



APPLICATIONS & APPEALS SERVICES

**TAINTFIELD FARM
KINGS LANE OFF KENT STREET
COWFOLD
WEST SUSSEX
RH13 8BD**

**SUPPORTING PLANNING, HERITAGE & DESIGN
AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

APRIL 2026



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning permission is sought for the removal of barn/stabling structures and mobile home and the construction of a single-storey ancillary dwelling to be used as a holiday let. The site is located at Taintfield Farm, Kings Lane off Kent Street, Cowfold, West Sussex, RH13 8BD.

1.2 The details of the proposals will be described and appraised having regard to the following aspects:

- **Physical Context** – explains the physical context of the site and its surroundings;
- **Planning Context** – the planning history of the site and broad policy requirements;
- **Use** – the purpose of the proposals;
- **Amount** – the extent of development on the site;
- **Scale** – the physical size of the development;
- **Layout** – the relationship of the proposals to neighbouring properties;
- **Appearance** – details of materials, style and impact upon the visual amenities of the area;

- **Landscape** – impact of the proposal on the existing landscape;
- **Access** – access to the development and parking provision.

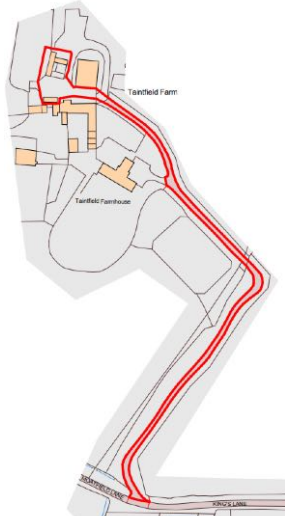
1.3 The Council is requested to consider this Statement alongside the submitted plans and this demonstration that the proposed development accords with the relevant planning policies and is acceptable in all respects. It is hoped that the Council will support the proposal and grant planning permission.

2. PHYSICAL CONTEXT & PLANNING HISTORY

Physical Context

- 2.1 The application site comprises an area of 0.181ha, it forms part of the wider Taintfield Farm site. It currently consists of a range of dilapidated stable and barn structures all of which are in very poor condition. The mobile home proposed to be removed as part of this application is located to the south of the stables.

Figure 2.1 – Site Location Plan



Source: Philips Surveyors (2025)

- 2.2 The wider site includes other buildings namely storage facilities along with residential accommodation. None of these buildings are the subject of this application.
- 2.3 Taintfield Farm is located on the north side of Kings Lane, to the east of the village of Cowfold and to the south of the A272. The site can be accessed via Kings Lane to the south of the site.

Figure 2.2 - Existing Site Photographs



Existing site looking north



Existing site looking east



Existing site looking south



Existing mobile home to be removed

Source: NJA Town Planning Ltd (2025)

- 2.4 The application site is outside of the built-up area boundary and is therefore considered to be within the countryside for policy assessment.
- 2.5 The site is not subject to any environmental designations for its landscape or ecological value. There are some existing trees on the site, none of which would be impacted as part of the proposal. It is wholly located in Flood Zone 1.
- 2.6 Lydford Farmhouse is Grade II listed (list entry number: 1193164) and is located approximately 90 metres to the south-west of the site. It is a C16th two storey timber framed house.

Planning History

- 2.7 The most recent planning application on the site was in 2007. Given the age of the applications there is limited information available, however, the information that is available is set out below.
- DC/07/2579 - Conversion of an existing barn to grooms/farm workers accommodation. Permitted May 2008.

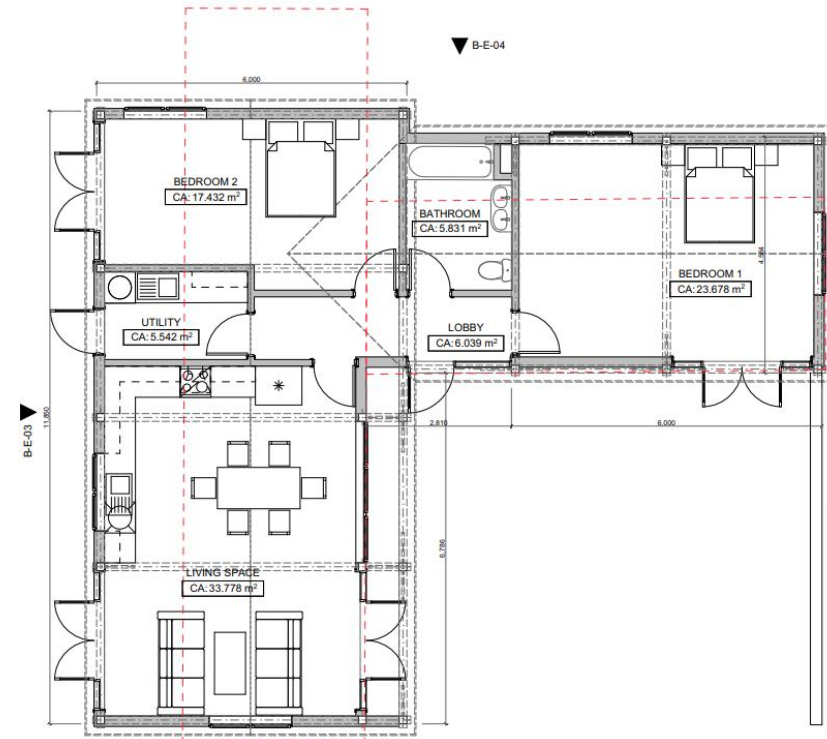
- DC/04/2732 – Retention of a dwellinghouse (LDC). LDC issued May 2005.
- CF/20/95 – Attached garage and access. Permitted August 1995.
- CF/29/94 – First floor extension and alterations. Permitted May 1994.
- CF/5/54 – Pair of agricultural workers bungalows. Permitted August 1954.

- 2.8 A recent planning application has also been submitted on the wider site to regularise the use of the northern area for open storage.

3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal is for demolition of the existing barn/ stabling structures and removal of the 2no. bedroom mobile home and construction of a barn style single- storey ancillary dwelling to be used as a holiday let. The locations of the buildings to be demolished and removed are set out in the plans in Figure 3.1 below.
- 3.2 The proposed ancillary dwelling would remain in the same position as the existing barn. The proposal results in a 23m² reduction of built development on the site, the existing stabling has a GIA of 72m² and the mobile home has a GIA of 44m², the proposed dwelling has a GIA of 93m². The outline of the existing barn/ stabling is shown on the Block Plan in Figure 3.2 overpage.
- 3.3 The proposed accommodation would benefit from 2no. bedrooms, a bathroom, an open plan kitchen/dining/living room and a utility room. The proposed site floor plan is provided in Figure 3.2 below.

Figure 3.1 - Proposed Floor Plan



Source: Philips Surveyors (2025)

- 3.4 The proposed accommodation would be built to a high standard, a range of materials are proposed to ensure the building reflects the local vernacular. An oak frame and black timber cladding would form the elevations. A brick plinth is also proposed to add character to the proposal and the roof

would benefit from a slate roof. The proposed elevations are provided in Figure 3.3 below.

Figure 3.2 - Proposed Elevations



Source: Philips Surveyors (2025)

- 3.5 The existing access via Kings Lane to the south of the site would be retained, as shown on the Site Location Plan. A parking area for 2no. cars would be provided on the hardstanding adjacent to the ancillary dwelling to the south.

4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

Sustainable Development

- 4.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework for the preparation of local plans for housing and other development. The NPPF should be read as a whole.
- 4.2 Paragraph 2 of the NPPF sets out that ***'Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements'***.

- 4.3 Paragraph 7 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has the following three overarching objectives which are independent but need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways:

- a) ***'an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;***
- b) ***a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect*** current and future needs and

support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

- c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy'.*

4.4 Paragraph 10 states ***'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 11).*** For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

4.5 Paragraph 12 of the Framework states that ***'The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a***

planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not normally be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed'.

Plan and Decision Making

4.6 Paragraph 34 requires local plans and spatial development strategies to be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years and should then be updated as necessary. In particular, 'Relevant strategic policies will need updating at least once every five years if their applicable local housing need figure has changed significantly; and they are likely to require earlier review if local housing need is expected to change significantly in the future'.

4.7 In terms of decision-making, the Framework states at paragraph 39 that ***'Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a***

positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible'.

Rural Businesses

- 4.8 Paragraph 85 requires planning policies and decisions to help create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity. In respect of rural areas, paragraph 88 supports ***'the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings'***. It also supports ***'sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside'***.

- 4.9 Paragraph 89 recognises that ***'sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycle or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist'***.

Highways and Car Parking

- 4.10 Paragraph 109 requires transport issues to be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, using a vision-led approach to identify transport solutions that deliver well-designed, sustainable and popular places. This is to ensure that (inter alia) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed.

4.11 Paragraph 112 states that if setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account the accessibility of the development, its type, mix and use, the availability of land and opportunities for public transport, local car ownership levels and the need to ensure that adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

4.12 Paragraph 116 makes it clear that ***‘Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe’***.

Effective Use of Land

4.13 Paragraph 124 requires planning policies and decisions to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring healthy living conditions.

4.14 Paragraph 125 states that planning policies and decision should encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land. Furthermore, paragraph 128 sets out that local planning

authorities should take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans where this would help to meet identified needs.

4.15 Paragraph 129 states that ***‘Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land.....’***

Design

4.16 In terms of design, Section 12 seeks to achieve well designed places sets out that the ***‘The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities’*** (Paragraph 131).

4.17 Paragraph 135 further states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and

effective landscaping. Development should also be sympathetic to local character and history and should be designed with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

- 4.18 Paragraph 139 states that ***‘Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:***

- a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes: and/or***
- b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so***

long as they fit with the overall form and layout of their surroundings’.

Climate Change

- 4.19 Paragraph 161 requires the planning system to support the transition to a low carbon future and to taking into account flood risk. New development should be planned in ways which avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change (paragraph 164).

Countryside

- 4.20 Paragraph 187 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural local environment by: (inter alia) ***‘recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside....’***.
- 4.21 Paragraph 189 sets out that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within

their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

Biodiversity

- 4.22 Paragraph 192 requires the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity. Paragraph 193 states that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should avoid significant harm to biodiversity which should be adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for. Development should not result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

Ground Conditions and Pollution

- 4.23 Paragraph 196 requires planning policies and decisions to ensure that a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination. Where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner (paragraph 197).

- 4.24 Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment (paragraph 198).

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)

- 4.25 Local planning policy is set out in the Local Plan, the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) adopted was in 2015. The following policies of the HDPF are most relevant to the proposal:

- Policy 1: Sustainable Development
- Policy 2: Strategic Development
- Policy 3: Development Hierarchy
- Policy 4: Settlement Expansion
- Policy 7: Strategic Policy: Economic Growth
- Policy 10: Rural Economic Development
- Policy 11: Tourism and Cultural Facilities
- Policy 24: Environmental Protection
- Policy 25: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
- Policy 26: Countryside Protection

- Policy 28: Replacement Dwellings and House Extensions in the Countryside
- Policy 31: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
- Policy 32: The Quality of New Development
- Policy 33: Development Principles
- Policy 35: Climate Change
- Policy 36: Appropriate Energy Use
- Policy 37: Sustainable Design and Construction
- Policy 38: Strategic Policy: Flooding
- Policy 40: Sustainable Transport
- Policy 41: Parking

Cowfold Neighbourhood Development Plan

4.26 The Cowfold Neighbourhood Plan was made in November 2024 and proposed to influence and guide development within the Parish over the plan period up to 2031. Policy 14 'Employment' of this Plan is relevant to the proposal and discussed further below.

5. DETAILS OF THE PROPOSAL: USE, AMOUNT & SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT

The Principle of Development

- 5.1 NPPF paragraph 7 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental (NPPF paragraph 8).
- 5.2 Paragraph 10 of the NPPF states '***So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11)***'. Importantly, paragraph 38 of the NPPF states '***Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible***'.
- 5.3 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, planning applications that accord with the policies of the HDPF will be approved without delay (unless material considerations indicate otherwise).

- 5.4 HDPF Policy 26 states that within the countryside development must be essential to its countryside location and must meet certain criteria. In addition, proposals should be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location. The policy also notes that development will be considered acceptable where it does not lead, either individually or cumulatively, to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside, and protects, and/or conserves, and / or enhances, the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area in which it is located.
- 5.5 The proposed creation of one, self-contained holiday let will help to enable the sustainable economic development of the rural area in accordance with policy 26. It is on a minor scale and would not lead to any increase in the level of activity in the countryside given the removal of a mobile home is also proposed.

5.6 Furthermore, the proposal relates to previously developed land and removes unsightly structures to create a building which is of a high-quality design and appearance. As such, there will be a positive impact upon the visual amenities of the countryside landscape.

5.7 The proposal complies with HDPF 26 and the NPPF and the principle of development is acceptable given it is compatible with its countryside location and the positive impact of the proposal on the character of the landscape.

Use of Building As Holiday Let

5.8 The NPPF at paragraph 85 requires planning policies and decisions to help create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity. In respect of rural areas, paragraph 88 supports ***‘the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings’***. It also supports ***‘sustainable rural tourism and leisure***

developments which respect the character of the countryside’.

5.9 Similarly, HDPF policy 10 supports sustainable rural economic development within the District to help generate local employment opportunities and economic, social and environmental benefits for local communities. In the countryside, policy 10 supports development which maintains the quality and character of the area whilst sustaining its varied and productive social and economic activity. Any development should be appropriate to the countryside location and should (inter alia) contribute to the wider rural economy and/or promote recreation in and the enjoyment of the countryside. Development should wherever possible be contained within existing buildings suitable for conversion although new buildings or development may also be acceptable.

5.10 HDPF policy 11 supports tourism and the enhancement of local cultural facilities. The policy requires any development to be of a scale and type appropriate to the location and should increase the range, or improve the quality of

accommodation, attraction or experiences for tourists, day visitors, business visitors and residents in the District.

5.11 Policy 14 ‘Employment’ of the Cowfold Neighbourhood Plan states ***“Proposals that enable the development or enhancement of small-scale businesses will be supported where schemes are (inter alia) on previously developed sites and in appropriate sustainable rural locations.”***

5.12 The existing barn/ stabling structures are incidental to Taintfield Farmhouse, the location of the existing structures lends itself well to accommodating a small-scale holiday let which will positively contribute to sustaining the local rural economy, including tourism.

5.13 The holiday let use is small in scale and would result in a smaller footprint of built development on the site due to the removal of the mobile home. The use will not result in any harmful intensification of activity within the countryside.

5.14 The site is well connected to the main road network, Kent Street connects to the A272 to the north, which links directly

to the A24 to the west and the A23 to the east (both of which are a short distance away). These major routes provide links north and south to London, the south coast, Gatwick airport and beyond. The site is also well placed in respect of the South Downs National Park (the boundary of which is located less than 7 miles away to the south) and a number of surrounding towns and villages such as Cowfold (1.5 miles), Partridge Green (2.5 miles), Southwater (5 miles) and Steyning (7 miles).

5.15 The site is close to the rural public right of way network locally including the Downslink Cycle Route which runs through Partridge Green. There are several tourist attractions nearby including the Knepp Castle Estate, vineyards (Nyetimber and Kinsbrook as examples), the South Downs Way and the many villages and towns, walking routes and visitor attractions, restaurants, pubs, cafes, shops and other businesses within the National Park and surrounding areas. The site is therefore well located and in a suitable position to accommodate self-contained tourist accommodation.

5.16 It should be acknowledged that NPPF paragraph 85 recognises that ***‘sites to meet local business and***

community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport’.

Given the small-scale nature of the proposal, the use of the building as holiday let will not result in harmful unsustainable vehicle movements within the countryside.

5.17 The Horsham District Visitor Hotel and Visitor Accommodation Study (2016), which is the most up to date document whilst writing, provides an assessment of the future potential for hotel and visitor accommodation across the District. It found that the District has a strong and growing market for hotel and visitor accommodation across the District based upon a number of issues including projected population growth. Within the rural areas of the District in particular, the study found opportunities for the upgrading and expansion of existing hotels and B&Bs and the provision of new high quality holiday cottages.

5.18 Paragraph 3.6.1 states that ***‘Our survey of holiday cottage letting agencies that are represented in Horsham District showed strong demand for all sizes and standards of self-catering property in all parts of the District. Existing***

agency-let self-catering properties are consistently full with full week lets during school holiday periods, May, June and September and the Christmas and New Year period. At all other times of the year there is strong demand for weekend breaks, other than during January and February when weekend demand is weaker and more variable’.

5.19 In addition, paragraph 3.6.3 states that all of the letting agencies spoken to are looking for additional properties in and around the Horsham District and in the South Downs National Park. There is clearly a high demand for the type of holiday accommodation that can be offered at Taintfield Farm with the building providing high quality self-catering facilities in an attractive and accessible location. Visitors will contribute to and help sustain the local economy and in particular other businesses such as local restaurants, pubs and visitor attractions. Overall, the proposal is fully supported by the NPPF and HDPF policies 7, 10 and 11 and policy 14 of the Cowfold Neighbourhood Plan.

Case Studies

- 5.20 The following are examples of where the Council has granted planning permission for similar self-catering holiday let accommodation within the countryside:

DC/25/1953 - Alders, Horsham Road, Steyning (Appendix NJA/01)

- 5.21 Planning permission was approved in January 2026 for the change of use of 2no. outbuildings to be used as self-contained holiday lets (Use class C3). (Retrospective). The Officer's Report stated ***"The proposal represents the re-use of existing buildings within an established residential curtilage. No new built form is proposed. The development would contribute modestly to the local visitor economy, consistent with Policies 7, 10 and 11 and SNP Policy SNDP4 (Improving Our Facilities)."***

DC/25/1279 - The Chapel Holiday Let, Old House Manor Estate, Cowfold Road, Coolham (Appendix NJA/02)

- 5.22 Planning permission was approved in November 2025 for the conversion of a chapel to be used as a self-contained holiday

let (Retrospective). The Planning Officer concluded ***"Given this context, the provision of the short-term holiday-let in the location would contribute to the diversity of the rural economy and would not be considered to result in an over-intensification of activity or cause material harm to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside."***

DC/23/1069 - Bentons Cottage, Bentons Lane, Dial Post (Appendix NJA/03)

- 5.23 Planning permission was approved in August 2023 for change of use of existing stable building into a holiday let. The Officer's Report stated ***"The proposal would contribute to the wider rural economy and would improve the range and quality of facilities for visitors. While it is recognised that there would be some dependence on the car to access facilities and services, this would not be unusual for accommodation of this type, and is not considered to amount to a level or intensity of activity that would result in adverse harm to the countryside location"***.

**DC/23/0984 - Walden Hall, Cowfold Road, West Grinstead
(Appendix NJA/04)**

- 5.24 This planning application was approved in February 2024 for the conversion of a stable building to form 4no. self-contained holiday lets. The Officers Report for this application states ***“The Council aims to take a proactive stance to encourage local tourism within the District and the proposal would make a modest contribution toward the provision of visitor accommodation within the District. There is likely to be a demand for this type of accommodation in this location. The Council’s Visitor Study (2016) identified a strong demand for this type of accommodation with supply not able to meet demand during spring and summer weekends, albeit this document is now over 7 years old.”***

**DC/22/0181 - Bayley Paddock, Mill Lane, Partridge Green
(Appendix NJA/05)**

- 5.25 This planning application was approved in March 2022 for the change of use and alterations to existing stable building to form 1no holiday-let unit (part retrospective). The Officers Report sets out ***“As established through the existing***

permission for holiday accommodation on the site, the proposed scale and nature of the accommodation is considered to be appropriate to the character and location of the area, whilst improving the range and quality of facilities for visitors.”

DC/21/1670 - Oak House, Worthing Road, Dial Post, Horsham (Appendix NJA/06)

- 5.26 Planning permission was approved in March 2022 for the change of use from ancillary accommodation to a holiday let. The Officers Report confirms ***“Policy 11 of the HDPF encourages measures which promote tourism and requires, amongst other matters, that development be of a scale and type appropriate to the location. The proposal would make a modest contribution toward the provision of visitor accommodation within the District, and the proximity of the site to the footpath network may create a demand for the accommodation from tourist”.***

DC/20/1282 - West Wantley, Fryern Road, Storrington, Pulborough (Appendix NJA/07)

- 5.27 This planning application was approved in September 2020 for the demolition of existing dairy and stables and rebuilding as a single storey building to provide 1No. 3 bed holiday let unit of accommodation. There was no Officers Report uploaded for this application, however, the Decision Notice confirmed the principle of development was acceptable.

**DC/20/0304 - Gay Street Farm, Gay Street, Pulborough,
West Sussex (Appendix NJA/08)**

- 5.28 Planning permission was approved in September 2020 for the conversion of former granary to holiday accommodation. The Officers Report stated ***“In policy terms, the proposal could be supported. It is noted that the site has already been converted to function as an office, approved in order to support the farm. The accommodation would be located within a wider landholding, located close to other buildings, with established vehicular access to the site and access to a wider parking area that serves the host property. As the accommodation would be linked to the host dwelling, this would be conveniently sited for maintenance and change-over times between guests.”***

6. LAYOUT, DESIGN & APPEARANCE

Design

- 6.1 The NPPF sets out that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Developments should be visually attractive and sympathetic to the local character of the surrounding area and should optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (paragraphs 131 and 135).
- 6.2 HDPF policy 32 requires high quality design for all development in the District. In addition, HDPF Policy 33 sets out the Council's key development control criteria and states that development should make efficient use of land, should not cause harm to neighbouring residential amenities, should be appropriate in scale, massing and appearance and be of a high standard of design. Development should also be locally distinctive in character and should use high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping.

- 6.3 Policy 33 sets out "***In order to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment developments shall be required to:***

- 1. Make efficient use of land, and prioritise the use of previously developed land and buildings whilst respecting any constraints that exist;**

- 6.4 The proposal makes efficient use of previously developed land and removes dilapidated buildings and a mobile home that are not suitable for occupation. The proposal complies with criterion 1.

- 2. Ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land, for example through overlooking or noise, whilst having regard to the sensitivities of surrounding development;**

- 6.5 The building is located away from neighbouring properties and there will be no adverse impact caused in respect of any loss of privacy, overbearing appearance or loss of light to

neighbours including to Taintfield Farmhouse. The proposal complies with criterion 2.

3. Ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of the development is of a high standard of design and layout and where relevant 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;

- 6.6 The appearance of the building will be significantly enhanced from its current state and the removal of the mobile home will also benefit the appearance of the area. The accommodation would be of an appropriate scale and mass and would be viewed in context of the other built form on the wider Taintfield Farm site. The building is not located within an isolated countryside position due to forming part of the wider farmyard, as such, there is limited impact upon the rural character and appearance of the area and any changes would be a betterment. The proposal complies with criterion 3.

4. Are locally distinctive in character, respect the character of the surrounding area (including its overall setting, townscape features, views and green corridors) and, where available and applicable, take account of the recommendations/policies of the relevant Design Statements and Character Assessments;

- 6.7 The proposed building is of a design that is typical of the rural area. As set out, it is set within other built form and its use will not result in any harmful spread of development within the countryside. The proposal complies with criterion 4.

5. Use high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping; and includes the provision of street furniture and public art where appropriate

- 6.8 A range of high-quality building materials are proposed. The proposed timber cladding with oak frame and slate roof respects its rural character and there is no conflict with criterion 5.

6. Presume in favour of the retention of existing important landscape and natural features, for example trees, hedges, banks and watercourses. Development must relate sympathetically to the local landscape and justify and mitigate against any losses that may occur through the development;

- 6.9 No trees, hedges, banks or watercourses are affected by the proposal. There is no conflict with criterion 6.

7. Ensure buildings and spaces are orientated to gain maximum benefit from sunlight and passive solar energy, unless this conflicts with the character of the surrounding townscape, landscape or topography where it is of good quality.

- 6.10 The proposed building would be sufficiently lit by natural light from appropriately positioned and sized windows. The proposal complies with criterion 7.

Proposals will also need to take the following into account where relevant:

Incorporate where appropriate convenient, safe and visually attractive areas for the parking of vehicles and cycles, and the storage of bins/recycling facilities without dominating the development or its surroundings;

- 6.11 The proposal involves the use of the existing hardstanding to the south of the site to provide space for 2no. car parking spaces. There is also space for the suitable storage of bins/recycling facilities at the property. The proposal complies with criterion 8.

9. Incorporate measures to reduce any actual or perceived opportunities for crime or antisocial behaviour on the site and in the surrounding area, and create visually attractive frontages where adjoining streets and public spaces, including appropriate windows and doors to assist in the informal surveillance of public amenity areas by occupants of the site;

6.12 The proposed development will provide an appropriate use within a safe and secure building. The close relationship of the accommodation to buildings on the wider site provides for natural surveillance within the curtilage. The proposal complies with criterion 9.

***10. Contribute to the removal of physical barriers;
and,***

***11. Make a clear distinction between the public
and private spaces within the site.***

6.13 The proposal raises no implications in respect of criteria 10 and 11. Overall it is demonstrated that the proposal complies in full with HDPF Policy 33.

Countryside

6.14 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by (inter alia) ***‘recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside’***.

6.15 HDPF Policy 24 requires the high-quality environment of the District to be protected through the planning process. Policies 25, 32 and 33 of the HDPF promote development that is of a high-quality design, which is sympathetic to the character and distinctiveness of the site and surroundings. The landscape character of the area should be protected, conserved and enhanced, with proposals contributing to a sense of place through appropriate scale, massing and appearance.

6.16 The design, scale and massing of the proposal along with considered materials ensures that the general character and appearance of the countryside will not be significantly altered as a result of the proposal. There would be no greater visual impact within the landscape, and it would be enhanced by removing dilapidated structures. The wider site is also screened by mature trees, hence there is no further landscaping required in order to protect the countryside.

6.17 In summary, the proposal would result in a very minimal impact to the character and appearance of the area and the high-quality environment is fully protected. The proposal is therefore fully compliant with NPPF paragraphs 187 and HDPF policies 24, 25, 32 and 33.

Impact on Amenity

- 6.18 HDPF policy 32 states that development will be expected to provide an attractive, functional, accessible, safe, and adaptable environment that contributes to a sense of place both in the buildings and spaces themselves. Policy 33 continues that development shall be required to ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land.
- 6.19 The design of the proposed holiday let is functional and meets all the required space standards. The proposal would not generate any major noise, the building is located away from neighbouring residential dwellings and there will be no adverse impact caused in respect of any loss of privacy, overbearing appearance or loss of light to neighbours. The proposal would also not increase the use of the access road due to the removal of the mobile home negating this.
- 6.20 Therefore, the proposal would meet the needs of the occupiers and not result in an unacceptable impact on nearby residential neighbours and the requirements of policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF would be fully met as part of the proposal.

Heritage

- 6.21 Section 16 of the NPPF refers to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. The Framework requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting (Paragraph 207). NPPF paragraph 212 sets out that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.
- 6.22 Any harm to, or loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset (including from development within its setting) will require justification (Paragraph 213). In line with the NPPF, HDPF policy 34 sets out that the Council will sustain and enhance the historic environment through positive management of development affecting heritage assets. It further requires development proposals to make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the area and ensure that the development is consistent with the special character of those areas.

6.23 Lydford Farmhouse is Grade II listed and is located approximately 90 metres south-west from the site. The Historic England register states:

“L-shaped C16 timber-framed house with plaster infilling, ground floor mainly rebuilt in red brick, south front tile-hung. Horsham slab roof with pentice behind. Gable at east end. Casement windows. Two storeys and attic in gable. Two windows.”

(List Entry Number: 1193164)

6.24 A Heritage Report has been prepared in support of this planning application. The Report confirms the existing building is not considered a non-designated heritage asset and dates from the early 20th Century. It is of an improvised form of construction and subject to appropriate design, is thought to be capable of replacement. Additionally, the site is located furthest from the Grade II listed Lydford Farmhouse and beyond the stable block, which is the primary historic outbuilding. The proposed design would be of a scale that is considered to be proportionate to existing and does not attempt to push beyond a comfortable scope. The design, layout, proportions and materials are of a quality that would

enhance the setting of the listed building over and above the existing improvised structure and reflects Lydford Farm House and former farmstead.

6.25 As such, no interests of acknowledged importance are harmed as a result of the proposal. It has been demonstrated the proposal complies with the heritage requirements of the NPPF and HDPF policy 34.

7. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1 The NPPF requires that local planning authorities should preserve and enhance biodiversity and that new development should adequately mitigate against any potential harm. The site is not located within any designated landscape, however HDPF Policy 25 protects the landscape and habitats of the district and is relevant to this proposal.

Ecology

- 7.2 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal including a Bat Emergence Survey has been submitted in support of this planning application. The Appraisal confirms the site comprises predominantly developed land and areas of low-value, sparsely vegetated habitat, with no irreplaceable habitats or Habitats of Principal Importance affected by the proposals. Whilst a range of species including bats, nesting birds, hedgehogs and great crested newts are identified as potential considerations, the risk of significant ecological impacts is low subject to appropriate mitigation and good practice during construction.

- 7.3 This position is reinforced by the Bat Emergence Survey, which recorded no bats emerging from or re-entering the building and confirms that bats are likely absent, with the development therefore unlikely to result in harm to bats or their roosts .
- 7.4 A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment prepared by Arun Ecology Ltd has been submitted to support this application. This confirms the proposed development delivers a 24.88% net gain in area habitat units, increasing baseline habitat from 0.03 to 0.04 units, thereby exceeding the statutory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain requirement with all trading rules satisfied and no off-site compensation required.
- 7.5 Overall, it is not considered that the proposal raises any issues in respect of the ecological and biodiversity requirements of the NPPF and HDPF Policy 25. Importantly there would be an increase in biodiversity value and thus no conflict with the relevant development plan policies or advice set out in the NPPF addressing biodiversity.

Sustainability

- 7.6 HDPF Policy 35 sets out that development will be supported where it makes a clear contribution to mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change and to meet the District's carbon reduction targets. Development must be designed to mitigate the effects of climate change and to adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- 7.7 The submitted Energy and Sustainability Statement prepared by Blew Burton Ltd confirms that the development will exceed the requirements of Part L of the Building Regulations through enhanced insulation standards, reduced air permeability and the use of efficient building fabric. The dwelling will be heated via an air source heat pump serving underfloor heating, providing a low-carbon solution for space heating and hot water. Consideration has also been given to the future installation of photovoltaic panels to further reduce carbon emissions.
- 7.8 In addition, water consumption will be significantly reduced through the specification of low-flow fixtures and fittings, achieving consumption below Building Regulations

standards, with further reductions achievable through greywater systems if required. Sustainable drainage measures, including permeable surfacing and soakaways, will be utilised to manage surface water run-off. The proposal also incorporates sustainable construction practices, including the use of responsibly sourced materials and low environmental impact products.

- 7.9 Details may be agreed and secured by condition to ensure compliance with the NPPF and HDPF policies 35, 36 and 37 and the Council's target to become carbon neutral by 2030 (direct emissions) and by 2050 (indirect emissions).

8. ACCESS AND HIGHWAYS

- 8.1 The NPPF sets out at paragraph 116 that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 8.2 HDPF policies 40 and 41 seek to ensure that proposals incorporate safe and adequate means of access and that there is appropriate car parking provision.
- 8.3 The existing access route off Kings Lane to the south of the site would be utilised by the occupants of the holiday let. This access route would not be subject to an increase in number of vehicle movements due to the removal of the 2no. bedroom mobile home and the wider activities on the site. There would also be no adverse effect upon the surrounding road network.
- 8.4 The existing hardstanding to the south of the site will be used to provide 2no. car parking spaces and there is sufficient manoeuvring space.

- 8.5 Additionally, visitors will benefit from a range of walking and cycling routes within the vicinity. This includes the rural public right of way network locally and the Downslink Cycle Route.
- 8.6 Overall, the proposed access and car parking provision are adequate and the proposal complies with policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF and the NPPF.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 This Statement supports the proposal for the removal of barn/stabling structures and mobile home and the construction of a single-storey ancillary dwelling to be used as a holiday let, at Taintfield Farm, Kings Lane off Kent Street, Cowfold.
- 9.2 The proposal is compliant with the aims of the NPPF and the HDPF to support sustainable rural economic development including tourism. The Horsham District Visitor Hotel and Visitor Accommodation Study (2016) found a strong and growing market for visitor accommodation across the District based upon a number of issues including the need for new high quality holiday cottages. The proposal will make a small but important contribution to help fulfil this need, making efficient use of previously developed land resulting in no harm to the countryside landscape.
- 9.3 The proposal is small in scale, as appropriate to the rural area and which will not create any harmful intensification of use in accordance with HDPF policies 10, 11 and 26. The self-contained holiday let accommodation is similar to others

permitted within the District as referred to within this Statement.

- 9.4 It is further demonstrated that no harm will be caused in any designated heritage assets. Neighbouring amenity will be fully respected and there are no ecological concerns. Sufficient car parking and access is also proposed.
- 9.5 Overall, the proposal complies with the relevant policies of the NPPF and the development plan (including the Neighbourhood Plan). Therefore, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development, planning permission should be granted.