performance is less than 75%, NPPF paragraph 11 (and footnote 8) of the 2024 version indicates that the policies that effect that supply of housing may be considered out-of-date. It further confirms that this has the effect of reducing the weight that may be afforded to such policies and engages the 'tilted balance' where there is an expectation that planning applications for housing should be approved.
- 3.29 In respect of the Council's emerging Local Plan, SD PAN paragraphs 2.13 and 2.18 confirm that (at the point of publishing), the Council does not take the view that the emerging Local Plan is sufficiently advanced to justify great weight to its policies, in addition to there being unresolved objections to the majority of policies within it. In addition, the Council acknowledges that Strategic Policy 37 (Housing Provision) of the emerging Local Plan is not consistent with the NPPF (2024 version) as it does not fully address housing needs (paragraph 2.19).
- 3.30 The Council recognises that as it is unable to demonstrate a five year supply of housing land that in accordance with the (former) NPPF, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged (where water neutrality is demonstrated but which is no longer requirement – please see below). Given these circumstances, it is also acknowledged that it is likely to receive applications outside of built-up area boundaries and on unallocated sites. Subsequently, the SD PAN confirms that it will consider positively applications that meet all of the following criteria:
- ***'The site adjoins the existing settlement edge as defined by the BUAB;***
 - ***The level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement the proposal relates to;***

- ***The proposal demonstrates that it meets all local housing needs or will assist the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services;***
- ***The impact of the development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long-term development; and***
- ***The development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape character features are maintained and enhanced’.***

3.31 The relevant parts of the SD PAN are referred to within this Statement of Case at Section 4 and a copy is included with this appeal for the Planning Inspector’s information.

Water Neutrality

3.32 The Horsham district lies within the Sussex North Water Resource Zone (WRZ) which is supplied from ground water abstraction, from the Folkestone bed of the Lower Greensand/Wealden Greensand semi-confirmed aquifer, close to Pulborough. The WRZ also covers the Arun district, Crawley borough, Chichester district and Mid Sussex district including areas located within the South Downs National Park.

3.33 The abstraction site is located on the River Arun, close to a group of nature conservation sites known as the ‘Arun Valley Sites’. These are designated as a Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area and Ramsar Site due to their rare and protected habitats.

3.34 In September 2021, Natural England issued a Position Statement setting out that it could not be concluded that water extraction was not having an impact on the protected Arun Valley sites and that development must not add to this impact by increased water abstraction. As a result, development was required to be ‘water neutral’ by not increasing the demand for water above current abstraction rates.

3.35 However more recently, on 31 October 2025, Natural England issued a Withdrawal Statement confirming that its Water Neutrality Position Statement of September 2021 has been withdrawn. For individual applications, the Council will be using the 2024/25 water efficiency savings made by Southern Water to allow all development to move forward as water neutral from 01 November 2025. As a result, for Applicants, it is no

longer a requirement to demonstrate water neutrality at planning application stage.

This means that:

1. No water neutrality statement is now required.
2. No payment into SNWCS is needed to use the Southern Water capacity.
3. No bespoke conditions or s106 obligations are required to demonstrate water neutrality.

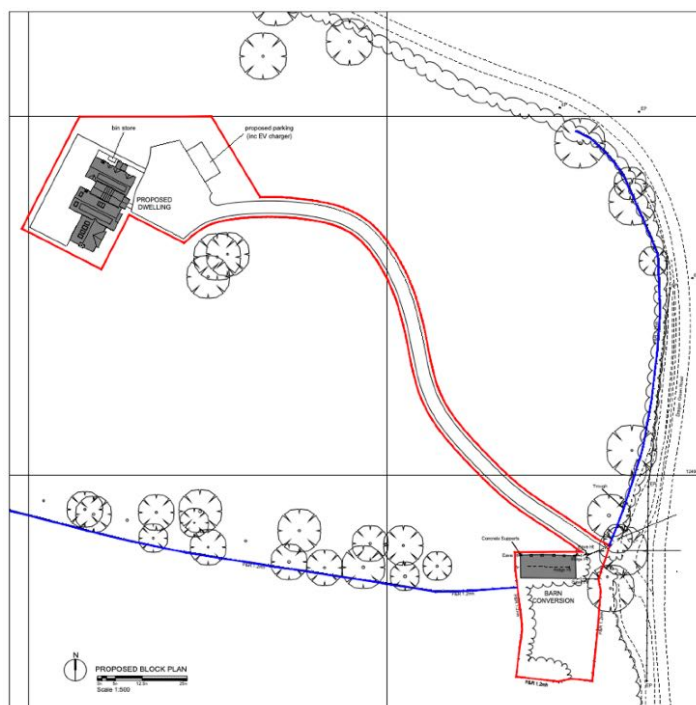
Relevant Legislation and Case Law

- 3.36 The relevant legislation and case law in respect of the proposal is set out at Section 4 of the Appellants' Planning, Design and Access Statement. It is reiterated that planning applications shall be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise (Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 3.37 In the case of the NPPF, paragraph 3 also confirms that its national decision making policies are a material planning consideration in deciding planning applications and should be read alongside the policies in the development plan.

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The proposal is for the construction of a two storey, four bedroom self-build dwelling on land at Town Barn. Town Barn itself will be retained and restored to create a home office, for use incidental to the proposed dwelling.
- 4.2 The existing access to Town Barn will be retained and adapted to access the proposed dwelling with a driveway installed and car parking area with space for turning of vehicles and the installation of an EV charging point.
- 4.3 The proposed dwelling is of a traditional design with a pitched, plain clay tiled roof. The elevations will be finished in buff facing brickwork and the windows will be a dark grey aluminium/composite.
- 4.4 Renewable energy is incorporated into the design of the proposed dwelling which includes solar panels, a heat pump (air or ground source) and MVHR heat recovery (please see the Energy and Sustainability Statement, Blewburton Ltd, 16 April 2026).

Figure 2: Proposed Block Plan



5.0 ANALYSIS OF THE COUNCIL'S REPORT

- 5.1 This section responds to the Case Officer's delegated report (in bold) and addresses the key planning issues and the Council's reasons for refusal.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The application seek permission for the erection of 1no. self-build dwelling and conversion of existing barn to form home office; construction of associated driveway at Town Barn, Dragons Green Road, Shipley. The application site is a spacious agricultural field with it and Town Barn located to the west of Dragons Green Road. Town Barn itself is located near to the southern boundary of the plot. The plot is located outside the built-up area boundary and will be assessed using countryside policy contexts.

Town Barn itself has previously had permission for residential conversions under applications DC/04/2051 (Conversion of barn into 1 residential dwelling) and DC/09/2155 (Renewal of existing consent (DC/04/2051) for conversion of redundant barn to (2-bed) residential use). It is noted that these were both approved and related to the conversion of Town Barn itself. This proposal is for the conversion of Town Barn to form a home office as an auxiliary building associated with a larger dwelling which is to be sited to the north east of Town Barn.

- 5.2 The Council has previously found the appeal site to be situated in an acceptable location for the creation of a single dwelling in granting planning permission for the residential conversion of Town Barn (applications DC/04/2051 and DC/09/2155). Whilst the permissions were not implemented, the principle of residential development at Town Barn has previously been accepted and agreed by the Council and this is a material planning consideration of significant weight.

Principle of Development:

Section 5, Paragraph 84 of the NPPF (December 2024) states that "[planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
- b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
- c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;

- d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or**
- e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:**
 - i. is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and**
 - ii. would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of**

Policy 1 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) states that the council will take positive approach to development proposals, aligning with the National Planning Policy Framework's emphasis on sustainable development. It collaborates proactively with applicants to find solutions that enable project approval and enhance economic, social, and environmental conditions. Planning applications that comply with the Local Plan and relevant neighbourhood plans will be approved promptly unless material considerations suggest otherwise. If policies are absent or outdated, the Council will grant permission unless significant adverse impacts outweigh the benefits, or specific policies in the Framework restrict development.

Policy 2 of the HDPF sets out the main growth strategy, focusing development in the main settlements. The HDPF outlines that the proposed settlement hierarchy is the most sustainable approach to delivering housing; where new development is focused in the larger settlements of Horsham, Southwater and Billingshurst; and limited new development is directed elsewhere, and only where it accords with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan. Specifically, Policy 3 of the Horsham District Planning Framework seeks to retain the existing settlement pattern and ensure that development takes place in the most sustainable locations as possible.

Policy 4 of the HDPF refers to the expansion of settlements outside the built-up area, and states that such development is only supported where: the site is allocated in the Local Plan or in a Neighbourhood Plan and adjoins an existing settlement edge; the level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement type; the development is demonstrated to meet the identified local housing needs; the impact of development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long term development; and the development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape and townscape character features are maintained and enhanced.

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 Ship HD1 supports new housing in Shipley, Coolham, Dragons Green and Brooks Green where proposals represent infill or redevelopment within existing built form, avoid extending settlements onto greenfield land, provide affordable housing, reflect the scale and density of surrounding development, and demonstrate a positive response to the Shipley Parish Design Guidance.

The proposed development is for of 1no. self-build dwelling and conversion of existing barn to form home office; construction of associated driveway at Town Barn, Dragons Green Road, Shipley. The application site is a spacious agricultural field with Town Barn located to the west of Dragons Green Road, near to the southern boundary of the plot.

The proposal is outside the built-up area boundary and would represent countryside development and would include the reuse of an unused barn for use as home office in line with paragraph 84(c) of the NPPF. The site itself is not allocated within any local or neighbourhood plan. Whilst the proposal would not be isolated in the truest sense of the word given the existing dwellings located in proximity to the site, the proposal is isolated in terms of access to service, approximately 1.3km away (as the crow flies) from the nearest built up area boundary of Southwater and 2.3km (as the crow flies) from built up area boundary of Barns Green. There is a public right of way system approximately 90m to the south of the site which allows access to Southwater using a combination of paths (path 1892; 2929; 1888; 1889). This connects the site to the closest built-up area boundary and exits at Shipley Road, Southwater. This distance is 1.7km. However, this is unlikely to constitute a desirable daily walking path when considering the length and terrain. In addition, as this terminates at Shipley Road, it requires an additional 1km walk to reach services within Southwater. Residents of any dwelling would be reliant on private vehicles to facilitate day to day living at the site.

The proposal is sited where there is very little development, save the barn which is located some 140m away from the proposed dwelling's intended positioning. Neighbouring dwellings are all in excess of 300m away from the site and as such the proposal would be considered to sit alone. The dwelling itself would be located roughly centrally within this agricultural field and would be a prominent development considering this and the lack of vegetation screening the development from the roadside. The proposal would result in a prominent dwelling appearing within an undeveloped section of land and would likely erode the image of an undeveloped countryside and would not sit in relation to any built form bar the barn.

The proposed dwelling would therefore be remote from day-to-day services, where the provision of market housing in this location, not linked to a rural use, would be contrary to Policy 26 of the HDPF and would not be in accordance with the overarching spatial strategy for development as set out in Policies 3 and 4 of the HDPF. It is therefore considered to be contrary to the spatial strategy and principles of the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Development Plan and Neighbourhood Plan.

The Principle of Development

5.3 NPPF policy S3 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means:

- a. 'Policy S4 of this Framework should be applied when considering development proposals within settlements;***
- b. Outside settlements, policy S5 should be applied; and***
- c. In all locations, development proposals that accord with both an up-to-date development plan and the decision-making policies in this Framework should be approved without delay'.***

5.4 HDPF Policy 1 states that when considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the NPPF. Therefore, in line with the NPPF, Policy 1 states that planning applications that accord with the policies of the HDPF will be approved without delay (unless material considerations indicate otherwise). Where there are no policies relevant to the application, or relevant policies are out of date, Policy 1 states that the:

'Council will grant permission, unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- Any adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or***
- Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted'.***

5.5 The application site is located within the countryside, outside of a built-up boundary as defined by the HDPF. HDPF policy 26 seeks to protect the countryside from inappropriate development. The policy requires development to be essential to its

countryside location and must meet one of four criteria set out. In addition, proposals must be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location.

- 5.6 In respect of NPPF policy S3, Annex B: Glossary of the NPPF describes a 'settlement' as follows:

'Includes cities, towns, villages and other predominantly built-up areas, including land which is allocated or has permission for development which will form part of the built-up area once the development is complete. This includes areas defined as a settlement in the development plan (whether using defined settlement boundaries or equivalent terms, or criteria for identifying settlement extents where the boundaries have yet to be defined). Settlements do not include hamlets and scattered groups of houses located outside predominantly built-up areas, unless specifically defined as a settlement in the development plan. For the purpose of this Framework they also exclude villages which lie within or are defined as part of the Green Belt in the development plan'.

- 5.7 Whilst it is acknowledged that the site is located within the countryside, outside of a 'settlement' (i.e. a built-up area boundary as defined by the HDPF and also having regard to the NPPF's definition), there are compelling reasons which justify the proposed development when considering the policies of the NPPF and HDPF as a whole. These material planning considerations are addressed as follows:

Housing Land Supply and Location

- 5.8 As set out, the Council is unable to demonstrate a five year supply of housing as required by the NPPF. The latest AMR 2024/25 (published 19 December 2025) confirms that the Council can demonstrate just 1.7 years' supply. As a result, the Council's policies in respect of the supply and location of new homes (HDPF policies 2, 3, 4, 15 and 26) are considered to be out-of-date and should be given less weight in the decision making process with priority given to NPPF policies S3 and S5.
- 5.9 In respect of the latter, NPPF policy S5 (1) states that only certain forms of development should be approved outside settlements. The relevant criteria of policy S5 (1) are addressed as follows:

d. The reuse, extension, alteration or replacement of an existing building, provided that the existing building is of permanent and substantial construction, is lawful in planning terms, and any extension or alteration will not result in a disproportionate increase in size compared to the existing building. In the case of proposals for a replacement building, it should be for the same use and not disproportionately larger than the one it replaces;

- 5.10 Part of the proposal is for the renovation and conversion of Town Barn to form a home office, incidental to the proposed dwelling. Town Barn is of a permanent and substantial construction and is suitable for conversion to the use proposed. The proposed development therefore makes effective use of an existing building by renovating it and bringing it back into use.

h. Residential and mixed use development which would:

- i. Be within reasonable walking distance of a well-connected station (applying the definitions in the glossary at Annex B);***
- ii. Be physically well-related to the station or the settlement within which the station is located;***
- iii. Be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure; and***
- iv. Not prejudice any long-term comprehensive development in the same location.***

- 5.11 The nearest train station to the appeal site is at Christ's Hospital which is approximately 4 miles to the north. It is therefore acknowledged that the site is not within a 'reasonable walking distance' of a train station when applying the definition at NPPF Annex B: Glossary (800m/10 minute walk). However, for the reasons set out below, the appeal site is also not situated within 'isolated' countryside and the proposed development of just one home is small in scale and which can be accommodated taking into account the level of likely activity in respect of the availability of infrastructure. The proposal will also not prejudice any long-term comprehensive development.

- 5.12 Notwithstanding the above, the main criteria of NPPF policy S5 (1) which the proposed development falls to be considered under is (j), addressed as follows:

j. Development which would address an evidenced unmet need (including, but not limited to, development proposals involving the provision of housing where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites or scores below 75% in the most recent Housing Delivery Test), and where the development would:

- i. Be physically well-related to an existing settlement (unless the nature of the development would make this inappropriate) and be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure; or***
- ii. Comprise major development for freight and logistics purposes which accords with policy E3***

- 5.13 As the Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites as required by the NPPF, the proposal for a new dwelling would address an evidenced unmet need.

- 5.14 In terms of S5 (1) (j) (i), the appeal site is considered to be physically well-related to an existing settlement. Town Barn is located approximately 2 miles to the south west of Southwater. Southwater is defined by HDPF policy 3 as a small town/larger village described by the policy as settlements ***‘with a good range of services and facilities, strong community networks and local employment provision, together with reasonable rail and/or bus services. The settlements act as hubs for smaller villages to meet their daily needs, but also have some reliance on larger settlements/each other to meet some of their requirements’.***

- 5.15 Southwater is one of the main settlements within the District where there is a wide range of local services and facilities including public transport options, education, retail, a medical centre, numerous local businesses, employment opportunities, sport and recreation facilities and community groups and facilities.

- 5.16 As noted within the Case Officer's report, there is a network of public rights of way locally. This includes a footpath link from Dragons Green Road just to the south of Town Barn which leads through Trawlers Farm linking to Beechwood and The Gables at Southwater. A footpath route into Southwater would therefore be available to occupiers of the proposed dwelling and/or cycling would be possible along Dragons Green Road, Marlpost Road and Bonfire Hill/Church Lane (which would take approximately 11 minutes to the outskirts of Southwater).
- 5.17 As set out, the proposed construction of just one dwelling is of a (small) scale that can be accommodated by the availability of existing infrastructure; the proposal is not for significant development (NPPF policy TR3 (1)(a)) and it will not in itself result in unsustainable patterns of vehicle movements within the rural area given that the majority of trips are likely to be short having regard to the site's proximity to Southwater. In turn, the proposal will not result in any harmful impact upon the local transport network.
- 5.18 Importantly, rural development should not necessarily be assessed against urban standards of public transport provision and pavement walking/cycling infrastructure and opportunities for sustainable transport will differ between urban and rural locations.
- 5.19 Having regard to NPPF policy S5 (2), in applying the policy, the benefits of approving the development will not be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects. In respect of S5 (3), the proposal would not amount to the development of an 'isolated home' as the site is not physically remote from Southwater and there is other sporadic development along the lane. It is not therefore necessary for the proposed development to comply with the provisions of NPPF policy HO11 (which relates to the provision of isolated homes within the countryside, which may be permitted under certain circumstances).
- 5.20 Overall, the proposed development complies with NPPF policy S5 (1) (j). However, notwithstanding this, it must be noted that the policy at S5 (4) does allow for development proposals which do not fall within any of the policy's criteria to be approved in exceptional circumstances, where the benefits of the proposal would substantially outweigh the adverse effects, including the character of the countryside and in relation to promoting sustainable patterns of movement. The proposed development for the reasons set out, will not cause any harm to the character of the

countryside and just one dwelling will not result in unsustainable patterns of vehicle movements.

- 5.21 In respect of the location of the appeal site and local planning policy, it is reiterated that the Council's policies relating to the supply and location of new homes are considered to be out-of-date given the age of the HDPF and the fact that the Council cannot demonstrate a five year deliverable supply of housing. As such more weight should be given to the relevant policies of the recently published NPPF and in this case policy S5 as assessed. However, for completeness and in response to the Case Officer's report, the relevant policies of the HDPF are addressed below:
- 5.22 HDPF policy 2 seeks to maintain the rural character of the district and states that new development should be focused in and around **'the key settlement of Horsham'** with growth in the rest of the District in accordance with the settlement hierarchy set out at HDPF Policy 3 and also in accordance with HDPF Policy 4.
- 5.23 HDPF Policy 4 supports the growth of settlements across the District in order to meet identified local housing, employment and community needs. Therefore, outside built up area boundaries, Policy 4 permits the expansion of settlements subject to the following:
- 1. 'The site is allocated in the Local Plan or in a Neighbourhood Plan and adjoins an existing settlement edge.**
 - 2. The level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement type.**
 - 3. The development is demonstrated to meet the identified local housing needs and/or employment needs or will assist the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services.**
 - 4. The impact of the development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive development, in order to not conflict with the development strategy; and**
 - 5. The development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape and townscape character features are maintained and enhanced'.**
- 5.24 The supporting text for HDPF Policy 4 (and 3) sets out the following justification - **'to ensure that development takes place in a manner that ensures the settlement**

pattern and the rural landscape character of the District is retained and enhanced, but still enables settlements to develop in order for them to continue to grow and thrive' (HDPF paragraph 4.6).

5.25 Given the fact that the Council cannot demonstrate an appropriate supply of housing, the Council's SD PAN previously referred to acknowledges that the Council is likely to receive applications for residential development outside of the defined built-up area boundaries and on unallocated sites.

5.26 As such, the SD PAN (at paragraph 5.12) confirms that the Council will consider positively applications that meet all of the following criteria:

- ***'The site adjoins the existing settlement edge as defined by the BUAB;***
- ***The level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement the proposal relates to;***
- ***The proposal demonstrates that it meets all local housing needs or will assist the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services;***
- ***The impact of the development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long-term development; and***
- ***The development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape character features are maintained and enhanced'.***

5.27 The above essentially follows the same principles of HDPF policy 4 with the exception that it does not contain the same requirement for sites to be allocated for development in the Local or Neighbourhood Plan.

5.28 As set out, the appeal site is located close to Southwater, one of the main settlements within the District. Occupiers of the proposed dwelling will be able to access a wide range of local services and facilities, including public transport a short vehicle trips, via cycling along the lane or via the local public right of way network. The appeal site is not therefore remote from a settlement and many trips are therefore likely to be short which is consistent with patterns of vehicle movements within rural areas.

5.29 Therefore, whilst the appeal site does not adjoin a settlement edge, it equally is not situated within truly isolated countryside. For the reasons described the site is in a sustainable location and in a suitable position to accommodate the dwelling without

resulting in significant conflict with the Council's spatial strategy especially when considered in context of the policies of the NPPF.

- 5.30 In terms of criterion 2 of the SD PAN and HDPF policy 4, the level of expansion, just one dwelling is small and the density of development is very low, as appropriate to site's location.
- 5.31 The proposed development meets local housing needs in the provision of a new dwelling due to the clear need for new housing within the District and the impact of the proposal will neither individually nor cumulatively prejudice comprehensive long term development. The proposal complies with criteria 3 and 4 of the SD PAN and HDPF policy 4.
- 5.32 In respect of criterion 5 of the SD PAN and HDPF policy 4, the application site is contained by an existing defensible boundary to the wider site boundaries of the land (defined by hedgerows and trees) and important landscape features will be retained.
- 5.33 In summary of HDPF policies 1, 2, 3 and 4, these policies encourage sustainable development and allow for the expansion of settlements outside of built up area boundaries where the level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement type.
- 5.34 Given the small scale of development proposed, the sustainable location of the application site, the lack of any harm caused to the visual amenities of the countryside landscape (as further addressed within this Statement) and the high need for new homes within the District, it is reiterated that the proposal does not significantly conflict with the overarching principles of the Council's spatial strategy or the Council's SD PAN.
- 5.35 It should also be noted that the proposed dwelling is deliverable in the short term in accordance with the NPPF and the Council's SD PAN (paragraphs 5.13 – 5.17).

Housing Mix

- 5.36 The proposed dwelling is a self-build dwelling. NPPF policy HO5 seeks to meet the housing needs of different groups, including identifying sites which can provide specific

type of accommodation where there is an identified need, including plots for self and custom build housing,

- 5.37 HDPF policy 16 requires development to provide for a mix of housing sizes, types and tenures to meet the needs of the District's communities. As of 24 April 2026, there are 180 entries on Horsham District Council's Self and Custom Build Register of Interest of which 128 are Horsham District residents.
- 5.38 The Government's PPG acknowledges that self-build or custom build homes help to diversify the housing market and increase consumer choice. Self-build and custom housebuilders choose the design of their own home, and can be innovative in its design and construction. The provision of such homes is clearly supported by the Framework and which play an important role in helping to tackle the housing crisis, with projects cumulatively making an important contribution to meeting housing need (helping to speed up delivery) and increased choice and variety in the type of new homes.

Small Sites and Rural Housing

- 5.39 NPPF policy HO6 requires the planning for a diverse mix of sites and requires Local Plans to allocate land to accommodate at least 10% of the housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare, and a further 10% on sites of between one and two and a half hectares, unless there are strong reasons why these targets cannot be achieved.
- 5.40 In addition, policy HO6 also requires Local Plans to allocated sites that will support and enhance the vitality of rural communities and enable villages to thrive, especially where this will support local services. The NPPF therefore recognises the importance of small sites, such as the appeal site, to the supply of new homes, including homes within rural areas.
- 5.41 As previously referred to, NPPF policy HO11 seeks to avoid the creation of 'isolated' homes within the countryside which will only be supported where certain criteria is met. In this case it is demonstrated that the application site is not situated within truly 'isolated' countryside as it is only a short distance away from Southwater and it is physically well connected to the settlement via Dragon's Green Road/Marlpost Road/Bonfire Hill/Church Lane and the public right of way network. There is also

sporadic development along the lane and therefore the construction of a single dwelling will not appear out of keeping with the existing pattern of development.

- 5.42 As set out, HDPF policy 26 seeks to protect the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside against inappropriate development. However policy 26 must also be read in the context of the text at HDPF paragraph 9.18 which sets out that ***'The Council is seeking to identify the most valued parts of the district for protection, as well as maintain and enhance this natural beauty and the amenity of the district's countryside'***.
- 5.43 The NPPF recognises the importance of allowing new residential development within the rural areas which can help to sustain local rural communities. As such, appropriate residential development on sustainably located sites, such as the application site is arguably 'essential' in supporting the sustainable development of rural areas (HDPF policy 26, criterion 4). In this case, the site is not located within an unduly prominent or isolated position and it is enclosed within well-defined boundaries to the wider land at Town Barn.
- 5.44 The proposed dwelling is of high quality, traditional design which is appropriate to and in keeping with the rural character of the area and as set out, just one dwelling will not result in any significant increase in the overall level of activity within the countryside.
- 5.45 Given the proximity of the site to Southwater and the character of Dragons Green Road comprising sporadic development, the dwelling will not appear at odds with the context of the site's surroundings. There is as such also no conflict with policy 26 in respect of its requirement for proposals to be of a scale appropriate to the countryside character and location and to protect/conservate/enhance key features and characteristics of landscape character.

Sustainable Development

- 5.46 The NPPF (paragraph 15) sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development, by managing the use and development of land in the long-term public interest. The proposed development meets the following objectives of sustainable development (NPPF paragraph 17):

- a) an economic objective – the proposal will make a small contribution to the local building industry and associated trades in constructing the new dwelling and converting Town Barn. Furthermore, occupiers of the new dwelling (the Appellants) will help to support local services and facilities. The proposal complies with the economic objective of sustainable development.
- b) a social objective – the proposal provides a suitable site for the creation of a new dwelling in close proximity to local services and facilities including schools, public transport and work opportunities. The proposal will also make a modest but important contribution to the supply of new homes within the District. The proposal complies with the social objective of sustainable development.
- c) an environmental objective – the proposal makes efficient use of land and an existing building as encouraged by NPPF policy L2 and is of an appropriate (low) density in line with NPPF policy L3. No harm will result to the visual amenities of the countryside landscape; the proposed dwelling is suitably located and of a sustainable design meeting the requirements of NPPF policies CC2 and CC3. The proposal is considered to comply with the environmental objective of sustainable development.

Whilst the Design and Access statement mentions that Town Barn itself has had permission for residential conversions under applications DC/04/2051 (Conversion of barn into 1 residential dwelling) and DC/09/2155 (Renewal of existing consent (DC/04/2051) for conversion of redundant barn to (2- bed) residential use), these related to the conversion of Town Barn itself. These permissions were not enacted. This proposal is for the conversion of Town Barn to form a home office as an auxiliary building associated with a larger dwelling which is to be sited to the north east of Town Barn.

Though the barn had previously been granted permission to be converted into a residential use, there are a number of relevant and material matters which should be bourn in mind when drawing a comparison to the present application. First of all: the 2004 permission related solely to the use of that barn and its immediate curtilage, and would have resulted in the re-use of an otherwise redundant building. By contrast, the present application comprises a significantly larger curtilage, and seeks to establish a new dwelling sited centrally within the field.

Furthermore, the planning framework has substantially and materially changed since 2004, both nationally and locally- this includes two local plans since, and the adoption of the NPPF and subsequent revisions. As this permission was never undertaken, and significant time has passed since, Officers are of the view that this does not represent a viable fallback to establish that the principle of the development is acceptable.

With the above in mind, the principle of the proposal is resisted. The appropriate degree of weight to be assigned to conflict with these policies is detailed further below.

Case Studies

5.47 Notwithstanding the differences between the present new build proposal and the previously permitted conversion proposal, it remains the case that the Council has previously accepted the principle of a single dwellinghouse in this location. In addition, the Appellants' Planning, Design and Access Statement included several examples where planning permission has been granted at appeal for the creation of single dwellings within the Horsham countryside. In these cases, weight was given to the insufficient supply of housing land within the District and the former provisions of NPPF paragraph 11 d) (2024 version).

5.48 In addition to the cases already provided, the Planning Inspector is respectfully asked to also consider the following two examples (please see Appendices NJA/1 and NJA/2 of this Statement):

1. DC/24/1966 – Land North of Cowfold Road, Coolham

5.49 Planning permission was granted at appeal in March 2026 for the construction of 9 x dwellings on land to the east of Coolham. The main issues of the appeal were:

1. Whether the appeal site would be in a suitable location for the proposed development having regard to planning policy; and
2. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

5.50 In terms of the accessibility of the site, the Planning Inspector noted that ***'Within walking distance of the appeal site there is a primary school, a village hall and a public house. Access to them is via the A272 which, whilst unlit, possessed a pavement. Although residents would be required to cross the A272 to reach the facilities, they would be aided by the fact that the road has a 20mph speed limit. Dropped kerbs and tactile paving are proposed along the route to aid pedestrians. There are bus stops within walking distance of the site, with an early morning and afternoon bus on weekdays to higher order facilities in***

Horsham and Storrington, and an irregular service during the day' (paragraph 12).

- 5.51 Notwithstanding the above, when considering local planning policy, the Planning Inspector found the location of the appeal site to conflict with HDPF policies 1, 2, 3 4 and 26, policy Ship HD1 of the Neighbourhood Plan and the Council's Shaping Development in the Horsham District guidance. However, when considering the proposal in the planning balance, the Planning Inspector found it to be acceptable against the presumption in favour of sustainable development having regard to the shortfall in housing within the District, the provisions of former NPPF paragraph 11 d) and the site's location adjoining the edge of the settlement of Coolham.
- 5.52 The Planning Inspector also found that the proposed development would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the area, noting the site's proximity to Coolham. Specifically the Planning Inspector comments at paragraph 17 that:

'The appeal site is however located close to Coolham, and its character is significantly influence by its proximity to the settlement. Whilst the appeal site forms a gap between the school and home farm, such that Home Farm is nominally outside the settlement, the compact form and domestic character of the converted farm buildings reflect the built-up area. The development of the site would not therefore be perceived as an encroachment into the countryside but rather as a consolidation of the settlement itself. Moreover, the strong existing boundary treatment around the site would limit the visual impact of the proposal when viewed from the countryside'.

2. DC/23/1178 - Horsham Golf Club, Denne Park, Horsham

- 5.53 Planning permission was granted at appeal in July 2025 for the construction of a sports and leisure hub, a golfing education facility, a local centre and sports facilities and up to 800 dwellings at Horsham Golf Club. Horsham Golf Club is situated in-between Horsham and Southwater, outside of a built-up area boundary.
- 5.54 In terms of housing land supply, the appeal decision notes that the Council is unable to demonstrate a five year supply of housing ***'or anything close to it'*** and that given the fact that the adoption of the new Local Plan at the time was some time away, there

is no ***'realistic or imminent prospect of that the current shortfall will be remedied through the development plan process'*** (paragraph 58 point 1). This means that the relevant policies, particularly the settlement boundaries, are considered to be out-of-date and the tilted balance in HDPF policy 1 and former NPPF paragraph 11 d) is engaged. The Planning Inspector further noted that ***'...it follows that the same boundaries within the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan must also be out-of-date'***.

5.55 The Planning Inspector found that ***'....in seeking to protect the countryside for its own sake and restricting development outside settlement boundaries, Policy 26 and SNP1 are inconsistent with the balanced cost/benefit approach set out in the NPPF. The balancing of harm against benefit is a defining characteristic of the NPPF's overall approach embodied in the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Because of this, where Policy 26 is used to restrict housing outside settlement boundaries, it cannot be seen to be consistent with the language of the NPPF'*** (paragraph 58 point 2).

5.56 The Planning Inspector set out that greenfield sites on the edge of Horsham and other top tier settlements will need to come forward if the housing needs of the District are going to be met. A realistic approach is advocated by the Planning Inspector, stating at paragraph 41 of the decision notice:

'Those principles apply with equal or greater force here because greenfield sites on the edge of Horsham and other top tier settlements will need to come forward if housing needs are going to be met. By virtue of their peripheral location, very few, if any, of these sites will score highly across all aspects of sustainable travel. Some may be better located for walking and others, as in the case here, for public transport and cycling. If one were to take the Council's approach in this case, which was to rigidly apply 'recommended' walk distances to some destinations and failing to balance that against the availability of other sustainable travel modes, there is very little prospect of the county meeting its ambitious housing targets'.

Design and Appearance:

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF (December 2024) should ensure that development is high-quality, functional and enduring, creating visually attractive places through good architecture, layout and landscaping. They should respect and enhance local character and history while allowing for appropriate innovation, establish a strong sense of place, and make efficient use of land to support a suitable mix of uses and community infrastructure. Development should also deliver safe, inclusive and accessible environments that promote health and well-being, provide a high standard of amenity for all users, and avoid impacts that could undermine quality of life or community cohesion.

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.

Policy Ship HD3 sets out that developments within Shipley Parish should respond positively to local design characteristics and should be of sizing and scaling that respects the character of the locality, using materials that are typical to the area. The Parish Design Statement also informs on the typical styling cues and elements found throughout the parish.

The proposal sees the erection of a large, 4-bedroom dwelling designed in a traditional architectural style, situated centrally within a wider agricultural field, approximately 160m north west of the entrance to the site off Dragons Green Road. The dwellings main massing is within its two story 'H' shaped footprint with a single-story side element which serves as the living room. This itself has a tall roof to allow a vaulted ceiling. The front elevation is of a traditional style with Georgian bar style windows. The rear continues this traditional style however includes full height windows and a rear balcony to serve the master bedroom. The dwelling itself is finished in buff facing brickwork with clay tile roofing with windows in a dark grey aluminium/composite materials. The proposals traditional style and material choice is considered to integrate itself within the character of the area and would not be considered in design terms to be in contrast to the built character of the wider vicinity.

The main dwelling would occupy a total 268m². It would be considered that this is a large dwelling and would be overt considering the surrounding contexts where there is a lack of vegetation screening the proposals. However, given the size of curtilage, it is considered that the plot could accommodate the large built form.

The proposal also sees the introduction of a home office sited close to the road of Dragons Green Road. This is housed within the existing barn on site. The proposal sees the introduction of several windows and doors all contained to the front (south) and rear (north) elevations, making use of the existing openings plus additional windows. The scale of the building however is questioned given the use as just as home office with a footprint of 95m² with no indicative floor plan for the space provided. As indicated within the block plan, the barn itself appears to have a somewhat *exaggerated* redline which extends outwards to the

south of the barn which raises questions in regard to the exact purpose of the barn. This exaggerated redline is the same as that which was approved for the dwelling within Town Barn under previous application for a presumed garden, though its enlarged curtilage has not been justified on this proposal.

The larger dwelling would be accessed via a lengthy private driveway. The driveway would also serve the converted barn home office (barn currently sited) which is located close to the roadside.

Overall, in considering the design and appearance of the dwelling, it is thought the proposal responds to the policies laid out above. However, as discussed in further detail below, though the overall design of the building may well be considered to comply with local and national planning policies, the development as a whole, including its layout and context within this area, would result in adverse landscape harm.

- 5.57 The NPPF at policy DP3 sets out the Government's key principles for well-designed places. In particular, development proposals should respond to their context (history, character and features of their site and its setting) so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings. NPPF policy DP4 requires design quality to be considered throughout the evolution, assessment and delivery of development proposals.
- 5.58 In respect of the proposed purpose of the existing barn, as set out within the planning application submission, this will be renovated and converted to form a home office that will be incidental to the proposed dwelling. The red line shows that the barn will be within the same planning unit as the proposed dwelling including all land within it and connected via the proposed driveway. It is not considered that the extent of the red edge is 'exaggerated' in any way and of course a condition can be applied to ensure that a single planning unit remains. In any event, planning permission would be required for the use of the barn as a separate dwelling.
- 5.59 The Case Officer's report above comments on the design of the proposed dwelling but does not raise any specific objections and states that ***'The proposals traditional style and material choice is considered to integrate itself within the character of the area and would not be considered in design terms to be in contrast to the built character of the wider vicinity'***. In addition, it is also states that ***'Overall, in considering the design and appearance of the dwelling, it is thought the proposal responds to the policies laid out above'***.
- 5.60 The proposed dwelling is of an appropriate scale, massing and height in relation to the site's character and location. As a result, the proposed dwelling and overall

development will not appear unduly prominent to views from outside of the site and the dwelling is of a high quality design which will relate sympathetically to the surroundings. The existing barn will be sympathetically restored and overall, no harm will be caused to the street scene and significant improvements will be made via the renovation and enhancement of the barn. Whilst views of the proposed dwelling from Dragons Green Road will be possible, given its high quality design and set back into the site, any visibility will not be harmful.

5.61 The area is characterised by a range of different age and types of dwellings within the vicinity of Dragons Green Road and the proposed dwelling will fit in with the character and appearance of the area. The proposed materials will be of a high quality and appropriate to the rural setting. Overall, the proposed development complies with the design policies of the NPPF, HDPF policies 32 and 33 and Neighbourhood Plan policy Ship HD3.

5.62 In respect of the heritage considerations of the existing barn, the planning application was accompanied by a Heritage Report which addresses the heritage requirements of the former NPPF (now policies HE4, HE5 and HE7) and HDPF policy 34. The Council has raised no objections in respect of heritage matters.

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.

Given the proposal is relatively isolated, there is not considered to be an impact on the residential amenity owing to overlooking, overshadowing and overbearing.

5.63 The Council has raised no objections in respect of residential amenity and against HDPF policy 33. The proposal will also create a high-quality living environment for future occupiers with spacious rooms, high levels of natural light and an appropriately sized private amenity area.

Trees and Landscaping:

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**

As above, the proposal is sited where there is very little development and would be considered to sit alone. The dwelling itself would be located roughly centrally within the agricultural field coupled with a lack of vegetation screening the development from the roadside, resulting in a prominent dwelling appearing within an undeveloped section of land and would erode the image of an undeveloped countryside and would not sit in relation to any built form, save for the barn. As per the Landscape Consultant's advice, given the proposal siting in relative isolation, the development of a large dwelling would result in degradation in landscape character and visual amenity. It is therefore considered that the proposal would be in conflict with the identified policy.

- 5.64 NPPF policy N2 requires development proposals to contribute to the natural environment and to support nature's recovery by (inter alia) considering the environmental qualities of land proposed for development, including habitats, landscape character and the natural beauty of the countryside and identify opportunities for those qualities to be conserved or enhanced. Development should conserve and enhance existing natural features (such as established trees and hedgerows) where possible and more specifically, NPPF policy N3 recognises the benefits which trees can provide for biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaption, and the character and quality of the built environment.
- 5.65 In response to the Council's Landscape Officer's comments (dated 11 June 2026), the Appellants submitted additional information to the Council. This includes the provision of a Landscape Scheme and an accompanying Landscape Plan together with a response to third-party comments in respect of the visibility of the proposed dwelling.
- 5.66 The Appellants confirmed to the Council that the footpath referred to in the third-party comments is over 350m from the proposed dwelling and in-between there is a 20ft wide belt of trees and hedgerow, an open field and a further line of mature oak trees running through the centre of the field. The proposed dwelling will sit approximately 200m beyond the crest of the hill which means that there will be no direct line of sight.

- 5.67 In addition, the landscaping information submitted demonstrates that the vast majority of the land surrounding the proposed dwelling will remain as undeveloped field and only a small area of amenity lawn to be laid out in close proximity to the new dwelling. The Landscape Scheme also confirms at paragraph 3.1 that ***‘....the hedgerows and trees that line the roadside boundaries, along with a number of large oak trees found across the field and on the boundaries, which define the local landscape, will remain in place, so not altering the existing native landscape’***.
- 5.68 The Case Officer’s report refers to the siting of the proposed dwelling to result ***‘in a prominent dwelling appearing within an undeveloped section of land that would erode the image of an undeveloped countryside.....’***. However, it does not specify which views would be adversely affected.
- 5.69 The Council’s Landscape Officer’s comments refer to ***‘adverse local effects’*** but notes that ***‘....the surrounding woodland and field boundaries enclose the site, reducing the adverse visual effects of the site and immediate surroundings’***.
- 5.70 As such, due to the screening to the wider site boundaries, the proposed development will not have any harmful landscape impact from outside of these boundaries. Any views from Dragons Green Road will not be overly dominant due to the set back of the proposed dwelling, a substantial distance away from the lane.
- 5.71 From within the wider boundaries of the land, whilst the construction of the proposed dwelling will result in landscape change, this change will be localised and is not considered to have a harmful impact due to the high-quality design of the dwelling proposed, which, (as noted above), the Case Officer’s report does not specifically object to.
- 5.72 Overall, for the reasons set out, the proposed dwelling will not result in any significant adverse landscape effects and the proposal complies with HDPF policies 24, 25, 32 and 33 in respect of the need to protect the natural environment and landscape character.

Ecology:

Policy 31 of the HDPF promotes development that protects and enhances green infrastructure and biodiversity. It supports projects that maintain ecological networks, create new habitats, and improve existing biodiversity. Loss of green infrastructure must be mitigated or compensated, and protected trees must be replaced if felled. The policy prioritizes safeguarding designated nature sites and habitats, and requires rigorous assessment and mitigation for developments impacting sensitive areas like the Arun Valley SPA and the Mens SAC.

The application is supported by a detailed Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA). The Ecology Consultant had no objections to the proposal subject to conditions being implemented. The Ecologist identified the PEA should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full along with conditions for a biodiversity gain plan and lighting as necessary.

It is considered that subject to the mitigation and enhancement measures, the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on habits or protected species in accordance with Policy 31 of the HDPF.

- 5.73 The above confirms that there are no objections in respect of ecology and the proposal complies with HDPF policy 31. In turn, the proposal complies with NPPF policies N2 and N3.

Highways Impacts:

Policy 40 of HDPF promote development that provides safe and adequate access, suitable for all users. Policy 40 focuses on supporting development of a sustainable and integrated transport system that supports sustainable transport travel to access jobs, homes, and services. It encourages development that aligns with existing transport infrastructure, reduces carbon emissions, and looks to reduce travel distances and conflicts. Development will be supported where public transport access is improved, routes for cyclists and pedestrians are well implemented and ensures safe highways use for all transport modes.

Policy 41 seeks to find the right balance between ensuring that adequate parking is provided and that it is suitably located and does not conflict with other uses. It should be of good urban design and be appropriate to ensure highway safety. Development which involves the loss of existing parking spaces will only be allowed if suitable alternative provision has been secured elsewhere the need for the development overrides the loss of parking and where necessary measures are in place to mitigate against the impact.

The proposal is considered to provide adequate parking. The site would be accessed via private driveway with there considered ample room for maneuverers on site to exit the site in forward gear. As per the LHA's

assessment “[it is not] considered] that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in ‘severe’ cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network”.

The proposal accords with the above policies.

- 5.74 NPPF policy TR3 encourages development to be located where it can support sustainable patterns of movement, enable good accessibility for different users and make the most of existing and proposed transport infrastructure. It states that development proposals that would generate a significant amount of movement, in the context of the areas within which they would be situated, should be in locations that are sustainable (or which can made so).
- 5.75 In addition, policy TR3 states that any significant adverse impacts from the development on the transport network or highway safety should be mitigated to an acceptable degree and the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure should be identified, assessed and taken into account.
- 5.76 In rural areas, policy TR3 recognises that opportunities to improve walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport and enhance the connectivity of an areas should be taken where they exist and can be supported by the development proposal.
- 5.77 NPPF policy TR4 sets out that to contribute to creating well-designed places, transport considerations should be integral to the design of the development.
- 5.78 In assessing transport impacts, NPPF policy TR6 requires development proposals that are likely to generate significant amount of movement to be supported by a transport statement and a travel plan.
- 5.79 As set out, the proposed development for a new dwelling is not ‘significant’ development and it will not generate high levels of vehicle movements. Furthermore, an appropriate vehicle access is provided together with adequate car parking spaces (with on-site turning). The Council has raised no objections in respect of highways matters including car parking provision and the proposal complies with NPPF policies TR3, TR4 and TR6 and HDPF policies 40 and 41.

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.

- 5.80 The Case Officer's report raises no objections in respect of water neutrality (and the impact upon the protected sites of the Arun Valley) having regard to the relevant provisions of the above stated legislation and policy.

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 'self-build or custom housing' under Regulation 8 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024**

- 5.81 The planning application was submitted (and determined) before the BNG changes were introduced on 06 August 2026. As noted, the proposed dwelling is a self-build dwelling and it is therefore exempt from the requirement to demonstrate a 10% BNG in accordance with the rules in place at the time of submission.

Conclusion and Planning Balance:

Planning permission is sought for the erection of one dwelling and the conversion of an existing barn into ancillary residential use. The site is not allocated for development with the HDPF or a made neighbourhood plan, owing to the site's location outside of the built-up area boundary, the principle of the development is resisted under Policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework, paragraphs 2, 11, 12 and 47 of the NPPF, and Policy HD1 of the Shipley Neighbourhood Plan. Furthermore, the development would result in adverse harm to the character of the surrounding area. The proposal also therefore conflicts with Policies 25, 32, 33 of the HDPF

The Council's most recent Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) revealed that the Council does not currently benefit from a deliverable supply of housing sites 5-years. Therefore, the presumption in favour of sustainable development at paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged in this instance, meaning the 'tilted balance' applies to the assessment.

NPPF paragraph 11 (d)(ii) states that where the policies most important for determining the application are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

NPPF paragraph 14 also states that 'in situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood

plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided the following apply:

- a) the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan five years or less before the date on which the decision is made; and**
- b) the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement...'**

As the Shipley Neighbourhood Plan is now over 5 years old, and the plan does not allocate sites for development, the plan is not afforded the 'protection' bestowed under paragraph 14 of the NPPF. Therefore, a diminished level of weight can only be attributed to the policies contained within the plan when assessing planning applications. However, the Neighbourhood Plan remains a component of the statutory Framework and part of the adopted Development Plan under Section 38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. While its housing supply policies are out-of-date, its conflict with the overarching settlement strategy and its purpose to protect the rural character of the parish still carry measurable weight in the planning balance

As above, the Shaping Development in Horsham District Planning Advice Note (SDPAN) was endorsed at Cabinet on 17 September 2025. The SDPAN recognises at 5.12 that the Council is likely to receive applications outside of defined BUABs and on unallocated sites (such as this proposal) as it is unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. Given this position and the principles behind HDPF Policy 4, it will consider positively applications that meet all of the criteria:

- The site adjoins the existing settlement edge as defined by the BUAB;**
- The level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement the proposal relates to;**
- The proposal demonstrates that it meets local housing needs or will assist the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services;**
- The impact of the development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long-term development; and**
- The development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape character features are maintained and enhanced.**

The site is located in a countryside location, though not isolated in the truest sense, it is a relatively remote location that does not adjoin the settlement edge. Therefore, the proposal fails on the first criterion and therefore the development does not benefit from the provisions of the SDPAN.

In the context of the Council's current five-year housing land supply position, the provision of housing as a general principle is a matter of significant weight. However, because this proposal would provide one dwelling, it makes no meaningful contribution toward recovering this shortfall. As such, the weight attributable to this specific scheme's housing delivery is tempered to moderate weight.

- 5.82 The Case Officer's report acknowledges that the Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of housing land as required by the NPPF (policy HO3) and that the Shipley**

Neighbourhood Plan is over five years old and does not allocate sites for development (NPPF policy S6). As a result, this Statement of Case sets out the reasons why the proposed development complies with NPPF policies S3 and S5 (specifically S5 (1) (j)).

- 5.83 The Council's 'SDPAN' has already been addressed within this Statement. It is reiterated that whilst the site does not adjoin a settlement boundary, this should not preclude the proposal from complying with the principles of sustainable development when considering the proposal against the relevant policies of the NPPF as a whole.
- 5.84 In terms of the provision of a single dwelling, the cumulative contribution towards helping to meet the District's housing requirements should not be underestimated particularly given the long term under provision of new homes within the Horsham District.

Officers acknowledge that the development has been proposed as self- / custom-build dwellings. The Council recognises that there is a need to facilitate self-build projects within the District. However, there is a key difference between 'self-build' housing in terms of CIL and BNG exemption, and 'Self-build and Custom Housebuilding' as defined within the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 and the subsequent Housing and Planning Act 2016. The two, though similarly named, represent different housing products.

PPG 011 Self-build and Custom Housebuilding (Reference ID: 57-011-20210208) clarifies how the population of a self-build and custom housebuilding register in terms of plan making should be considered as part of a Council's local housing need:

'Assessment of local housing need as a whole should be conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups should be assessed including people wishing to self-build or custom-build their own homes.

Local planning authorities should use the demand data from the registers in their area, supported as necessary by additional data from secondary sources (as outlined in the housing and economic development needs guidance), to understand and consider future need for this type of housing in their area.

Secondary sources can include data from building plot search websites, enquiries for building plots recorded by local estate agents and surveys of local residents. Demand assessment tools can also be utilised.

Plan-makers will need to make reasonable assumptions using the data on their register to avoid double-counting households. '

PPG 025 Self-build and Custom Housebuilding (Reference ID: 57-025-20210508) clarifies house Council can increase the number of planning permissions which

are suitable for self-build and custom housebuilding:

‘Relevant authorities should consider how local planning policies may address identified requirements for self and custom housebuilding to ensure enough serviced plots with suitable permission come forward (for example, as a number of units required as part of certain allocated sites, or on certain types of site).

More widely, relevant authorities can play a key role in brokering and facilitating relationships to help bring suitable land forward. This can include:

- supporting Neighbourhood Planning groups where they choose to include self-build and custom build housing policies in their plans;

- effective joint working across service delivery areas and with local delivery partners including Housing Associations, Arm’s Length Management Organisations and housing developers;***
- using their own land (if available and suitable) for self-build and custom housebuilding and marketing it to those on the register;***
- working with Homes England to unlock land and sites in wider public ownership to deliver self- build and custom build housing;***
- when engaging with developers and landowners who own sites that are suitable for housing, and encouraging them to consider self-build and custom housebuilding, and facilitating access to those on the register where the landowner is interested.***
- working with local partners, such as Housing Associations and third sector groups, to custom build affordable housing for veterans and other groups in acute housing need. ’***

The site is not included on the Council’s self-build register, and the applicant has not detailed how the proposal would meet an unmet need of self-/custom-building within the local area or indeed the District. Therefore, the proposal would not be considered to meet the definition of Self-/Custom-build housing as per the relevant acts and PPG as above. In the absence of this information, the Council does not consider that this claim has any meaningful benefit in favour of granting permission.

5.85 As set out within the planning application submission, including the application forms, the proposed dwelling is a self-build dwelling to be built by and occupied by the Appellants. The proposed dwelling therefore complies with the definition within the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act (as amended) 2015. The Case Officer’s report above acknowledges that there is a need to facilitate self-build homes within the District and the proposal will positively contribute towards the supply of such homes.

5.86 The ‘Bacon Review’ 2021 commissioned by the Government at the time aimed to boost capacity in self-build and custom housebuilding. The key findings include the recognition that such homes can help diversify the housing market, increase overall supply, and provide homes that people truly desire.

It is acknowledged that any development would bestow socio-economic benefits, such as the creation of temporary jobs during the construction phase in the short-term, and local expenditure and contribution to the local economy in the medium to long-term arising from increase occupancy. However, this is not a particularly unique benefit that would result from this development. Nonetheless, this benefit is afforded limited weight in the overall planning balance.

The proposal's ability to demonstrate an absence of adverse ecological harm and acceptable highways impact (among others) are neutral considerations that demonstrate general policy compliance rather than positive benefits weighing in favour of the scheme. No other discernible benefits would arise from the granting of this permission.

As per the preceding sections of this report, the granting of this permission would conflict with Policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the HDPF. This conflict with the development plan is afforded significant weight, as it would undermine the strategic process of allocating housing sites for development in appropriate locations, and the democratic process of selecting sites within Neighbourhood Plans. Furthermore, the resultant character harm is attributed significant weight.

While the Council's housing land supply shortfall triggers the presumption in favour of sustainable development under NPPF Paragraph 11(d), the tilted balance is not a green light for unsustainable development. In this case the site's failure to meet the location criteria of the SDPAN, and the adverse character harm results in clear harm to the settlement strategy and character of the local area. These impacts combined significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of delivering one market dwelling when assessed against the policies of the NPPF taken as a whole. As such, the presumption is displaced, and the proposal is therefore recommended for refusal.

Recommendation: Application Refused

- 5.87 On the basis that the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of housing, it is reiterated that less weight should be given to the Council's policies in respect of the supply and location of new homes as these policies are deemed to be out-of-date. Instead, the proposal should be considered against the principles of sustainable development set out within the NPPF having regard to all material planning considerations.
- 5.88 In terms of location, it is demonstrated that notwithstanding the site's countryside location, it is sustainably located close to Southwater where there is a wide range of local services and facilities. The majority of vehicle movements are likely to be short (which is not unusual for rural areas) and there is a local network of public rights of way together with cycling being an option along Dragons Green Road.

5.89 When considered in the planning balance, the proposed development will make a small, but important contribution towards the supply of much needed new homes within the District (including self-build homes) and it is demonstrated that the proposal will not result in undue harm to wider countryside views. Any visual impact will be localised to predominately views within the site itself and from Dragons Green Road but as the proposed dwelling is of a high standard of design, these views and the localised landscape change will not result in harm to the overall and wider landscape character of the area.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 This Statement of Case supports the proposal for the construction of a self-build dwelling together with the conversion of an existing barn to form a home office and the creation of a new driveway at Town Barn, Dragons Green Road, Shipley (near Southwater). Planning permission was refused for the proposal by Horsham District Council on 29 July 2026 (DC/26/0766) for two reasons relating to the site's location outside of a built-up area boundary and the proposal's impact upon the rural character, landscape quality and visual amenity of the countryside.
- 6.2 Case law confirms when considering whether a proposal complies with a development plan, it is not necessary to say that it must accord with every policy of the development plan and the question is whether it accords with the development plan overall. In addition, paragraph 7 of the NPPF confirms that the Framework should be read as a whole.
- 6.3 Therefore whilst the site is located outside of a built-up area boundary, the proposal should be considered in the planning balance:
- The Council's HDPF is over five years old and the Council is unable to demonstrate a five year supply of housing as required by NPPF policy HO3. As a result, the Council's policies in respect to the supply and location of new homes are out-of-date (including HDPF policies 2, 3, 4, 15 and 26). In addition, the Case Officer's report confirms that the Shipley Neighbourhood Plan is also over five years old and does not allocate sites for development.
 - The proposal will make a small but important contribution towards the supply of new homes including windfall provision within the District and the provision of a self-build home. NPPF policy HO7 requires that substantial weight should be given to the benefits of providing homes which will contribute towards meeting the evidenced accommodation needs of the community.

- NPPF policy S3 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development and refers to the application of policy S5 in respect of the principle of development outside settlements. This policy confirms that only certain types of development should be approved in such locations with exceptions listed at S5 (1) (a – j). In this case, the proposed development would address an evidenced unmet need for housing, the site is physically well-related to an existing settlement (Southwater), and the proposal is of a scale (just one new dwelling) which can be accommodated taking into account the existing availability of infrastructure. The proposal therefore complies with NPPF policy S5 (1) (j) and is an acceptable form of development in this particular countryside location.
- In applying the provisions of policy S5, there are no adverse effects that would substantially outweigh the provision of a new home, in an appropriate and sustainable location and the proposal would not amount to an ‘isolated’ home within the countryside (NPPF policy HO11). The proposal therefore also complies with the provisions of NPPF policy S5 (2) and (3) together with policy TR3 in respect of locating development in sustainable locations. In this case, the proposal is not for significant development and one dwelling will not generate large amounts of new vehicle movements.
- The Council has already accepted the principle of the creation of a new dwelling at Town Barn under applications DC/04/2051 and DC/09/2115 via the conversion of the existing barn to a dwelling. Whilst the permissions have expired, this planning history is a material planning consideration.
- The proposed dwelling has been carefully designed to ensure it is of a high quality construction and appearance and of an appropriate height, scale and mass. The wider site boundaries to the land are well defined and screened and the proposed development will not have any significant or adverse impact upon wider countryside views. The Council’s Landscape Officer acknowledges that any visual impact will be localised to views within the site itself and the Case Officer’s report confirms no objections to the design of the proposed dwelling which is high quality and appropriate to the rural area. Overall, the proposed dwelling would not appear as an incongruous form of development and no harm will be caused to the rural character, landscape quality and visual amenity of the countryside. In particular, the proposed dwelling is set back from Dragons Green Road and it will not appear

as an unduly prominent feature within the surrounding countryside landscape. Improvements would also be made to the appearance of the barn via its sensitive renovation and conversion. The proposed development does not therefore conflict with the overall requirements of NPPF policies DP3, DP4, N2 and N3 and HDPF policies HDPF 25, 32 and 33.

- 6.4 As the proposed development complies with the principles of sustainable development set out at NPPF policies S3 and S5, and in accordance with HDPF policy 1, it is respectfully asked that this appeal is allowed.