



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/0407

Guilkenhurst Stud, Lordings Road, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9JB

DESCRIPTION:

Change of Use of land and extension to existing equine arena.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

BL/28/91	Erection of barn for use as private stables	Application Permitted on 13.06.1991
DC/16/0089	Erection of horse walker	Application Permitted on 16.02.2016
DC/26/0403	Application to confirm the creation of a Canter Track (Lawful Development Certificate - Existing).	Application Permitted on 30.04.2026
DC/26/0404	Application to confirm the continuous use as a horse arena (Lawful Development Certificate - Existing).	Application Permitted on 30.04.2026

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site, Guilkenhurst Stud, is located to the west of Lordings Road, beyond the defined built-up area boundary of Billingshurst. The site is accessed via a private track leading from Lordings Road and is associated with the residential property of Guilkenhurst Stud, located to the north of the wider equestrian site. The site sits within a small cluster of residential properties further afield, to the north and northwest. The surrounding area is characterised by open countryside and equestrian uses.

The wider site comprises stables, an equine area, horse walker, canter track and grazing fields to the southern part of the site. The site is not within a conservation area and there are no Article 4 Directions or Enforcement notices applicable to the site. Whilst planning consent was never sought for the installation of the arena, DC/26/0404 established it had been substantially completed and in use as such, for a period in excess of 10 years.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

The application seeks full planning consent for the extension of the existing equine area, with an increase from 60m x 20m, to 70m x 20m, to facilitate the private training and exercise of show jumping horses. The materials are to match the existing arena, comprising a sand riding surface and timber edging.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):

Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development
Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 29 - Equestrian Development
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
Policy 39 - Strategic Policy: Infrastructure Provision
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking

Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031
Policy Bill 1: Billingshurst Built-Up Area Boundary

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):

Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality
Strategic Policy 10: Flooding
Strategic Policy 11: Environmental Protection
Strategic Policy 12: Air Quality
Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection
Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality
Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles
Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
Policy 25: Parking
Policy 31: Rural Economic Development
Policy 33: Equestrian Development

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

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

Billingshurst Parish Design Statement

Planning Advice Notes:

Shaping Development in Horsham District
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:

INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

None received

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

None received

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Representations:

None received

Parish Comments:

Billingshurst Parish Council: Neutral Response

No cause for objection to the plans as submitted.

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:

Policy 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) (HDPF) sets out a general policy of restraint against inappropriate development in the countryside in order to protect its rural character and undeveloped nature. However, it does allow for, amongst other things, quiet, informal recreational use, such as that derived from private equestrian activities.

Policy 29 of the HDPF is generally supportive of new equestrian development, subject to several criteria, including the proposal being appropriate in scale and character, and level of activity, and being in keeping with the location, being well-related to existing buildings. The policy sets out that existing buildings should be re-used before new buildings are considered.

The proposed extension of the existing equestrian arena would be modest in size, in which it would continue to be used for private purposes only, in association with the existing established equestrian yard and facilities. Given this existing use, in principle, the proposed extension for private use only, would be of an appropriate scale and level of activity that would not undermine the character or appearance of the rural area, in accordance with Policy 26 and 29.

As a result, the principle of the proposed development would be considered acceptable, subject to all other material considerations.

Design and Appearance:

Policies 23, 32 and 33 of the HDPF seek to ensure high quality and inclusive design for all development in the District and ensure that it will complement locally distinctive characters and heritage; that the scale, massing and appearance of the development is of a high standard of design and layout and where relevant relates sympathetically with the built surroundings; is locally distinctive in character; respects the character of the surrounding area; and uses high standards of building

materials and finishes. Policy 29 requires equestrian development to be suitably scaled, sensitively designed, and well-related to existing buildings where possible, ensuring no unacceptable urbanising effect on the countryside.

The proposed development involves the expansion of the existing equestrian arena from 60m x 20m, to 70m x 20m, to facilitate the private training and exercise of show jumping horses. The proposal represents a modest and proportionate extension to the existing arena and materials are to match the existing arena, comprising sand riding surface and timber edging. The proposal would be in keeping with the established equestrian character of the site and given the site's countryside location, is not an unexpected feature.

The site benefits from mature screening along all boundaries and whilst there are a number of Public Right of Ways in the vicinity, given the presence of the existing arena and the modest extension, coupled with this screening, there will be no harmful impact on the surrounding landscape or from public vantage points.

Overall, the siting, materials and size of the proposed arena extension are considered acceptable to the rural and equestrian character of the area. The proposal would not result in material harm to the character or appearance of the countryside and complies with Policies 25, 29 32 and 33 of the HDPF.

Residential Amenity:

Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.

Whilst the application site is in a rural location, the site does sit within a small cluster of residential properties. Guildenhurst Stud, the applicant's address is located 31 metres to the north, Garden House Guildenhurst Manor 45 metres to the north and Guildenhurst Manor located 83 metres to the northeast. Considering this application relates to the extension of the existing arena, the alterations would not give rise to overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impacts. Given these separation distances, the proposed development would have limited adverse impact on residential amenity. However, given the rural location of the application site within the countryside, suitable conditions are to be imposed, ensuring the development does not give rise to an increase in noise and light pollution. These conditions relate to the restriction of the use of the facilities for personal purposes only, no external lighting and no music/address system to be played on the site.

Having regard to the above factors, the proposal would not result in adverse amenity harm, in accordance with Policy 33 of the HDPF.

Highways Impacts:

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

The proposed development continues to utilise the existing access serving the site. As the proposal will not introduce a commercial use of the facilities, it is not considered that the proposal would result in a material increase in traffic to and from the site. It is therefore considered that the proposal would accord with Policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF.

Water Neutrality:

The proposed development will not result in any increase in mains water demand and therefore will not lead to adverse effects on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC, SPA or Ramsar sites, either alone or in combination. The proposal can therefore be screened out at the HRA Stage 1 Screening and does not require progression to Appropriate Assessment. On this basis, the development is considered acceptable in ecological terms and compliant with Policy 31 of the HDPF and relevant national policy

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 Biodiversity Gain Plan must show how the development will achieve the required minimum 10% BNG using the statutory biodiversity metric tool and must demonstrate how the habitats will be managed and maintained for 30 years, starting from the date the development is completed. Off-site gains (on unregistered sites) and significant on-site enhancements will be secured over this period by way of a Legal Agreement.

The Applicant has submitted a Biodiversity Metric which demonstrates a 12.27% net gain is achievable by way of habitat enhancement measures, including the planting of 12 native rural trees, which will provide additional habitat, compensating for the loss of a small area of modified grassland.

Conclusions:

The proposed sand school would be used in connection with the existing equestrian facilities on site and would be used for personal purposes only, as secured by condition. The development is considered acceptable in principle and would be appropriately sited, scaled, and designed in relation to the existing equestrian facilities and rural surroundings. The development would not result in material harm to the character or appearance of the countryside, or the amenities of neighbouring occupiers as such the application is recommended for approval.

Recommendation: Application Permitted

Conditions:

- 2 **Standard Time Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 3 **Pre-Commencement Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (the HMMP), prepared in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan and including:

- (a) a non-technical summary;
- (b) the planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan; and
- (c) the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan from the completion of development.

has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

The created and/or enhanced habitat specified in the approved HMMP shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved HMMP. Any proposed or retained planting, which within a period of 5 years after the completion of development, dies, is removed, or becomes seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 4 **Regulatory Condition:** The materials and finishes of all new external walls, windows and roofs of the development hereby permitted shall match in type, colour and texture those of the existing equestrian arena.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 5 **Regulatory Condition:** The equestrian arena hereby approved shall be for private use only, in connection with Guildenhurst Stud. The facilities shall not be used by visiting members of the public or for the staging of equestrian competitions, the provision of equestrian livery services for financial reward, or for a riding school providing horse riding lessons to the general public.

Reason: In the interests of amenity, to enable the Local Planning Authority to regulate and control the development and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 6 **Regulatory Condition:** No amplified music shall be used or installed other than with the permission of the Local Planning Authority by way of formal application.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of amenity and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 7 **Regulatory Condition:** No additional external lighting or floodlighting shall be installed other than with the permission of the Local Planning Authority by way of formal application.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the locality and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

NOTE TO APPLICANT

Biodiversity Net Gain Condition

Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the "biodiversity gain condition" which means development granted by this notice must not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission is Horsham District Council.

This permission will require the submission and approval of a Biodiversity Gain Plan before development is begun.

For guidance on the contents of the Biodiversity Gain Plan that must be submitted and agreed by the Council prior to the commencement of the consented development please see the link:

[Submit a biodiversity gain plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain).

Statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These can be found at Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 74-003-20240214 of the Planning Practice Guidance, which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>.

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat Regulations 2024)) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans.

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.

(The approved plans will form Condition 1 on the Decision Notice of all Permitted applications)

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Block plan	Existing Block Plan	02 REVISION V1	05.03.2026
Location & Details plan	Location Plan & Proposed Kick Board Elevations	01 REVISION V1	07.07.2026
Block plan	Proposed Block Plan	03 REVISION V1	07.07.2026

Case Officer sign/initial Sam Nye Date: 03/08/2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial Tamara Dale Date: 20/08/2026