MME PLANNING SERVICES

Conversion and extensions to existing stables and pole barn to form 1no detached self-build / custom build dwelling and associated works.

at

Oaklands Stud, Forest Grange, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 6HX

Grounds of Appeal Statement

Ref: P-039b

December 2025

Version 1

Mr Oguzhan Denizer
MME Planning Services
Email: [redacted]



Figure 1: Site Location

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1. Introduction

1.1 This appeal has been prepared and submitted following the Council's decision to refuse planning application reference DC/25/0462. The development sought planning permission for the 'Conversion and extensions to existing stables and pole barn to form 1no detached self-build / custom build dwelling and associated works' at Oaklands Stud, Forest Grange, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 6HX. By decision notice dated 23 July 2025, planning permission was refused for the following reason(s):

1 The development would be located beyond a defined built-up area on a site not allocated within the Development Plan and would not be essential to this countryside location. The development would therefore be contrary to the overarching spatial strategy and hierarchy approach of concentrating development within defined settlements and advocating a planned approach to settlement expansion, contrary to policies 1, 2, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015). 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 Local and Neighbourhood Plan policies in these regards.

2 The design and scale of the development particularly the enclosure of the pole barn, introduction of large glazed openings, and domestic-style materials results in a block-like and suburban appearance at odds with the site's rural character. Additionally, the proposal would introduce a formalised residential use and associated paraphernalia that would domesticate and degrade the natural, rural character of the site, in conflict with the purposes of the High Weald National Landscape. The proposal fails to respect the setting of the High Weald National Landscape, conserve or enhance the visual and spatial qualities of the protected landscape and is contrary to Policies 25, 30, 32, and 33 of the HDPF.

3 The application fails to provide a tree survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, or adequate tree protection details despite the presence of ancient and TPO-protected trees. This omission prevents proper assessment of potential harm and risks indirect impacts such as future pressure for pruning or removal. The proposal is therefore contrary to HDPF Policy 30.

1.2 This statement will consider the reason(s) for refusal and the policies attached to these. Having reviewed the submitted plans and considered the Council's assessment of this proposal, it is our view that planning permission should reasonably have been granted. In addition, the Inspector is respectfully asked to consider the structural report and tree information which would partly address reason for refusal 1 and reason for refusal 3 respectively.

1.3 The Appellant contends that given the Council's lack of 5-year housing supply, which currently stands at just 1 year, the fact that the appeal site represents previously developed land; relevant recent examples of housing developments permitted outside of settlement boundaries within the District; the principle of residential development in this instance is therefore acceptable and the appeal scheme is policy compliant.

1.4 Furthermore, with regards to 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. As such, there is no longer a requirement to show that the development is water neutral.

1.5 It is considered that Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF would be engaged. In the circumstances, therefore, we would respectfully request that the appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for this proposal.

2. Appeal Site and Surroundings

2.1 The appeal site relates to an existing private equestrian facility located to the north of Forest Grange, outside any designated built-up area boundary. The appeal site is therefore located within the countryside in policy terms. The site is also located within the High Weald National Landscape (formerly AONB). An area of ancient woodland (St. Leonards Forest) is located immediately to the north of the application site. The appeal site is opposite to the property known as Forest Grange Manor which includes a Grade II listed country house (Forest Grange) built in 1913. The appeal site, therefore, is considered to be within the wider setting of the Listed Building.

2.2 The appeal site comprises a stable building with lean-to pole barn located immediately to the south of the stable building. The wider site consists of a number of divided paddocks, along with a sand school and hay barn. The appeal site is accessed to the south-east, with the site bound by mature trees and woodland to the north and south, and divided paddocks to the east and west.

2.3 The stable building is of a traditional design with a low-pitched roof and additional space for storage. The soft landscaping to the southern boundary of the site is classified as Priority Habitat.

2.4 The initial approval for the stables / equestrian facility was permitted under planning reference CG/33/94 in August 1994 and included a use condition (Condition 4) which required that the stables be used in association with the use of the dwelling at Tanglewood (formerly known as 1 Garage Cottages Forest Grange). This condition has since been removed from the site under a Removal of Condition application, reference DC/24/1499 in January 2025.

2.5 It is noted that the wider site has been granted planning permission under an allowed appeal for Use of land for part-time fitness boot camp (Retrospective) under planning reference DC/23/2234 in March 2025. It is also noted that a tree located outside the application site boundary has recently been granted a tree preservation order (TPO).

3. Relevant Planning Policy Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)

3.1 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.

3.2 Running throughout the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Sustainable development is achieved through three main objectives which are – economic, social and environmental.

3.3 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that for decision-taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application / appeal are out of date, planning permission should be granted unless the policies of the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed, or, any adverse impact of doing so would 'significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits' when assessed against the policies of the NPPF when taken as a whole (NPPF paragraph 11(d)).

Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015)

3.4 Paragraph 34 of the NPPF requires that all development plans complete their reviews no later than 5 years from their adoption. Horsham District Council has submitted its new local plan for examination, however at this stage, the emerging policies carry little to no weight in decision-making.

3.5 A Local Development Scheme (LDS) was published in February 2025 by the Council. The LDS sets out the production timetable for the New Local Plan anticipated to be adopted in April 2026. Notwithstanding the above, as the HDPF is now over 5 years old, the most important policies for determining this application are now considered to be 'out of date'.

3.6 The Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites. The presumption in favour of development within Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF therefore applies in the consideration of all applications for housing development within the District, with Policies 2, 4, 15 and 26 now carrying limited weight in decision-making.

3.7 While considered to be out of date, the main HDPF policies relevant to this application are as follows:

- Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
- Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
- Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
- Policy 4 - Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion
- Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development
- Policy 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
- Policy 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs
- Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
- Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
- Policy 30 - Protected Landscapes
- 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 40 - Sustainable Transport
- Policy 41 - Parking

Planning Advice Note(s) (PAN)

3.8 Relevant PANs to this application are as follows:

- Shaping Development in Horsham District
- Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

4. Planning Issues, Grounds of Appeal and Comments on the Officer's Report

Principle of Development – Reason for Refusal 1

4.1 As detailed above, the Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply. The latest Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) (April 2025) has been released which confirms that the Council's housing land supply currently stands at only 1 year. Therefore, the tilted balance contained in paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged.

4.2 Additionally, limited weight is attached to the conflict with Policy 26 in respect of development outside of built-up area boundaries given that the deficient housing supply position dictates that these boundaries are out of date. As such, the fact that a site may lie outside of the built-up area boundary does not, in and of itself, constitute a reason to refuse planning permission.

4.3 The site is located approximately 1km from the built-up area boundary of Horsham, which is classed as the main town and at the top of the settlement hierarchy for the District and the site is considered to be within a reasonable distance of services. While it is acknowledged that future residents would likely be reliant upon private vehicles to access facilities, leading to some harm in this regard, this harm would be tempered by the short distance to Horsham. Alternative options such as cycling and walking are available and overall, occupants of the proposed dwelling would have reasonably good access to services and facilities in a higher order settlement.

4.4 In addition, the Council, within their delegated report state that paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF would not be engaged given the impact on the surrounding High Weald National Landscape, the ancient woodland to the north and the priority habitat to the south. Additional information is provided which shows that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the trees and priority habitat to the south, and the development is located a considerable distance from ancient woodland located to the north.

4.5 The appellant contends that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the setting of the High Weald National Landscape. The Council, within their delegated report for the refused application have stated that the proposal would "not preserve the rural character of the site, nor would it enhance the setting of the buildings". The existing buildings / structures are not considered to be of any special architectural merit. The proposals would add interest to the building, however would still maintain their equestrian character, with key features retained and enhanced.

4.6 In any event, given the housing position of the Council, it is viewed that even if some harm is identified, the adverse impacts of granting permission would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole. It is contended that any issues or harm that are identified would need to surmount a high hurdle to prevail in this balance. The resulting design, as is evident from the plans, would preserve the overall equestrian appearance and character of the buildings. While the pole barn would be enclosed, given its positioning to the rear of the stable building, the impact on the setting and the wider landscape character is considered to be minimal.

4.7 Further to the above, the proposal would also be acceptable in principle as it represents development on previously developed land / brownfield land, which was confirmed by officers in the committee report for the refused application. The definition of previously developed land within the NPPF is as follows – *"Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape".*

4.8 The use and more effective use of previously developed land attracts support in the NPPF, as well as in Policy 2 of the HDPF. Under the definition set out above, given the use of the site for equestrian purposes and the fact that there is an existing stable building present, the site is classed as previously developed land / brownfield land. This weighs in favour of the proposed development. This was confirmed by the Council under a previous application in relation to the site (application reference DC/24/1499, Decision date January 2025). Within the Committee Report for this application, attached at Appendix G, Paragraph 1.3 states that the "site comprises an existing private equestrian facility". The application was approved with a new condition (Condition 1) requiring the continued private equestrian use of the stables which is the subject of this appeal.

4.9 It is therefore somewhat surprising that the Council, within the delegated report for the refused application, which is the subject of this appeal, has questioned the equestrian use of the site, mere months after confirming that it is equestrian. The stable building is a permitted permanent structure which has planning permission which confirms its equestrian use. Taking the above into account and the clear situation on site, it is evident that the site represents previously developed land.

4.10 The delegated report in relation to the refused application also raised concerns regarding the structural suitability of the stable building. To address these points, this appeal is supported by a structural survey of the stable building, which confirms that the building is capable of conversion. The Inspector is respectfully asked to consider this document together with this appeal.

4.11 In addition, the delegated report states that as the building is currently in use it is neither redundant or disused. In response to this point, attention is drawn to Appendix H which is a recent appeal decision where at Paragraph 36 the Inspector states that – "Although the appeal buildings are currently in use, I have no reason to dispute that they are redundant in terms of no longer being needed or useful". The appellant has confirmed that equestrian activities are effectively redundant on site and their horses are able to stay outside, with the stable building used very sparsely for actual stabling. The building is therefore no longer needed and is available for residential conversion in this regard. As such, the fact that it is in use and taking into account the Inspector's view within Appendix H, should not form part of the reason for not accepting the proposed development in principle.

4.12 The proposal relates to the conversion of an existing and established building to a residential dwelling. It is noted that Policy 10 of the HDPF supports the conversion of rural buildings to commercial in the first instance. However, given the spatial context of the site and surroundings, it is considered that a residential use would be more reflective of the surrounding land uses, and therefore more appropriate in this regard.

4.13 In addition to Policy 10 of the HDPF, Policy 32 of the emerging Local Plan introduces more explicit support for the conversion of rural buildings to residential use. It is noted, however, that this policy refers to buildings in agricultural or forestry use, and does not mention stables. Furthermore, since the new Local Plan is some way off adoption, it remains possible that the wording within this policy may change. As such, while the emerging policy indicates an intention to take a more positive approach to conversion of rural buildings than the HDPF, it carries only limited weight at this stage, as detailed above. Notwithstanding the above, the proposal is considered to fully comply with Paragraph 84 of the NPPF (although it is noted that reference is made to paragraph 87 by the Council within their delegated report).

4.14 Further to the above, the Inspector's attention is drawn to HDC application reference DC/18/0249 which granted planning permission for the 'Conversion and extension of existing outbuildings into a three-bedroom single storey dwelling. Demolition of remaining buildings with retention of one shed'.

4.15 This approval was also located in the Parish of Colgate and within the High Weald National Landscape and from inspection of the plans and details, permitted significant alterations and extensions to the buildings on the site, appearing more as a rebuild. No concerns were raised by the Council in relation to this and the delegated report for this application states that – "In addition the current application proposes to largely retain and adapt the existing development on the site, rather than erect a replacement dwelling". The current proposals under this current application at Oaklands Stud would retain and adapt the existing stable building, as per the consideration of the Council under application reference DC/18/0249. The delegated report for this application is attached at Appendix A.

4.16 A similar further example can be viewed under HDC planning reference DC/15/2447 which granted planning permission for 'Conversion of buildings to three bedroom dwelling and construction of glazed link. Partial demolition of piggery and demolition of store building'. This approval was again located within Colgate Parish and within the High Weald National Landscape. Indeed, it is noted that this site was located on a slope with expansive views over open fields.

4.17 The delegated report attached to the above application stated that the proposal would re-use redundant or disused buildings and the principle of development was considered to be acceptable on this basis. The current proposal would also re-use a building that is no longer needed. As such, the context and policy position would be the same in this regard. The delegated report in relation to the above example is included at Appendix B.

4.18 The above examples are considered relevant to this appeal. In addition, it is highlighted that permission was granted for these conversions to form dwellings at a time when HDC had a 5-year housing land supply.

4.19 Further to the above, the Inspector's attention is drawn to a number of recent decisions which have granted residential developments outside of the defined BUAB. Examples include reference numbers DC/22/0495 (Appeal Reference APP/Z3825/W/22/3303603) and DC/22/2250 (Appeal Reference APP/Z3825/W/23/3325926) which each sought permission for 1no dwelling and were granted at appeal in August 2023 and March 2024 respectively. These appeal decisions are provided at Appendices C and D respectively.

4.20 Application reference DC/23/2278, which sought permission for 8no dwellings, where the site was located a significant distance away from any settlement boundaries, was granted by the Council's planning committee in April 2024.

4.21 Further, more recent examples of applications for the creation of dwellings outside BUAB include reference numbers DC/23/0627 which sought permission for the conversion of stables and was granted at appeal in December 2024 (Appeal Reference APP/Z3825/W/24/3353401 (Appeal Decision attached at Appendix E)); DC/21/0501 and DC/24/1710 which each sought permission for the conversion of existing buildings to form 1no dwelling and both granted under delegated powers by the Council in January 2025 and; DC/23/1023, which also sought permission for the conversion of an existing building to form 1no dwelling and was granted under delegated powers by the Council in March 2025.

4.22 It is highlighted that within the appeal decision at Appendix E, the Inspector states at paragraph 12 that the proposal "would not positively enhance the appearance of the buildings or their immediate setting". Notwithstanding this, more weight was given to the lack of a 5-year housing supply by this Inspector, and the appeal prevailed.

4.23 In addition to the above, a recent appeal decision under planning reference DC/24/1086 (Appeal Reference APP/Z3825/W/25/3360134) which sought outline planning consent for 3no dwellings outside of a defined settlement boundary, is also highlighted. While this appeal was dismissed on ecology and biodiversity grounds, the Inspector did not consider that the appeal site was an inappropriate location for housing and gave limited weight to policies 3, 4 and 26 of the HDPF. This appeal decision is attached at Appendix F.

4.24 While it is acknowledged that every application / appeal site context should be considered on its own merits, taking into account the current situation of the Council in terms of its 5-year housing supply and the above examples, there is an expectation that a consistent approach is applied to decision making.

4.25 It is highlighted that these permitted dwellings were located a significant distance away from any defined built-up areas. The above examples clearly show, that notwithstanding the distances to the respective settlement boundaries, given the lack of 5-year housing supply, the tilted balance is engaged and the principle of residential development in this location is acceptable.

4.26 This position is confirmed by the Inspector within the appeal decision in relation to application reference DC/22/0495 at Appendix A, which states “I have attached limited weight to the conflict with HDPF Policy 26 in respect of development outside of BUAB. The housing shortfall dictates that those boundaries are out of date. I consider that some weight can still be given to the strategy set out within HDPF Policy 2, in terms of the general locations of new development, but the fact that a site may lie outside of the BUAB does not, in and of itself, constitute a reason to refuse planning permission”.

4.27 Appendix F in particular also highlights that the development does not need to enhance the immediate setting to be acceptable, given the lack of a 5-year housing supply.

4.28 Lastly, a very recent appeal decision issued in October 2025 under planning reference DC/24/1486 (Appeal Reference APP/Z3825/W/25/3361339), granted permission for a new build dwelling approximately 2 miles away from the closest built-up area boundary. Within the appeal decision (included at Appendix I) the Inspector states that –

“27. The proposed dwelling would be in a location that is not considered suitable when assessed against the relevant HDPF and NP policies. The site lacks close proximity to a wide range of essential services and facilities. Although there are some opportunities for travel by means other than private car, reliance

on car journeys is likely to be significant. In these respects, the proposal would conflict with key development plan policies.

28. Balanced against the harm are a number of benefits. The overall housing supply remains significantly deficient, and the provision of an additional dwelling would make a meaningful contribution to addressing this shortfall. The Framework recognises that small sites can make an important contribution to housing supply and are often built out quickly. There would also be modest economic benefits during construction and through local spending, as well as a small contribution to housing diversity. While the scale of these benefits is modest given that only one dwelling is proposed, in the context of current housing pressures, even a single additional home represents a valuable and positive contribution.

29. Taking all matters into account, the adverse impacts of granting permission would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole. Consequently, the proposal benefits from the presumption in favour of sustainable development as defined in paragraph 11d of the Framework."

4.29 The context of the appeal site is considered to be similar to the above example. Given the relatively close proximity of the site to the main town of Horsham, it is considered that the proposal would accord with criterion 4 of Policy 26 of the HDPF, as it would enable the sustainable development of rural areas. The appeal is seeking the conversion of existing buildings on previously developed land and future occupiers would have access to a range of facilities and services located in Horsham.

4.30 The housing supply position of the Council is deficient. 1no additional dwelling would contribute towards the much-needed supply of houses. Small sites can often be built out relatively quickly. There would be economic benefits arising from construction and spend in the local economy. Although these benefits are tempered by the small contribution that 1no dwelling would make in the context of the current circumstances, the additional dwelling would be valuable.

4.31 In summary, given the lack of a 5-year housing supply, the location of the appeal site close to the main town of Horsham, the site being designated as previously developed land, and relevant recent examples of housing developments permitted outside of settlement boundaries, including the conversion of existing rural buildings, and the resulting landscape enhancement that the development would achieve, the principle of residential development is therefore acceptable.

4.32 Any perceived harm within this setting is not considered to outweigh the provision of an additional dwelling, given the deficient housing supply of the Council. The development would not result in harm to the High Weald National Landscape, with the overall form and scale of the buildings retained, to a degree which would warrant refusal. The proposals would also be acceptable and would not have an adverse impact on the ancient woodland to the north and priority habitat to the south.

Design and Appearance – Reason for Refusal 2

4.33 Policy 25 of the HDPF seeks to protect the natural environment and landscape character of the District, including the landform, development pattern, together with protected landscapes and habitats. Development will be required to protect, conserve, and enhance landscape and townscape character, taking account of areas or features identified as being of landscape importance, individual settlement characteristics and settlement separation. In addition, development will be supported where it maintains and enhances the Green Infrastructure Network.

4.34 Policy 30 of The HDPF states that the natural beauty and public enjoyment of the High Weald AONB and the adjoining South Downs National Park will be conserved and enhanced and opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities will be promoted. Development proposals will be supported in or close to protected landscapes where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts to the natural beauty and public enjoyment of these landscapes as well as any relevant cross boundary linkages.

4.35 Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF require development to be of a high standard of design and layout. Development proposals must be locally distinctive in character and respect the character of their surroundings. Where relevant, the scale, massing and appearance of development will be required to relate sympathetically with its built-surroundings, landscape, open spaces and to consider any impact on the skyline and important views.

4.36 From assessment of the delegated report for the refused application, the Council consider that the proposal involves substantial alterations to the buildings and that the resulting appearance would be overly domestic.

4.37 As set out above, the existing buildings, while utilitarian in appearance, are of no architectural merit. The use of high quality materials would not be at odds with the character, however would instead result in an enhancement to the setting, creating a dwelling of interest while preserving the overall form of the existing structures.

4.38 While it is accepted that the pole barn would be enclosed, the works would not encroach beyond its existing footprint, with only very modest extensions proposed to the north elevation of the stable building. The pole barn is set behind the stable building with extensive soft landscaping surrounding the site, and as such, would not appear prominently or be at odds with the pattern of development, as purported by the Council.

4.39 As is evident from the proposed elevations, the main equestrian features of the stable building would be retained, with the majority of windows and doors positioned within existing openings. In terms of the materials, regard has been given to the setting, the High Weald Colour Study and the setting of the listed building to the south. The materials are not considered to be alien or out of keeping within this rural context.

4.40 The provision of large glazing is not in itself considered to result in domestic appearance and it must be acknowledged that a dwelling and future occupiers would require an appropriate level of accommodation. The Inspector's attention is again drawn to the decisions contained at Appendices A, B and E. These examples, including within the High Weald National Landscape, involved substantial alterations as well as large, glazed areas, where harm was not identified.

4.41 The Inspector's attention is drawn to the recently allowed appeal referred to above under reference DC/24/1486 (Appeal Reference APP/Z3825/W/25/3361339) (Appeal Decision at Appendix I), which permitted a large new build dwelling sited in an open field. Within the delegated report for this application, the officer states that: "The application site would be viewed in the context of an open agricultural field, along with commercial and agricultural development. The application site is located within the immediate context of the commercial development, and whilst the proposed dwelling would be located within a narrow plot of land, it is not considered that the proposal in itself would result in harm to the landscape character and visual amenity of the area.

There are however some concerns regarding the design of the proposal. It is understood that given the wider site context, the design appears to be intended to appear as a converted agricultural barn such that from wider views it would reflect the built form to the north and would not be visually incongruous with this context in wider views of the application site".

4.42 While it is acknowledged that each application needs to be considered on its own merits, taking into account the view of the Council in relation to the above referenced application when compared to the resulting design the subject of this appeal, the proposals are considered to have less of an impact on the landscape character, and would therefore be acceptable. It is again reiterated that the proposals would utilise existing and established built form and are predominantly screened, with additional hedging proposed to the north. Given the housing position of the Council, it is viewed that even if some harm is identified, the adverse impacts of granting permission would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole.

4.43 It is also highlighted by the Council within their delegated report, that the proposal would be harmful given that a residential curtilage would be created and due to the introduction of residential paraphernalia. It is emphasised that the appeal scheme does not involve any works to the wider site to create a curtilage as purported by the Council. The site benefits from an existing permitted hardstanding area for parking as well as post and rail fencing to the north which already separates the buildings with the paddock to the north. Instead, the Council make a presumption that the site "would become more domesticated". The Appellant would contend that this would be the case with any rural conversion to form residential accommodation, and the assumptions made by the Council do not constitute harm in this context which would reasonably be considered a reason to refuse the application.

4.44 It is again highlighted that the proposal would utilise the existing buildings and structures with only very modest extensions added to the front of the stable building. Built form would not encroach beyond the existing yard area and therefore, the view of the Council that the proposals "would undermine the informal, agricultural character of the site and would visually erode the woodland edge and surrounding landscape" would not apply. It is again reiterated that any perceived harm identified in this regard would not outweigh the housing land supply position of the Council.

4.45 Reference is made within the delegated report that there is a requirement that a development be visually attractive. However, it is again highlighted that the Inspector within the appeal decision at Appendix I considered that in that instance, the proposal would not enhance the setting. This clearly shows that even where a proposal may not meet all policy requirements, the lack of housing dictates that permission should be granted. The Appellant contends that the necessary weight has not been given to the deficient housing land supply of the Council. The Inspector is respectfully requested to apply the appropriate planning balance, which, taking into account the examples set out above and contained within the attached Appendices, would indicate that any harm would not be so great to warrant dismissal of this appeal.

Trees – Reason for Refusal 3

4.46 In order to address the third reason for refusal and to ensure that the development would not have a detrimental impact on surrounding trees, this appeal is supported by a tree survey, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Method Statement and a Tree Protection Plan. The Inspector is respectfully requested to consider these documents as part of this appeal.

4.47 The Arboricultural Method Statement concludes that "the overall quality and longevity of the amenity contribution provided for by the trees and groups of trees within and adjacent to the site will not be adversely affected as a result of the local planning authority consenting to the proposed development. It is considered that any issues raised in this report, or beyond the scope of it can be dealt with by planning conditions".

4.48 As set out within the submitted details, the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on any trees or planting, particularly to the south of the site, including the adjacent TPO tree. As detailed above, the appellant would be happy to provide a comprehensive hard and soft landscaping scheme, including the provision of trees and other planting, via a suitable condition.

5. Summary and Conclusion

5.1 Overall, the Appellant contends that the appeal scheme represents an appropriate form of development within a sustainable location. As the Inspector will no doubt be aware, case law confirms that it is not necessary for developments to accord with every policy of the relevant development plan and that the primary consideration is whether the proposal accords with the plan as a whole.

5.2 The NPPF at paragraph 3 confirms that the Framework should be read as one. In addition, the Government's Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) states that any conflicts between the development plan should be considered in light of all material planning considerations including local priorities and needs, as guided by the NPPF.

5.3 As set out above, the Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing and the HDPF is now over 5-years old, with the most relevant policies in relation to the appeal proposals considered to be out-of-date and carrying limited weight. Given the circumstances, paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF sets out that planning permission should be granted unless:

- "Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole".

5.4 As detailed within this statement, there are not considered to be any adverse impacts which would outweigh the benefits of the appeal proposal. The tilted balance at paragraph 11(d) is therefore engaged.

5.5 Taking into account the clear need for new dwellings within the District, as well as the context, the appeal proposal is arguably essential to the countryside location and will help to enable the sustainable development of the rural area, as well as contribute to the shortfall of housing.

5.6 Paragraph 39 of the NPPF states that decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development wherever possible. In light of the above, therefore, we would contend that there is no conflict with the objectives set out in National and Local policies, and we respectfully request that this appeal be allowed. The Appellant is happy to accept any suitable planning conditions which the Inspector may deem necessary.

5.7 In summary, therefore, we would urge the Inspector to allow this appeal and grant planning permission accordingly.

6. Appendices

6.1 The following Appendices are attached to this statement –

- Appendix A – Delegated Report - DC-18-0249
- Appendix B – Delegated Report - DC-15-2447
- Appendix C – Appeal Decision - DC-22-0495 - 1no Dwelling in Countryside
- Appendix D – Appeal Decision - DC-22-2250 - 1no Dwelling in Countryside
- Appendix E – Appeal Decision DC-23-0627 - Conversion to form 1no Dwelling in Countryside
- Appendix F – Appeal Decision - DC-24-1086 - 3no Dwellings in Countryside
- Appendix G – Committee Report DC-24-1499
- Appendix H – Appeal Decision - Redundant Building
- Appendix I – Appeal Decision DC-24-1486 - 1no Dwelling in Countryside