

Planning Statement

Planning Application for
**Erection of a business unit (Use Classes E and B8) with associated
parking**
at
Baileys Farm, Brooks Green Road, Coolham, Horsham RH13 8GR
on behalf of
Mr Nigel Parsons

January 2023

Planning & Development



3 Massetts Road
Horley
Surrey RH6 7PR
planninganddevelopment@whiteandsons.co.uk
01293 824354

Prepared by Alex Moseley
BA (Hons) MA TP MRTPI
Principal Planner

Checked by: Julian Sharpe
BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI
Associate Partner



RTPI

Chartered Town Planners

1. Introduction

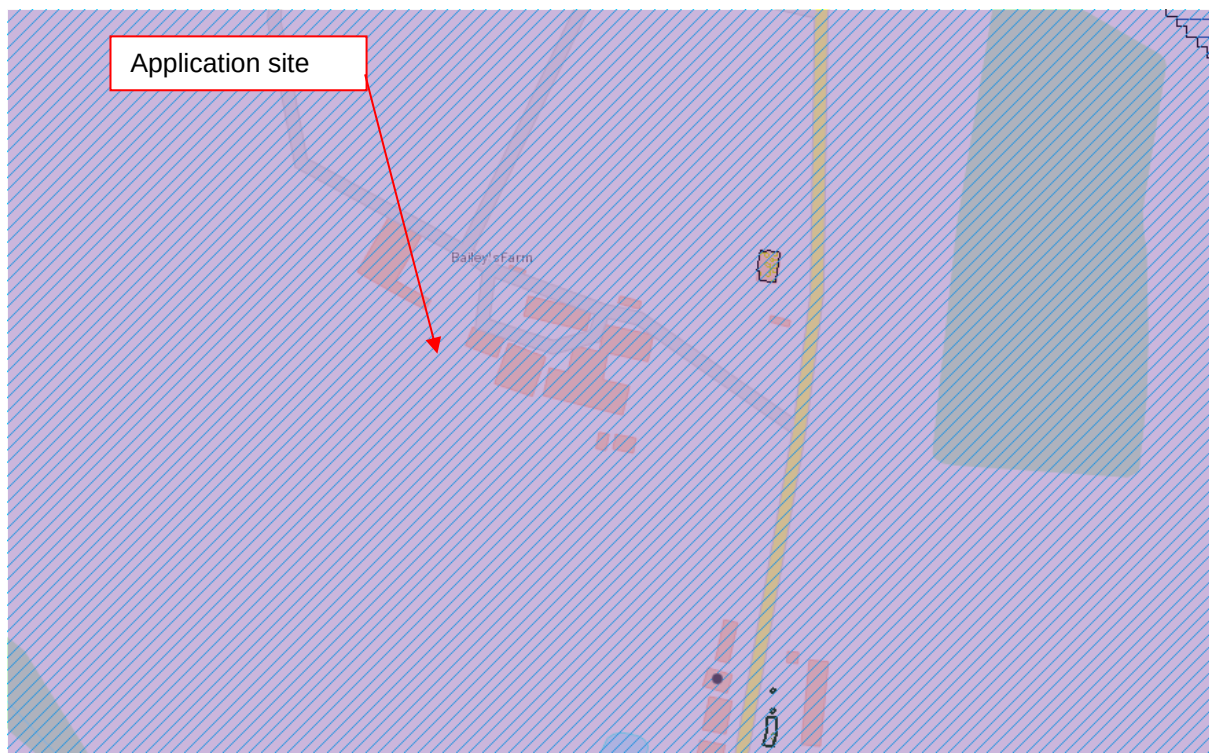
- 1.1. This Statement supports the planning application for the erection of a business unit to provide a mix of Use Classes E and B8 together with associated parking at Baileys Farm, Brooks Green Road, Coolham, Horsham RH13 8GR. This Statement should be read in association with the planning application forms and drawings, which include a site location/block plan together with the proposed elevations and floor plans. The plan also shows the proposed parking layout.
- 1.2. This Statement sets out the background to the application and need for the development, before summarising the site planning history and relevant planning policies. It then analyses the proposals against that background before concluding how the development would meet those policies and other material considerations.

2. Site Description and Proposals

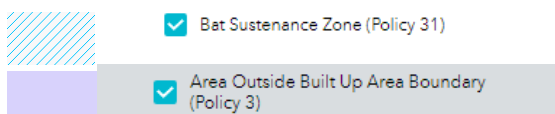
- 2.1. The proposal concerns the erection of a building to be used for business purposes to provide a mix of light industrial (Class E) and storage & distribution (Class B8). The site already caters for a variety of other uses on a commercial basis which have over time evolved into rural industrial estate. The Council accept that this is the case and the importance of its role to the local rural economy.
- 2.2. The proposed building will be located on the southern side of the former farm buildings on an area which is currently laid to hardstanding.
- 2.3. Planning permission was granted in 2018 for the erection of an office building with associated parking and access track from Brooks Green Road. It was recognised that the office building in that application would provide an additional source of employment which given its proximity to the existing commercial units would become part of an established business park and contribute to the local and wider rural economy of the district. In context of this it was considered that the office building and use would be appropriate to the countryside character when weighed alongside the parking provision and the existing activities at the

site. This application is based on the same principles which are addressed within this statement.

- 2.4. The proposal will not alter the access arrangements at the site with there being sufficient parking to accommodate existing and proposed traffic movements.
- 2.5. Baileys Farm is located west of Coolham Road with the site being located within the Parish of Coolham, approximately 400 metres north of the Coolham crossroads. The area is mixed in character with the Baileys Farm complex overlooking agricultural land. The area is characterised by housing located to the south east with there being a wider concentration in the direction the Coolham Crossroads.
- 2.6. An extract from the Council's planning policy map is included below which shows that the site is located outside of the built-up area boundary and within a Bat Sustainance Zone:



Key:



Extract taken from Horsham District Local Plan Proposals Map

3. Planning History

3.1. The most recent planning history relating to the farm is below in chronological order:

Application Number:	Description:	Decision:
DC/20/1591	Amendment to planning permission DC/18/1087 (Erection of an office building with associated parking and access track from Brooks Green Road) to alter windows, doors and include roller shutter doors.	Permitted
DISC/19/0005	Approval of details reserved by conditions 3, 4 and 5 to approved application DC/18/1087	Permitted
DC/18/1087	Erection of an office building with associated parking and access track from Brooks Green Road.	Permitted
DC/16/1901	Construct new agricultural access onto Brooks Green Road Coolham	Permitted
DC/13/2077	Proposed small extension to existing B8 storage unit	Permitted
DC/11/1501	Variation of condition 3 of planning permission DC/10/2191 (Change of use of redundant farm buildings (units 1-4 Lower Barn) to B8 use) to occupation of the site by Mr C Thornton	Permitted
DC/10/2191	Change of use of redundant farm buildings to B8 use (units 1-4 Lower Barn, Brooks Green Road, Coolham)	Permitted
DC/10/0064	Alterations to existing farm access	Permitted
DC/08/0533	Prior notification for the construction of an access track to serve Baileys Farm using existing access onto Coolham Road	Permitted

DC/05/0914	Change of use of former grain store and dryer to B8 storage use	Refused
DC/04/1309	Change of use of redundant agricultural building to B8 storage	Refused
SP/22/91	Alterations & conversion of existing redundant stables/store/implement shed & piggery building into 2 industrial units	Permitted
SP/16/90	Alterations and conversion of existing redundant stables/store/ implement shed and piggery building into 2 industrial units	Refused

4. Planning Policy

- 4.1. According to the Horsham District Plan, the site is located in countryside defined as an 'Area outside built-up area boundary'. Applications for development will be assessed against policies contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Horsham District Planning Framework.

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

- 4.2. The NPPF provides a presumption in favour of sustainable development, defined as development that meets the terms of the NPPF. The document seeks to balance the economic, environmental and social aspects of the planning system.
- 4.3. Paragraph 11 lists the relevant principles for this presumption within the NPPF, stating that: *"strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses"*. Business units and employment are important components of the rural economy with needs that should be served by strategic policies.
- 4.4. Within Chapter 4 'Decision making', Paragraph 38 states that *"Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible"*.
- 4.5. Paragraph 56 states that *"Planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects"*.
- 4.6. Section 6. 'Building a strong, competitive economy' contains a sub-section entitled 'Supporting a prosperous rural economy' which is geared around sustainable growth in rural areas. Paragraph 84 states that local plans should:
- "Support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas both through conversion of existing buildings and well-*

designed new buildings” and “the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses”.

- 4.7. Section 9 ‘Promoting sustainable transport’ states at paragraph 105 that *“opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision taking”*. In this case, the proposal centres upon a business/warehouse use, where any additional vehicular movements can be accommodated on the highway network.
- 4.8. Section 11 ‘Making effective use of land’ states at Paragraph 120 that decisions should: *“d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings”*. Paragraph 122 states that *“decisions need to reflect changes in the demand for land”* with paragraph 123 stating that LPAs *“should also take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans”*.
- 4.9. Chapter 15 ‘Conserving and enhancing the natural environment’ seeks to minimise impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains where possible.
- 4.10. Section 16 concerns conservation and the enhancement of the historic environment.

Horsham District Planning Framework (November 2015)

- 4.11. Policies **1** ‘Sustainable Development’ and **2** ‘Strategic Development’ set out the main spatial policies for the district. They confirm that new development should improve economic, social and environmental conditions in the area and focused on the main settlements. It is advocated that development supports the rural economy, allowing people to work locally to where they live.
- 4.12. Policy **10** ‘Rural Economic Development’ aims to promote sustainable building and employment opportunities in the countryside and owing to its relevance here it would be appropriate to provide the full policy wording as follows:

“Sustainable rural economic development and enterprise within the district will be encouraged in order to generate local employment opportunities and economic, social and environmental benefits for local communities.

*In the countryside, development which maintains the quality and character of the area, whilst sustaining its varied and productive social and economic activity will be supported in principle. **Any development should be appropriate to the countryside location and must:***

*1. Contribute to the diverse and sustainable farming enterprises within the district or, in the case of other countryside-based enterprises and activities, **contribute to the wider rural economy** and/or promote recreation in, and the enjoyment of, the countryside; and either*

*a. Be contained wherever possible within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion or, **in the case of an established rural industrial estate, within the existing boundaries of the estate;** or*

*b. Result in substantial environmental improvement and reduce the impact on the countryside particularly if there are exceptional cases where new or replacement buildings are involved. **New buildings or development in the rural area will be acceptable provided that it supports sustainable economic growth** towards balanced living and working communities and criteria a) has been considered first.*

*2. **Demonstrate that car parking requirements can be accommodated** satisfactorily within the immediate surrounds of the buildings, or an alternative, logical solution is proposed.*

Proposals for the conversion of rural buildings to business and commercial uses will be considered favourably over residential in the first instance”.

- 4.13. The policy amplification to Policy 10 at paragraphs 5.16 and 5.19 recognises that over half of the SMEs are within the rural area of the District providing the only local employment in villages and hamlets. The Council will encourage the retention of this valued employment by affording the businesses the opportunity to expand in the vicinity of their home. Moreover, the need for and benefits arising from visibility of business premises to provide essential profile for commercial viability and economic importance is supported.

- 4.14. Policy **25** 'The Natural Environment and Landscape Character' states that all new development must respect and, where appropriate, enhance the character and distinctiveness of the landscape and habitats. The proposal would achieve this by significantly reducing the footprint of buildings on site.
- 4.15. Policy **26** 'Countryside Protection' seeks to protect the countryside from inappropriate development. The proposal would involve a substantial reduction in the floorspace of built form at the site which already has consent for a flexible commercial use for 1 unit in this location.
- 4.16. Policies **32** 'The Quality of New Development' and **33** 'Development Principles' require significant consideration within development proposals for attractive environments, respect for local character, optimal land uses and maximising design and layout standards to cater for surrounding amenity and accessibility needs.
- 4.17. Policy **40** 'Sustainable Transport' states that development will be supported when it can be demonstrated that it is appropriate in scale, be safe to all, can maintain and improve the existing transport system with opportunities for sustainable transport which reduce the need for major infrastructure and minimising the distance people need to travel.
- 4.18. Policy **41** 'Parking' states that adequate parking and facilities must be provided within developments to meet the needs of anticipated users.

5. Analysis

- 5.1. The site is classified as being one of the District's rural industrial estates. The Council accept within previous applications that the location is more akin to a business park as opposed to a farm. Planning permission is sought for a relatively small commercial building on land falling within the boundaries of the complex with no changes to the access arrangements onto Coolham Road.
- 5.2. A major part of the case is that the new building would be hugely beneficial to the local rural economy by making better use of the land falling within the boundaries of the industrial estate. As such it is suggested that the development would make more effective use of the land. All of the buildings at the site are surrounded by hardstanding and are easily accessible to Coolham Road via Brooks Green Road. Such a proposal makes a valuable contribution to the rural economy without causing environmental harm, in line with policies 1, 3 and 10.
- 5.3. It is suggested that the following issues are of most relevance in this case and are addressed in detail below:
- Principle of Development;
 - Design and layout;
 - Impact on the countryside;
 - Noise impacts of the development;
 - Heritage;
 - Contamination risk;
 - Flood risk;
 - Access and parking.

Principle of Development

- 5.4. The wider site comprises of a complex of buildings all in commercial use. Planning policy supports the principle of new and replacement commercial buildings alongside making efficient use of land. More locally the policy of most

relevance is considered to be Policy 10 which is addressed below with each part corresponding to the sections of the policy;

1 - The proposed building will contribute to the countryside-based enterprise with the commercial activities helping to contribute towards the wider rural economy:

1a – The site is within a rural industrial estate and the new building will be located within the existing boundaries of the estate in line with the requirements;

1b – The applicant is reliant on compliance with 1a. However, the development would support sustainable growth towards balanced living and working communities which is a specific requirement of 1b.

2 - The development will provide sufficient parking at the site to meet the needs all the uses that fall within the application site area. The farm complex benefits from significant areas that are laid to hardstanding and would collectively be capable of accommodating the required parking standards.

- 5.5. It is suggested that the principle of development is acceptable given that the site already supports a number of other commercial uses and the Council are in agreement that the location forms one of the District's rural business locations.

Design and Layout

- 5.6. The proposed building will be sited on the southern peripheries of Baileys Farm. The building's dimensions will be 15m in width, 12m in length, 4.2m to the eaves and 6m to the ridge. The size and scale of the building will be reflective of other commercial buildings already observed within the business park.
- 5.7. In terms of materials and finish, the proposed building will be constructed from box-profile steel sheeting with an olive green finish to the walls and the roof. Whilst the materials and appearance are utilitarian, they reflect the prevailing character of the business park. There will be a floor to eaves roller shutter door, together with 2 personnel doors and window openings to maximise light.

- 5.8. The building will have a floor area measuring 180m² with the roller shutter being on the western elevation of the building. The layout plan provides a parking layout for the entire site area including the three other buildings that fall within it.
- 5.9. In terms of general layout, the proposed access would ensure that the business uses can function without adversely affecting any wider agricultural operations on neighbouring land or the surrounding environment. Parking and access are addressed further under a separate sub-heading.
- 5.10. It is suggested that the development would present a building that would reflect the existing character of Baileys Farm and would offer a business unit that conforms with the general scale of development already exhibited locally. The development as demonstrated will be in direct compliance with the aims set out by Policy 10.

Impact on the countryside

- 5.11. Both national and local policy support the provision of new buildings in the countryside and encourage development that contributes to the rural economy. It is considered that any visual impact within the landscape as a result of the new building or use will be reflective of the existing built character of the business park. The development is not reliant on any form of extension of hardstanding at the site. The proposed ridge height of the new unit would be broadly consistent with the other commercial buildings.
- 5.12. Historically, the Council have accepted the principle of commercial buildings, recognising the importance of their role locally helping the rural economy and also attracting local employment. This was particularly relevant in the consideration of application ref DC/18/1087 for the erection of an office building at the farm. Whilst it cannot be confirmed what business would take occupancy of the unit, the use will have a positive impact, attracting employment and making good use of the land available land within the complex. Policy allows for the impact on the Countryside to be balanced with the needs and benefits of the development.

Noise impacts of the development

- 5.13. The nearest residential properties lie to the south east and north east of the site. Bailey's Farmhouse is a Grade II listed house located to the north east and this property is situated roughly 130m from the site. Byfields is located to the south east with this property being a similar distance from the proposed location of the building. It is suggested that the proposed building and its future uses will have no material impact on the amenities of the nearest neighbouring properties and will be within the requirements of policy 33.
- 5.14. It is commonly accepted that light industrial uses are compatible in residential areas and in this case the general location would mean that the impacts will remain low. Indeed, the storage or light industrial uses, when compared to general industrial use or agricultural operations, are likely to involve less noise. It is important to note that the existing uses within the complex have not given rise to any noise related amenity issues.

Heritage

- 5.15. Within the farm estate, the Bailey's Farmhouse is a Grade II listed building. The register entry is as follows: ***"C17 or earlier timber-framed building, now faced with red brick on ground floor and weather-boarding above. Half-hipped tiled roof. Casement windows. Modern gabled porch. Two storeys. Three windows."***
- 5.16. The listed building's significance and setting would not be harmed by the presence of a further commercial building as it would be some distance away and within the existing modern range of other similar buildings and the associated activities of them.

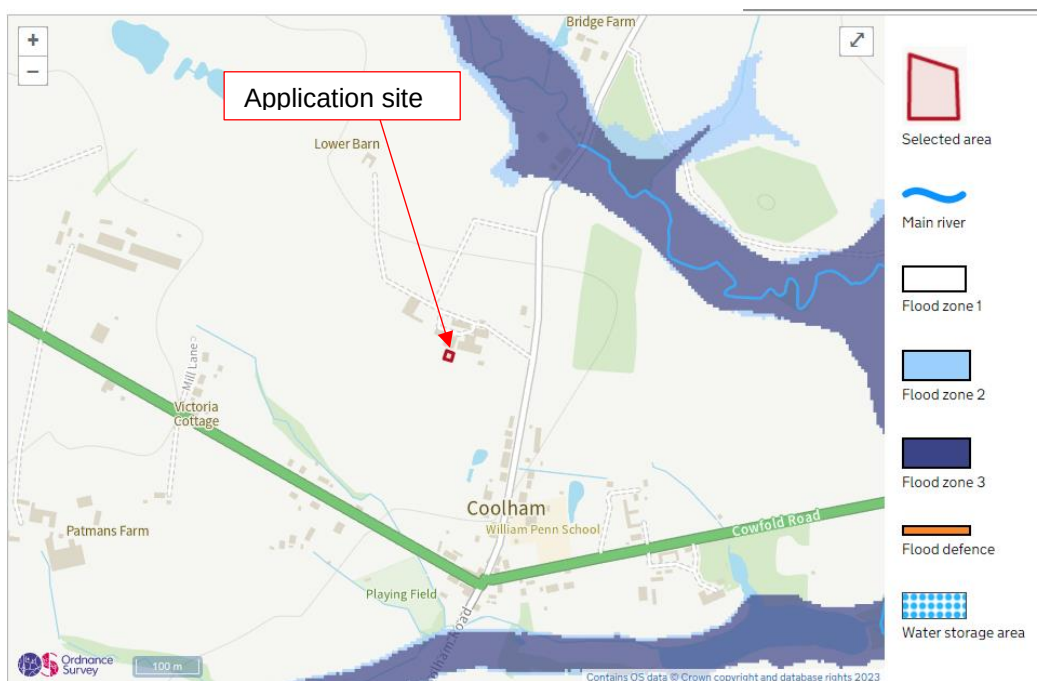
Contamination risk on the site

- 5.17. Originally, the site was part of a working farm and there is no historical evidence of ground contamination present. According to the gov.uk website it states that land may be contaminated if it was previously used as a factory, mine, steel mill, refinery or for landfill. These are of course not applicable in this case and

originally it was just formed part of the farm yard. The nature of the uses would not be vulnerable to contamination when factoring the concrete foundations and the damp proof membrane to be applied to the building. These measures will ensure that any contamination risk remains low to future employees at the site. Therefore, it is submitted that there are no contamination issues but should any be encountered this can be controlled by a suitable condition.

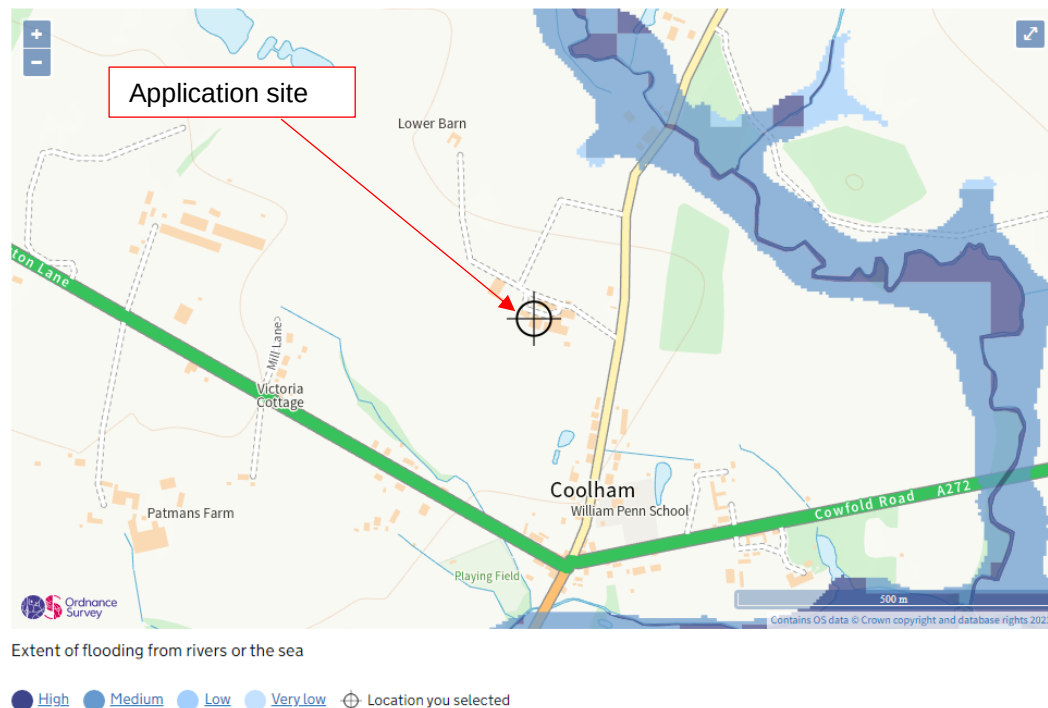
Flood risk

- 5.18. There is no history of flooding on the site and the new building will rely on surface water drainage into a soakaway or an existing water course. The development will not give rise to an increase in surface water runoff given that much of the area is laid to hardstanding. Foul sewage would flow into a treatment plant on the site. The flood maps on the Government's website (Gov.uk) indicate that the site is outside flood zones 2 or 3, as confirmed by the extracts shown below.



Extract from the Gov.uk maps showing flood risk from rivers or the sea

- 5.19. The extract from the flood maps relating to rivers or the sea shows no risk at the site.



Extract from the Gov.uk maps showing flood risk from surface water

- 5.20. The extract from the flood maps relating to surface water shows no risk at the application site. The application site itself is in an area of very low risk.

Ecology

- 5.21. The application site currently has no built form and the land is laid to hardstanding. The risk to habitats is regarded as being low. In this case a walkover assessment is of little benefit other than to identify neighbouring land and buildings which will remain unaffected by the development.

Access and parking

- 5.22. The farm is served by 3 access points onto Coolham Road. The main access is used by HGVs with cars utilising the southern access. There is a further access point to the north of the site. There is of course a through route to both points.
- 5.23. Parking and turning within the farm yard area is regarded to be good with expanses of existing hardened areas. As part of the proposal a more configured

parking arrangement will be proposed as a result and as part of the wider changes at the site.

- 5.24. The access is at a relatively straight section of the road and therefore affords good visibility in both directions. The access arrangements are longstanding for Baileys Farm and are considered to be safe. WSCC Highways raised no objection under application DC/18/1087 to the increase in activity associated with the new office building. Works to widen the access as part of that application have improved access into and out of the site. There will not be a significant increase in the number of trips to and from the site. Based on WSCC's guidance on parking for new development and the proposed floor area of the building (180m²), the parking requirement for a B8 use will be just 2 spaces. However, this increases to 6 spaces should the unit be let for a light industrial use.
- 5.25. The development will collectively provide a total of 24 parking spaces when factoring the other 3 buildings comprising of 7 office and warehouse units. Having regard to all these and the proposed, the total requirement based on WSCC's standards comes to 20 spaces and so the development will provide an additional 4 spaces to account for visitors and any fluctuations in staff. The layout of the site would ensure good ingress and egress of vehicles with the parking areas being served by both existing access points.
- 5.26. It is considered that the development would conform to the requirements of policy 41 of the District Framework.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. The proposal concerns the erection of a business unit to provide a mix of use classes E and B8 together with associated parking at Baileys Farm, Brooks Green Road, Coolham, Horsham RH13 8GR.
- 6.2. The proposal is influenced by the fact that the site has evolved over time to serve local business needs and in turn would contribute towards the wider rural economy. Policy 10 of the District's Framework supports the construction of new buildings located in established rural industrial estates. The development is confirmed as being within the existing boundaries of the complex.
- 6.3. The new building's appearance and character will conform to that of the others in this rural industrial estate and would result in its continued contribution to the local economy and viability into the future. The new building will be comparable in height with the existing commercial buildings in the complex.
- 6.4. The existing access and proposed parking arrangements are considered to be safe and compliant with the relevant standards. The existing accesses that already serve Baileys Farm are considered to be satisfactory to serve the proposed development.
- 6.5. For the above reasons, it is respectfully requested that the Local Planning Authority support this planning application and grant planning permission.



3 Massetts Road
Horley
Surrey RH6 7PR
planninganddevelopment@whiteandsons.co.uk
01293 824354