
From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk
Sent: 11 September 2026 22:50
To: Planning
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/26/1182

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Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 11/09/2026 10:49 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Limekiln Farm Ghyll House Farm Broadwater Lane Copsale Horsham West Sussex RH13 6QW
Proposal:	Variation of Condition 1 of previously approved application DC/23/1325 (Construction of a stable block with associated storage and staff room facilities. Construction of machinery/hay storage barn and a water borehole plant room. Construction of a sand school) for variations to the machinery barn and stable block designs.
Case Officer:	Daniel Holmes

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Customer Details

Address:

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Member of the Public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Design - Loss of General Amenity - Other - Overdevelopment - Trees and Landscaping
Comments:	I request name and address anonymity regarding these comments. I wish to object to retrospective application DC/26/1182.

My objection is not based simply upon the fact that the application is retrospective, rather, I am concerned that the development now constructed represents a material departure from the scheme originally presented to and approved by the Council, both in its appearance and in the nature and amount of accommodation now incorporated within the buildings.

I ask the Council to assess the development as it has actually been constructed, rather than treating the alterations individually as a collection of minor changes.

1. Departure from the design and landscape justification originally put before the Council

The original Planning Statement supporting DC/23/1325 placed considerable emphasis upon the rural and tranquil character of this countryside location. In particular, paragraphs 3.7 and 3.9 stated:

"It is important for the benefit of the animals and for those using the public right of way at Limekiln Farm that new structures respect the rural, tranquil nature of the landscape."

It went on to explain that, because of the proposed "colours and finishes", the buildings would "blend in with the surrounding area."

Most importantly, paragraph 3.9 expressly stated:

"The proposed stable block and the barn will be single storey in design..."

The development for which retrospective approval is now sought differs materially from that description.

The current Planning Statement acknowledges that the machinery barn approved under DC/23/1325 was to be clad with vertical American western cedar timber slats in a "Yorkshire" pattern. Instead, it has been constructed with black corrugated metal cladding.

In my view, on a building of this substantial scale, the resulting appearance is considerably more industrial and warehouse-like than the timber-clad rural building originally presented to the Council.

This is particularly important given the isolated countryside location at the end of a rural track and the proximity of the public right of way. The applicant's original case for the development specifically relied upon the proposed design, colours and finishes enabling these large structures to blend into their rural surroundings.

I therefore ask the Council to reassess the landscape and visual impact of the development as actually constructed, including whether the original Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment remains applicable to the substantially altered appearance.

Design, appearance, materials and character are expressly identified by HDC as material planning considerations.

2. Substantial mezzanine and change in the character of the barn

I am particularly concerned about the introduction of a substantial mezzanine floor into the machinery/hay barn.

The retrospective statement describes this as a "hay loft" but confirms that it incorporates a staircase and a separate office area.

This appears difficult to reconcile with the unequivocal statement made in support of the original application that the barn would be "single storey in design."

The mezzanine also appears substantial in relation to the overall building. I therefore request that the Council carefully considers whether this represents a materially different form and

intensity of accommodation from the machinery/hay storage building originally considered acceptable.

The applicant states that an office is required so that legally required agricultural-business documents may be stored securely.

I respectfully suggest that the Council should require a clear functional justification for the scale of the mezzanine and office accommodation, including why such accommodation is reasonably necessary within this particular barn.

This is especially relevant as other office accommodation has already been approved elsewhere on the site in connection with DC/25/0883 (granted permission on 28 July 2026).

3. Functional need and proportionality

More generally, I ask the Council to consider whether the scale and internal arrangement of the altered barn are reasonably proportionate to the agricultural/equestrian operation they are said to serve.

The retrospective statement explains that the additional mezzanine is necessary to maximise hay storage and states that a shortage of hay supply in the previous season created a requirement for maximum possible storage. I pass this site regularly and rarely see more than the same three horses grazing.

Given the substantial size of the building and additional mezzanine storage now proposed retrospectively, I consider that the applicant should provide objective evidence demonstrating the operational requirement for this amount of storage, having regard to the scale of the equestrian/agricultural operation actually undertaken at Limekiln Farm.

This is particularly relevant in a countryside location, where the justification for the scale and need of rural development is an important planning consideration. HDC has previously treated the "justification for need and scale" and landscape impact as key issues when assessing rural buildings in the countryside.

4. Alterations to the stable block

The stable block has also changed from the approved development.

The retrospective application seeks approval for an additional stable and repositioned windows resulting from changes to the staff dayroom, WC and washdown facility. It introduces a number of altered window arrangements, including windows serving the staff dayroom and wash-down area.

Taken individually, some of these alterations might appear relatively modest. However, I ask the Council to assess their cumulative effect alongside the mezzanine, staircase, office and other alterations, and to consider whether the buildings as now constructed remain consistent with the limited rural/equestrian purposes for which permission was originally justified.

Given the isolated countryside location, I would also ask the Council to consider imposing robust conditions restricting the buildings to their authorised agricultural/equestrian purposes and preventing their use as residential accommodation or for commercial business purposes without a further express grant of planning permission.

I make this request as a matter of appropriate future planning control, rather than making any allegation concerning the applicant's intentions.

5. Fire safety and the altered machinery/hay barn

I also request further consideration of fire safety arising from the altered configuration of the

barn.

Condition 6 of DC/23/1325 was imposed specifically to ensure the safe development and operation of the site and required details of access and circulation for fire and rescue vehicles.

In subsequently considering that condition, the Council recorded that West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service was satisfied with fire-appliance access and turning arrangements and that an alternative firefighting water supply would be provided by a pond capable of holding up to 65,000 litres.

However, the building now requiring retrospective approval is materially different internally from the one originally approved.

It now incorporates additional hay storage at mezzanine level, an office and staircase. The applicant also confirms that batteries and electrical equipment associated with the solar roof panels are located in the ground-floor machinery store underneath the mezzanine.

Given the combination of machinery, electrical/battery equipment, substantial quantities of hay/haylage and occupied office accommodation within the altered building, I ask the Council to consult West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service again, or otherwise obtain appropriate specialist confirmation that the previously accepted fire and rescue arrangements remain adequate for the building in its altered form.

I would also ask that appropriate consideration be given to the rural setting and surrounding vegetation and mature trees when assessing the consequences of a significant fire at this isolated site.

6. Conditions 10 and 11 - private water supply

I am particularly concerned that the same retrospective application also seeks the removal of Conditions 10 and 11 of DC/23/1325.

The applicant's Planning Statement expressly requests their removal and states that this would enable the Planning Authority to reconsider whether the conditions are necessary.

These were not incidental conditions.

Condition 10 expressly prevented development above ground-floor slab level until a suitably qualified consultant had prepared a mitigation scheme demonstrating how borehole water would be treated to meet the requirements specified by the condition. It also required the borehole and mitigation scheme to be implemented before first occupation and thereafter maintained and operated. The stated reason included ensuring water neutrality and avoiding adverse effects upon the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites.

Condition 11 similarly prohibited development above ground-floor slab level until a Private Water Supply Management Plan had been submitted to and approved by the Council. That plan was required to deal with water sampling and testing, risk assessment, maintenance and servicing, treatment equipment, record keeping and ongoing annual review.

From the documentation I have seen on the planning portal, I have not identified evidence that either Condition 10 or Condition 11 was discharged before construction progressed.

By contrast, the February 2025 discharge application DISC/24/0212 expressly dealt with Conditions 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13 and 14, but not Conditions 10 or 11.

I therefore respectfully request that, before considering their removal, the Council clearly establishes:

- whether Conditions 10 and 11 were complied with at the construction stage at which they took effect;
- whether the development has already progressed beyond that stage;

- whether the borehole/private water supply is now operational;
- what has changed in planning policy, environmental circumstances or technical evidence since the Council considered these safeguards necessary in August 2024; and
- whether the relevant environmental and private-water-supply consultees support their removal.

The fact that removal may now have been suggested for consideration does not in itself establish that the safeguards originally imposed are no longer necessary.

7. Retrospective nature and cumulative assessment

The applicant's July 2026 Planning Statement expressly describes this as a Section 73A application seeking approval for "retrospective adjustments" to DC/23/1325 and records that the application followed a recommendation from HDC's Enforcement Team.

I appreciate that the retrospective nature of an application is not, of itself, a reason for refusal.

However, neither should the fact that the alterations have already been carried out weigh in favour of accepting them.

I request that the Council considers whether the development as actually constructed would have been considered acceptable had this design been presented at the outset.

That assessment should, in my view, consider cumulatively:

the extensive black corrugated metal cladding; the substantial mezzanine/hay loft; the office and staircase; the altered machinery barn doors; the additional stable; the revised windows and internal accommodation; the increased storage capacity; and the proposed removal of Conditions 10 and 11.

The original permission required the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans. The present application demonstrates that material elements of the development were instead constructed differently.

Conclusion

For these reasons, I respectfully request that Horsham District Council refuse retrospective permission for the alterations unless it is satisfied, on appropriate evidence, that the development as actually constructed remains justified in scale and function, is acceptable in its countryside and landscape setting, and does not undermine the safeguards imposed through the original permission.

In particular, I ask the Council:

- (i) to reassess the landscape impact of the black corrugated-clad buildings against the rural design and landscape case upon which DC/23/1325 was originally presented;
- (ii) to require proper justification for the scale and operational necessity of the mezzanine, additional hay storage and office accommodation;
- (iii) to consider the cumulative implications of the alterations to both buildings and impose appropriate restrictions against unauthorised residential or commercial use;
- (iv) to reconsider fire and rescue arrangements in light of the building's altered internal configuration and uses; and
- (v) not to remove Conditions 10 and 11 without clear technical and environmental evidence demonstrating that those safeguards are no longer necessary, together with clarification of their compliance history.

I would be grateful if these matters could be addressed expressly in the officer's assessment of the application.

Kind regards

Telephone:

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**Horsham
District
Council**



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