Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/25/0781
Swains Farm, Brighton Road, Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9RP

DESCRIPTION:
Removal of modern agricultural building and replacement with 4 new-build residential dwellings with associated landscape works.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/22/2118	Prior Notification for Change of Use of an Agricultural Building to residential (Use Class C3) to form 4no dwellinghouses.	Prior Approval Required and PERMITTED on 04.01.2023
DISC/24/0193	Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 1 to approved appliction DC/22/2118	Application Permitted on 27.09.2024
DC/24/1164	Demolition of agricultural building and erection of 4nos residential dwellings.	Pending Consideration
DC/25/1039	Prior Notification for Change of Use of Agricultural Building to 8no. dwellinghouses.	Prior Approval Required and PERMITTED on 19.08.2025
DC/25/1661	Prior Notification for change of use of an agricultural building to 4no dwellinghouses (C3 Use Class).	Prior Approval Required and PERMITTED on 08.12.2025

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site lies within the rural countryside outside of the built up area boundary of Henfield, and consists of an agricultural building set within a courtyard made up of a mixture of concrete, sand and gravel. To the east of the application site is a Grade II listed farmhouse known as Swains farm and two small workers bungalows. To the north is a small rural agricultural building. The site is accessed along an access track to the north of Brighton Road after Swains Farm shop and is shared with the cricket club. The access track is a Public Right of way.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

The application would demolish the existing agricultural building and replace it with 4 semi-detached dwellings. Each of the dwellings would be 3 bedrooms. The development would include the creation of a garden amenity area through a combination of hard and soft landscaping. The hardstanding would be limestone chippings to parking and turning areas. It is noted that the proposed block plan indicates a turning head created, although given that this is outside of the red line boundary it appears to be outside of the applicant's ownership. The materials of the dwellings would be hanging tile, red brick, aluminium framed windows, oak framed doors and 'Cast iron look' rainwater guttering goods. There would be a bike and bin store in timber.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES
The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):

Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
Policy 7 - Strategic Policy: Economic Growth
Policy 9 - Employment Development
Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development
Policy 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
Policy 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs
Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 – Parking

Henfield Neighbourhood Plan:
Policy 1 – A Spatial Plan
Policy 2 – Housing Allocations
Policy 10 – Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 12 – Design Standards for New Development

Henfield Parish Design Statement

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF requires that all development plans complete their reviews no later than 5 years from their adoption. Horsham District Council is currently in the process of reviewing its development plan however at this stage the emerging policies carry only limited weight in decision making. As the HDPF is now over 5 years old, the most important policies for the determination of this application must be considered as to whether they are 'out of date' (NPPF paragraph 11d). This includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, whether the Council can demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites (NPPF footnote 8).

The Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, with the supply currently calculated as being 1.7 years. The presumption in favour of development within Paragraph 11d) of the NPPF therefore applies in the consideration of all applications for housing development within the District (unless footnote 7 or Paragraph 14 applies to relevant applications), with Policies 2, 4, 15 and 26 now carrying only moderate weight in decision making.

All other policies within the HDPF as itemised above have been assessed against the NPPF and are considered to be consistent such that they continue to attract significant weight in decision making.

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):
Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Strategic Policy 2: Development Hierarchy
Strategic Policy 3: Settlement Expansion
Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change
Strategic Policy 7: Appropriate Energy Use
Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction
Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality
Strategic Policy 11: Environmental Protection
Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection
Strategic Policy 15: Settlement Coalescence

Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality
Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles
Strategic Policy 23: Infrastructure Provision
Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
Policy 25: Parking
Strategic Policy 37: Housing Provision
Strategic Policy 38: Meeting Local Housing Needs
Policy 39: Affordable Housing
Policy 40: Improving Housing Standards in the District

Supplementary Planning Guidance:
Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (2017)
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (2017)

Planning Advice Notes:
Facilitating Appropriate Development
Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

REPRESENTATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES
Where consultation responses have been summarised, it should be noted that Officers have had consideration of the full comments received, which are available to view on the public file at www.horsham.gov.uk

Consultations:

Natural England: Standing advice

Landscape Consultant: Objection [Summary] (*from DC/24/1164*)
While the principle of development is not opposed, it is considered that the current layout fails to respond to the rural character and visual sensitivities of the site, particularly regarding its proximity to a Grade II Listed Building and views from nearby Public Rights of Way. In addition, there remains a lack of justification for the proposed layout, an omission of key local landscape character assessments, and insufficient detail regarding boundary treatments and hard landscaping.

HDC Conservation Officer: No Objection [Summary]
The permitted prior approval scheme will have a harmful impact on the setting of the listed building. This revised scheme to demolish the agriculture shed and replace it with four detached dwellings will have a neutral impact within the setting of the listed building. It will certainly be a more favourable scheme than the fallback.

WSCC Highways: No Objection [Summary]
The Local Highway Authority does not consider that the proposal for 4 dwellings would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 115), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

HDC Ecological Consultant: No Objection [Summary]
No objection, subject to the use of appropriate conditions.

NatureSpace (District Newt Licencing): No Objection
The applicant has provided a report that recommends using precautionary working measures. This is deemed suitable, however, a dedicated set of measures need to be provided for amphibians as opposed to following a reptile strategy as recommended in the report.

It should be noted, with works happening close to the onsite pond, there is a level of risk associated with this method therefor the applicant may wish to obtain a Licence to remove all risk.

Southern Water: Comment

No soakaways, swales, ponds, watercourses or any other surface water retaining or conveying features should be located within 5 metres of public or adoptable gravity sewers, rising mains or water mains.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:
Representations:
None received

Parish Comments:
Parish Council: Objection
The planning application is contrary to HD Planning Framework Policy Numbers:-

- 1 as it is not a strategic site in the Local Plan
- 2 as it is not a nominated site in the Neighbourhood Plan
- 3 as it is not within an existing built-up area
- 10 as it does not maintain the quality and character of the area; does not contribute to diverse and sustainable farming enterprises; or promote recreation;
- 23 as the site cannot be served by safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access; or cannot be supplied with essential services, such as water, power, sewage and drainage, and waste disposal; or provide adequate vehicle parking; or would have an unacceptable impact on the landscape
- 26 as the site lies outside built-up area boundaries and does not support the needs of agriculture or forestry; does not enable the extraction of minerals or disposal of waste; or provide for quiet informal recreational use or enable the sustainable development of a rural area
- 27 as the site will generate urbanising effects within the settlement gap, including artificial lighting, and traffic movements
- 33.2 as there is loss of amenity to the neighbouring property; or the design is not sensitive to surrounding buildings
- 33.3 as the scale and massing and appearance of the proposal is out of keeping and unsympathetic with the built surroundings.

Member Comments:
None received

HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY:
The application has been considered having regard to Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998, which sets out a person's rights to the peaceful enjoyment of property and Article 8 of the same Act, which sets out their rights in respect to private and family life and for the home. Officers consider that the proposal would not be contrary to the provisions of the above Articles.

The application has also been considered in accordance with Horsham District Council's public sector equality duty, which seeks to prevent unlawful discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people in a diverse community, in accordance with Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In this case, the proposal is not anticipated to have any potential impact from an equality perspective.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development:

The application site is located outside of any built-up area, and within the countryside in policy terms, where residential development is more greatly restricted. The application site has been subject of two Class Q Prior Approval under planning references: DC/25/1039, which sought the conversion of the existing building into 8x dwellings, and; DC/25/1661 for the conversion of the building into 4x dwellings. Both of the granted consents included a pre-commencement contamination condition, neither of which have been discharged.

Class Q.2(4) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) states that any consented scheme '*must be completed within a period of 3 years starting with the prior approval date*'. The expiration of each of these consents to be completed is 18.08.2028 and 08.12.2028 respectively. Whilst it is not inconceivable that the discharge of conditions procedure could be undertaken and approved within this period, the fact remains that the conditions at the point of considering the present proposal have not been discharged. Furthermore, Officers acknowledge that a previous prior approval scheme was also granted (DC/22/2118) which included a similarly worded condition. This condition was discharged under application reference DISC/24/0193. The 2022 permission has since lapsed (as of 04.01.2025), and though this demonstrates that it is not beyond the realm of possibility that the condition *could* be discharged, the conditions attached to both the 2025 consents remain in situ.

It is further noted that the 2025 Class Q consents included Phase 1 and 2 surveys (desk based and on-site respectively), the Council's Environmental Health Officer noted an absence of information relating to the private amenity spaces- hence the requirement for the conditions. The Council therefore retains the need for the condition on both consents.

Owing to the presence of pre-commencement conditions attached to each Class Q consent, both of which are considered to go to the 'heart of the consent', these consents (at the time of writing) are not considered to represent a viable fallback in the alternat to the present proposal. As such, and given the location of the site outside of the defined built-up area boundaries, the Council's restrictive housing policies are applicable, namely Policy 4 (settlement expansion) and Policy 26 (countryside protection).

Policy 2 of the HDPF sets out the district's spatial strategy, directing growth to the main settlements. Under Policy 3, the application site is located outside any defined settlement boundary and is therefore considered to be within the countryside for policy purposes.

Policy 4 supports settlement expansion only where the site is allocated in the Local Plan or a Neighbourhood Plan, adjoins an existing settlement edge, is proportionate to the scale and function of the settlement, meets identified local housing needs, does not prejudice long-term comprehensive development, and is contained within a defensible boundary while maintaining landscape and townscape character. The HDPF's settlement hierarchy emphasises that the most sustainable locations for new housing are the larger settlements of Horsham, Southwater, and Billingshurst, with only limited development elsewhere where supported by an adopted Neighbourhood Plan.

In this countryside location, Policy 26 applies. It seeks to protect the rural area from inappropriate development unless it is essential to the countryside and meets one of four criteria: supporting agriculture or forestry; enabling minerals or waste operations; providing quiet informal recreation; or enabling sustainable rural development. The proposed residential scheme is not essential to this location and does not meet any of the criteria.

Paragraph 82 of the National Planning Policy Framework encourages rural exception sites to deliver affordable housing. The proposal does not include any affordable units and therefore does not benefit from this provision.

Policy 1.2 of the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan states that development outside defined boundaries will only be supported where it accords with national policy and the HDPF in respect of countryside development. As the site lies outside the BUAB and the proposal is not essential to its countryside setting, it conflicts with Policies 1, 3, 4, and 26 of the HDPF.

The Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply (1.7 years at the time of writing). In response, the Council published the 'Facilitating Appropriate Development' (FAD) document in 2022, now superseded by 'Shaping Development in Horsham District' Planning Advice Note (SDPAN). This guidance acknowledges that applications on unallocated sites outside BUABs may come forward in the absence of a five-year supply. It states that proposals will be considered positively where they meet all of the following criteria:

- The site adjoins the existing settlement edge;
- The scale of expansion is appropriate to the settlement;
- The proposal meets local housing needs or supports community facilities;

- The development does not prejudice long-term comprehensive development; and
- The site is contained within a defensible boundary and maintains/enhances landscape character.

The proposal does not meet these criteria, as the site does not adjoin a settlement edge. The existing agricultural barn is functional and rural in character, blending into the landscape. Its presence, and lack of a viable fallback position, do not justify the construction of four new detached dwellings extending significantly into open countryside. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policies 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the HDPF and does not benefit from the provisions of the SDPAN.

Design and Appearance:

Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the HDPF promote development that protects, conserves and enhances the landscape and townscape character from inappropriate development. Proposals should take into account townscape characteristics, with development seeking to provide an attractive, functional and accessible environment that complements the locally distinctive character of the district. Buildings should contribute to a sense of place, and should be of a scale, massing, and appearance that is of a high standard or design and layout which relates sympathetically to the landscape and built surroundings.

Policy 33(3) of the HDPF states that development will be required to *'Ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of the development … relates sympathetically with the built surroundings'*.

Policy 12 of the Henfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan states that as appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals will be supported where their design and detailing meet the relevant requirements in the Henfield Parish Design Statement. In addition, as appropriate to the site concerned, the scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and materials of all new development proposals are of a high quality and reflect the architectural and historic character and scale of the surrounding buildings and street scene/landscape.

In design terms, the existing site consists of an agricultural building of approximately 361 sqm with two ridges and an area of hardstanding. The application site is read visually as part of the rural character of the countryside, supported by its countryside location outside of the built-up area boundary and unremarkable rural appearance. The introduction of further built form, with the proposed spread across the site would go beyond the parameters of the defined agricultural building. To the east of the application site is a Grade II listed farmhouse known as Swains farm and two small workers bungalows.

To the north is a small rural agricultural building. The proposed development would contrast visually with the surrounding development, being a definite residential character and resulting in a suburbanisation of the site that would be at odds with the prevailing character of surrounding development. Furthermore, the spread and quantum of development would be at odds with the nearest dwellings, being semi-detached dwellings with the proposed dwellings representing a greater degree of built form than the existing workers bungalows and Swains Farm.

The proposal entails a significant degree of built form on the site with a design approach which would reflect a modern suburban vernacular, taking limited cues from the immediate rural setting. The appearance of the dwellings together with their height and bulk would contribute to a significant domestication of the site, and this would be a less preferable design that the Class Q consents. In addition, the enlarged incidental curtilages would result in more generous grounds than previous permissions. This would also impart a strong domestic quality which would contrast sharply with fields to the west resulting in a greater level of encroachment into the countryside location. The development included some indicative landscaping to attempt to screen the development from the surrounding landscape, however this would be unlikely to maintain an open visual relationship with the surrounding countryside compared to what currently exists within the site and surrounds.

The current proposal significantly differs to the previous consents, with the scale and massing of the proposed dwellings larger than that previously approved. It is considered that while there may be potential for residential development in this location, the design of this would need to take design cues

from the surrounding landscape and if the development were otherwise acceptable, amendments to the design would be requested to appear closer to the design under the Class Q consents.

The Council's Conservation Officer has commented that the development will have a positive impact to the setting of the listed building in comparison with the approved scheme. This could be considered a merit of the proposal in light of policy 34 of the HDPF, however would be limited to the impact on Swains Farm specifically and does not extend to the character of the countryside in general or the surrounding built form. Furthermore, given that the agricultural land around Swains Farm would have historically been agricultural farmland, in the officer's opinion it would be anticipated that a historic farmhouse would have agricultural land in its setting such that little weight is afforded to this consultation response.

Nonetheless, the development, by reason of its scale, siting and layout, would relate unsympathetically with the existing pattern of development and would represent a harmful overdevelopment of the site. The proposal would result in a loss of the open rural character and would, in terms of scale and appearance, appear visually incongruous with surrounding dwellings within the locality. The development would therefore be contrary to Policies 25, 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and policy 12 of the Henfield parish neighbourhood plan.

Residential Amenity:

Policy 33 of the HDPF 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.

Policy 12 of the Henfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan states that the design of development should respect the amenities of occupiers/users of nearby property and land. The design should also achieve satisfactory access without harming the amenities of neighbouring properties and residents.

It is considered that the siting and layout of the proposed dwelling and the resulting relationship with adjoining properties would be sufficient to prevent any unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity.

In terms of storage and the collection of waste bins, Highways have commented that there would be some amenity concern with residents having to travel 30 metres away to put bins out and cars should not have to travel more than 25 metres to collect bins. It is not considered that refuse vehicles would enter the site to collect bins, however the existing arrangements are unknown. As such, if the development were otherwise acceptable, a condition would be attached to request further details fin this regard.

Each of the plots would have an area of amenity space, although the garden space of plot 1 would have a pond shown within the red line boundary on the block plan. NatureSpace have commented that this is an ephemeral pond, which would have negligible water in dry parts of summer and would be wet in winter. It is considered that the pond would result in poor quality amenity space, which would be subject to development pressure from the occupiers to fill in, to create adequate amenity footprint and quality. If the development were otherwise acceptable, there would be a recommendation to reduce the red line boundary to exclude the pond to prevent its future removal.

Highways Impacts:

Policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF promote development that provides safe and adequate access, suitable for all users.

Policy 4 of the Henfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan states that as appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should conform to West Sussex Highway Standards, and adequate offroad car parking should be provided for all developments in accordance with West Sussex Parking Standards.

The access from Brighton Road would remain and Highways have been consulted as part of the proposal who have no objections in terms of the safety of the existing access. The block plan indicates that each property would have provision for 2 cars. The cars would require a multiple point manoeuvre

to park and turn and therefore would not provide convenient parking which would likely result in additional parking outside of the application site. Nevertheless, the proposal would not result in significant safety concerns and overall, there would be no objections in light of policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF.

Ecology:

Policy 31 of the HDPF states that development will be supported where it demonstrates that it maintains or enhances the existing network of green infrastructure. Development proposals will be required to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity, and should create and manage new habitats where appropriate.

NatureSpace have commented that there is an ephemeral pond within the site, which would have negligible water in dry parts of summer and would be wet in winter. It is considered that the pond would result in poor quality amenity space, which would be subject to development pressure from the occupiers to fill in, to create adequate amenity footprint and quality. Notwithstanding this concern, the Biodiversity net gain assessment makes recommendations to crop trees surrounding the pond and add planting to facilitate its existing biodiversity value. Furthermore, Place Services have commented that they have no objections to the proposal subject to the inclusion of relevant conditions.

In light of the NatureSpace comments a precautionary working method would be one of the conditions recommended, if the application were acceptable to ensure that if Great Crested Newts are encountered in their breeding season that potential harm is avoided. In the case that the application were otherwise acceptable, the applicant would have the option to seek a District Newt license prior to determination to mitigate against harm. In any case, there are no objections in light of policy 31 of the HDPF.

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.

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. Natural England have been consulted on this Appropriate Assessment and have provided standing advice which raises no objection to this approach.

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 s.70 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, HDPF Policy 31, and paragraph 193 of the NPPF.

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 applicant has submitted Biodiversity net gain metric and demonstrated that on site mitigation would be sufficient to result in a 10% increase in biodiversity. This can be secured by condition, with the habitat units being less than 0.5 such that the enhancements are not 'significant' such that it would require a legal agreement to secure the mitigations.

Conclusions and Planning Balance:

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.

The Council recently published an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) outlining a deliverable supply of housing sites of 1.7 years. Therefore, the presumption in favour of sustainable development at paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged in this instance.

NPPF paragraph 11(d)(i) states that where there are no relevant development plan policies in place, the policies that are considered most important for the determination of applications (in this case, Policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the HDPF, owing to the lack of a five-year housing land supply) permission should be granted unless there is a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

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 and is not allocated in the neighbourhood plan. 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. This harm is tapered by the Council's inability to currently demonstrate a five-year housing land supply (a *significant benefit* in favour of the proposal in its own right), therefore attributing *moderate weight* in the overall planning balance.

Furthermore, the development would be out of character with the prevailing development and this would result in conflict afforded *significant weight.* In this instance, this represents a clear reason for refusal.

With the above in mind, the benefits of the proposal (the provision of 4x dwellings towards the Council's five-year housing land supply) would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the harm that would arise should planning permission be granted (core policy conflict and resultant landscape harm). The application is therefore recommended for refusal on this basis.

Recommendation: Application Refused

Reasons for Refusal:

1. The proposed development would be sited within an unsustainable location in the countryside, outside of a defined built-up area boundary, and on a site not allocated for housing development within the Horsham District Planning Framework, or a made Neighbourhood Plan. Furthermore, the proposed development is not essential to its countryside location. Notwithstanding the absence of a five-year land housing supply, and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) at paragraph 11(d), it is not considered that there are any material considerations in this instance which would outweigh harm arising from conflict with Policies 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policy 1 of the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan (2021).

2. The proposal would entail a scale, design and form of development which fails to reflect the rural character of the site and surrounding area, appearing unduly suburban and representing an incongruous form of development which would fail to preserve the character and appearance of this relatively open rural location. The proposal therefore represents an inappropriate form of development that would be contrary to policies 25, 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policy 12 of the Henfield Neighbouhood Plan (2021).

POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

Statement pursuant to Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received, in order to be able to, where possible, grant permission.

Plans list for: DC/25/0781

Schedule of plans/documents **not approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Design & Access Statement		NONE	09.05.2025
Location plan		2308SW_2025_000	09.05.2025
Supporting Statement	Noise Impact Assessment	NONE	09.05.2025
Site plan	Proposed Habitat Plan	NONE	09.05.2025
Site plan	Site Habitat Plan	NONE	09.05.2025
Supporting Statement	Water Neutrality Report and Water Management Plan	NONE	09.05.2025
Block plan	Approved	2308SW_2025_001	09.05.2025
Block plan	Proposed	2308SW_2025_P002	09.05.2025
Site plan	Proposed	2308SW_2025_P003	09.05.2025
Site plan	Proposed	2308SW_2025_P004	09.05.2025
Floor plan	Existing ground	2308SW_2025_100	09.05.2025
Elevation plan	Existing North and South	2308SW_2025_102	09.05.2025
Elevation plan	Existing East and West	2308SW_2025_103	09.05.2025
Floor plan	Approved Ground Building A	2308SW_2025_104	09.05.2025
Elevation plan	Approved	2308SW_2025_105	09.05.2025
Floor plan	Proposed Ground and First	2308SW_2025_P200	09.05.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed	2308SW_2025_P201	09.05.2025

Materials	and Proposed Bike and Bin Store	2308SW_2025_900	09.05.2025
Supporting Statement	Ecological Impact Assessment	GS319.SwainsFarm.EclA REV 2	09.05.2025
Supporting Statement	HMMP	NONE	06.06.2025
Supporting Statement	HMMP - Companion Document	NONE	06.06.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Hannah Darley Date: 27.02.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 08.04.2026