Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/24/1793
Gravatts Farm, Guildford Road, Rudgwick, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 3JD

DESCRIPTION:
Erection of a stable building and hay/equipment store.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

None Relevant

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site, Gravatts Farm, is a 26-acre property situated north of Guildford Road (A281) in Rudgwick, West Sussex. The site consists of a detached residential dwelling, several fields primarily used for sheep grazing and hay cutting, and areas of woodland dominated by Ash trees, some of which are affected by dieback and require periodic removal.

The proposed development site is within an existing clearing among the trees, ensuring minimal disruption to the surrounding landscape. The site is designated as countryside location under local planning policy and is located within a Bat Sustenance Zone, with Ancient Woodland to the west. There are no other designations of acknowledged importance.

The property is accessed via an established entrance from Guildford Road and benefits from existing tracks within the site. The location has direct connectivity to bridleways, making it suitable for equestrian activities.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

The application seeks permission for the erection of a stable building and a hay/equipment store at Gravatts Farm for private equestrian use. The stable block will provide accommodation for four horses, including a tack room, and will be arranged in an L-shape. The structure will be finished in dark brown timber cladding with a black corrugated bitumen roof to blend with the rural surroundings.

The accompanying hay and equipment store is designed to house hay harvested from the property's fields and securely store associated tools. Currently, these are kept in a domestic garage, which is unsuitable for agricultural storage due to space constraints and condensation issues.

The proposed development is intended to allow the applicant to stable and care for horses on-site, avoiding the need for off-site stabling and reducing travel. The design, materials, and siting have been carefully considered to minimize visual impact, retain existing vegetation, and integrate with the character of the surrounding countryside.

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 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 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction

Rudgwick Neighbourhood Plan (made):
Policy RNP6 – Materials
Policy RNP7 – Architectural Style
Policy RNP8 – Development Height
Policy RNP9 – Street Scene
Policy RNP17 – Green infrastructure and Trees

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):
Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction
Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality
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
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)

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:

HDC Arboricultural officer: No Objection - The tree officer comments confirm that the proposed stable building and hay/equipment store will be sited in a young plantation woodland, primarily consisting of Ash trees, with several young oaks. Most of the Ash trees are either standing dead or severely affected by Ash dieback and will need to be removed regardless of the development outcome. This condition means that the Ash trees do not pose a constraint to the proposed development.

The proposed buildings will be accessed via existing tracks, which can be extended without impacting the retained trees, given the number and location of the trees to be removed. No arboricultural concerns are raised, and the development is considered acceptable in terms of tree impact.

Ecology Consultant: No Objection - The Ecological Constraints & Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment for the proposed development highlights the importance of safeguarding local biodiversity, especially in relation to bats, protected species, and habitats. The assessment indicates that some Ash trees were felled due to Ash dieback disease, with due diligence checks for roosting bats prior to felling noted as important. While no significant bat roosting concerns were identified on-site, the proximity of the site to the Sussex Bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and various bat species recorded nearby necessitates a sensitive lighting strategy to mitigate potential impacts on foraging and commuting bats. The report recommends a Wildlife Friendly Lighting Strategy, including specific measures such as low-light levels, warm white lighting, and motion sensors, to ensure minimal light disturbance.

Further recommendations include implementing a 50-meter buffer zone to protect ancient woodland, a woodland management plan to support bat commuting and foraging, and a precautionary method statement for mobile species like reptiles and amphibians. The development's impact on Priority habitats, like deciduous woodland, will be addressed through appropriate mitigation measures. With these measures in place, the development is deemed acceptable, provided conditions are met and a comprehensive Construction and Environmental Management Plan (Biodiversity) is implemented. The development is expected to achieve biodiversity net gains, with measures securing compliance with planning policies and statutory biodiversity duties.

Natural England: No Objection - We concur with the conclusion of your authority's HRA appropriate assessment, insofar that we have no objections subject to the delivery, management and maintenance of measures identified in the water neutrality statement, and subject to relevant pre-commencement conditions identified in the appropriate assessment being put in place, to achieve water neutrality.

Nature Space: No Objection - The consultation response indicates that the proposed development is unlikely to impact great crested newts or their habitats. However, since the site is within the red Impact Risk Zone, as per district licence mapping, it is recommended that an informative be attached to the planning consent.

WSCC Rights of Way: No Objection - The comments highlight concerns regarding potential conflicts between construction traffic and public users of Public Bridleway 1395 (Bowcroft Lane), which is part of the access route to the development site. To mitigate this, it is recommended that the applicant install signs at key points where the access route intersects the bridleway, advising drivers to give way to pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians. Additional signage is suggested to warn both construction traffic and the public about the presence of each other at junctions with Public Footpath 1397. The applicant should ensure adequate visibility at these junctions and take responsibility for repairing any damage caused to the public right of way by construction vehicles.

While the proposal does not directly affect the public right of way, the Public Rights of Way team raises no objections as long as there are no changes to the route. If future alterations to the public rights of way are proposed, the applicant must consult directly with the West Sussex County Council, Public Rights of Way team.

Representations:
None Received.

Parish Comments:
Rudgwick Parish Council: No Objection – but subject to RNP Policy 17 (DPD) being specifically referenced in any landscape conditions attached to a granting of approval, with regard to replacement of trees lost in the development.

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 proposed development seeks permission for the erection of a stable building and a hay/equipment store on land at Gravatts Farm, Guildford Road, Rudgwick. The principle of development is supported by both national and local planning policies, which acknowledge the need for equestrian and agricultural facilities in rural areas. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 promotes sustainable development, with paragraph 84 specifically supporting rural businesses and leisure developments that respect the character of the countryside. Additionally, paragraph 180 emphasizes the importance of well-designed buildings that contribute positively to their surroundings while avoiding unnecessary harm to the environment.

At a local level, the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) 2015 provides clear policy guidance for development in countryside locations. Policy 26 (Countryside Protection) seeks to protect rural areas from inappropriate development, allowing only proposals that are essential to their countryside location and that contribute to the quiet, informal recreational use of the land. The proposed stables and storage facilities are directly linked to equestrian activities and land management, fulfilling an agricultural and leisure function that aligns with the policy's objectives. The scale and design of the buildings are in keeping with the rural character of the area, and the development does not introduce an inappropriate increase in activity or urbanization. Overall, the use proposed would not be unexpected in this location.

Furthermore, Policy 29 (Equestrian Development) sets out criteria to ensure that new equestrian facilities are appropriate in scale, location, and level of activity. The policy prioritizes the reuse of existing buildings before permitting new development. In this case, there are no existing equestrian or agricultural buildings available for repurposing on the site, thereby justifying the need for new structures. The proposed stables and storage facility are designed to be well-related to the existing property while minimizing their visual impact on the landscape. The development is also located within close proximity to the established bridleway network, ensuring that it meets the accessibility requirements of Policy 29.

Overall, the proposal represents a sustainable and necessary form of countryside development, supporting rural land use while maintaining the environmental and visual integrity of the area. The application is in accordance with both national and local planning policies, ensuring that the development will have minimal impact on the rural character of the site while providing essential equestrian and land management facilities.

Design and Appearance:

The proposed stable building and hay/equipment store at Gravatts Farm, Guildford Road, Rudgwick, have been carefully designed to reflect the traditional character of rural development while adhering to local and national planning policies. The design takes into account Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF), as well as the Rudgwick Neighbourhood Plan (Policies

RNP6, RNP7, and RNP8), ensuring that the development conserves and enhances the rural landscape.

In line with Policy 25 of the HDPF, which seeks to protect, conserve, and enhance the natural environment and landscape character, the proposed buildings have been designed to integrate seamlessly with their surroundings. The stable block adopts an L-shaped layout to minimize its visual impact, ensuring it remains compact and unobtrusive within the existing landscape. The hay/equipment store is positioned nearby, allowing for efficient use of space while maintaining the open countryside character of the site. Both structures are located within a natural clearing, reducing the need for tree removal and preserving the ecological integrity of the area.

The materials used in the construction have been selected to complement the surrounding rural environment, meeting the requirements of Policy RNP6 of the Rudgwick Neighbourhood Plan. The stables and store will feature timber cladding finished in dark brown with a black corrugated bitumen roof, ensuring that they blend naturally into the landscape. Additionally, a multi-stock brick base will provide a durable and visually appropriate foundation, further reinforcing the traditional rural aesthetic.

The scale and massing of the proposed buildings have been carefully considered to ensure they are in keeping with their location, satisfying the principles set out in Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF. The stable block measures 14.9m in length, 8.7m in width, and 3.5m in height, ensuring that it remains proportionate to its intended use while not overwhelming the site. The hay/equipment store, measuring 7.6m by 6.1m, has a modest height of 3m, further reducing any potential visual intrusion.

The architectural style of the development aligns with Policy RNP7 of the Rudgwick Neighbourhood Plan, which encourages designs that are sympathetic to the traditional built environment of the area. The pitched roof design and simple, functional layout are consistent with established equestrian and agricultural buildings, ensuring that the development respects local architectural heritage.

In accordance with Policy RNP8, which governs development height to protect rural views, the proposed buildings have been designed to maintain a low profile. The ridge heights of 3.5m (stables) and 3m (hay store) ensure that they remain unobtrusive, particularly given their positioning within an established clearing surrounded by mature trees. This natural screening will significantly reduce any visual impact from surrounding viewpoints.

To further enhance the visual integration of the development, additional tree planting and landscaping measures will be implemented around the site, in line with Policy 25 of the HDPF. The use of native species for any new planting will reinforce the site's rural character while also contributing to biodiversity net gain (BNG).

In conclusion the proposed stable building and hay/equipment store have been designed with careful attention to scale, materials, architectural style, and landscape impact, ensuring full compliance with the Horsham District Planning Framework and the Rudgwick Neighbourhood Plan. By prioritizing traditional materials, appropriate massing, and low-impact positioning, the development preserves and enhances the countryside character while providing a functional and sustainable equestrian facility.

Arboricultural Impact:

The proposed stable building and hay/equipment store will be situated within a young plantation woodland at Gravatts Farm, primarily consisting of Ash trees, with several young oaks interspersed throughout the site. The Horsham District Council (HDC) Arboricultural Officer has reviewed the proposal and raised no objections, confirming that the tree impact of the development is acceptable.

A significant number of Ash trees within the site are either standing dead or severely affected by Ash dieback and will require removal irrespective of whether the development proceeds. Given this condition, the Ash trees do not pose a constraint to the proposed construction, as their removal is necessary for woodland management and ecological health.

The Tree Constraints Plans (A and B) illustrate the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of retained trees and confirm that the proposed buildings will be positioned in a manner that avoids any significant impact on

these trees. The proposed access route to the buildings follows existing tracks, minimizing disruption to the surrounding woodland. Where minor extensions to these tracks are required, they will be implemented without encroaching on the RPAs of retained trees.

In accordance with Policy RNP17 of the Rudgwick Neighbourhood Plan, which seeks to protect and enhance woodland, trees, and hedgerows, the development has been carefully designed to minimize impact on the surrounding tree cover. The removal of trees is limited to those that are either diseased or structurally compromised, and new native tree planting will be introduced to offset the loss and contribute to biodiversity net gain (BNG). This approach aligns with the policy's objective of preserving and improving woodland health while allowing for sustainable rural development.

The proposed development includes a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) strategy, which incorporates additional native tree planting to offset the loss of affected Ash trees and enhance the ecological value of the site. This ensures compliance with both local and national policy objectives, promoting woodland resilience while accommodating essential equestrian facilities.

In summary, the tree officer's assessment confirms that no arboricultural concerns have been raised, and the proposed development is acceptable in terms of tree impact. The careful siting of the buildings, combined with the planned removal of diseased trees and compensatory planting measures, ensures that the woodland character and biodiversity of the site will be maintained and enhanced, in accordance with Policy RNP17 and the broader environmental protection framework.

Amenity Impact:

Policy 33 of the HDPF states that development should be designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land, whilst having regard to the sensitivities of surrounding development.

The siting of the development and its use for private / non-commercial purposes would not result in unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity, with this and the installation of external lighting restricted by condition. It is considered that this approach is such that no unacceptable harm would result to neighbouring properties and land, in accordance with the above policy.

Ecology:

Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) requires that development proposals contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity and create and manage new habitats where appropriate. The Council supports new developments that retain and/or enhance significant features of nature conservation on development sites.

An Ecology Consultant has reviewed the proposed development and raised no objections. The Ecological Constraints & Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment for the development underscores the importance of protecting local biodiversity, particularly regarding bats, protected species, and habitats. The assessment notes that some Ash trees were felled due to Ash dieback disease, with necessary checks for roosting bats prior to felling being highlighted. No significant bat roosting concerns were identified on-site, but the proximity of the site to the Sussex Bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the presence of various bat species nearby require a sensitive lighting strategy to minimize impacts on foraging and commuting bats. The assessment recommends implementing a Wildlife Friendly Lighting Strategy that includes measures such as low-light levels, warm white lighting, and motion sensors to reduce light disturbance. A condition is attached to ensure that no external lighting is installed without prior consent from the Local Planning Authority.

Additional recommendations include establishing a 50-meter buffer zone around ancient woodland, preparing a woodland management plan to support bat commuting and foraging, and adopting a precautionary method statement for mobile species such as reptiles and amphibians. The development's potential impact on Priority habitats, like deciduous woodland, will be mitigated through appropriate measures. With these safeguards in place, the development is deemed acceptable, provided that conditions are met, and a comprehensive Construction and Environmental Management

Plan (Biodiversity) is implemented. The proposal is expected to achieve biodiversity net gains, ensuring compliance with planning policies and statutory biodiversity obligations.

Water Neutrality:

The application site falls within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone as defined by Natural England which draws its water supply from groundwater abstraction at Hardham. Natural England has issued a Position Statement for applications within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone which states that it cannot be concluded with the required degree of certainty that new development in this zone would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites.

Natural England advises that plans and projects affecting sites where an existing adverse effect is known will be required to demonstrate, with sufficient certainty, that they will not contribute further to an existing adverse effect. The received advice note advises that the matter of water neutrality should be addressed in assessments to agree and ensure that water use is offset for all new developments within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone.

The Water Neutrality Statement (WNS) for the proposed stable block and barn at Gravatts Farm has been reviewed to assess its compliance with water neutrality standards. The proposal includes the construction of a stable block with four stables and a tack/feed room, as well as a barn for hay and machinery storage. Water use is limited to providing drinking water for up to four horses, with no domestic facilities such as toilets or washrooms planned for the site.

The estimated maximum daily water consumption for the horses is 220 litres per day, calculated conservatively at 55 litres per horse per day, assuming all horses are worked in warm weather year-round. Currently, the site has no water demand, resulting in a baseline of zero litres per day. To mitigate this, a rainwater harvesting system will be installed to collect water from the roofs of the stable block and barn. The system is projected to yield 318 litres per day, based on annual rainfall data, which exceeds the estimated water demand, ensuring no reliance on mains water. The system includes three rainwater tanks, each with a 2,600-litre capacity, providing sufficient storage to meet a 35-day drought period in accordance with BS EN 16941-1:2018 standards. Mains water is proposed only as a contingency for extended droughts.

The water demand estimate is intentionally conservative, ensuring the proposal overcompensates for potential water use. The rainwater harvesting system is suitably sized, with adequate storage and treatment systems to maintain water quality. A detailed management plan will address maintenance and monitoring, ensuring long-term operation. As all water demand will be met through harvested rainwater, the proposal achieves water neutrality without impacting the Sussex North Water Supply Zone (SNWSZ).

In conclusion, the WNS confirms that the proposed development at Gravatts Farm will achieve water neutrality, provided the rainwater harvesting system is implemented and maintained as outlined. This approach satisfies both planning and environmental requirements.

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.

The applicant has submitted a Biodiversity Metric which demonstrates a 33.53% net gain is achievable by way of onsite biodiversity gains. However, this is not so significant as to warrant a legal agreement for monitoring. The informative attached details that the proposed net gain shall be secured post-decision.

Conclusions:

The proposed development at Gravatts Farm, which includes the construction of a stable building and hay/equipment store, is consistent with both national and local planning policies, and represents a sustainable form of countryside development that will enhance rural land use while preserving the character of the area. The principle of development is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which encourages rural businesses and leisure developments, and the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF), which sets out clear policies for rural development. The proposed buildings are well-designed to blend with the rural landscape and provide essential equestrian and land management facilities, adhering to the requirements of both the HDPF and the Rudgwick Neighbourhood Plan (RNP).

In terms of design and appearance, the proposal integrates traditional materials and low-profile structures, minimizing visual impact and preserving the natural environment. The siting of the development ensures that the buildings are in harmony with the surrounding countryside, with careful attention paid to landscape integration, tree preservation, and appropriate massing. The project also complies with policies aimed at safeguarding the countryside's aesthetic and ecological integrity.

The development's impact on trees has been thoroughly assessed and deemed acceptable by the Arboricultural Officer. The removal of affected Ash trees due to Ash dieback is necessary for woodland management, and the proposed buildings will be positioned to avoid significant disruption to the surrounding tree cover. Furthermore, new native tree planting will be introduced to offset any losses and contribute to biodiversity net gain (BNG), in line with policy objectives.

Regarding residential amenity, the proposal will not cause unacceptable harm to neighbouring properties, with conditions in place to mitigate any potential impact, such as restrictions on external lighting. The development also incorporates a robust Biodiversity Net Gain strategy, which will ensure the preservation and enhancement of local biodiversity through careful habitat management and appropriate mitigation measures.

Importantly, the proposal complies with the requirement for water neutrality. The Water Neutrality Statement confirms that all water demand will be met through a rainwater harvesting system, which ensures no reliance on mains water and addresses the concerns of water abstraction in the Sussex North Water Supply Zone.

Overall, the proposed development is in full compliance with national and local planning policies, including those related to biodiversity, water neutrality, and countryside protection. The careful design, location, and mitigation measures ensure that the development will have minimal environmental impact while providing necessary and sustainable facilities for equestrian use and rural land management. The application represents a responsible and appropriate use of rural land, enhancing both the local environment and the functionality of the site.

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**: A construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following:

a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".
c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To conserve protected and Priority species and allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and Policy 31 of the Horsham Development Framework.

4 **Pre-Commencement (Slab Level) Condition**: No development above ground floor slab level shall commence until a management and maintenance plan for the rainwater harvesting system has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The management and maintenance plan shall include the following details:

- Detail on the continuity of supply during dry periods extending beyond 35 days.
- Arrangements for keeping written records of all sampling, results of analysis, inspection, cleaning, and maintenance.
- Details of contingency plans to ensure any failure's or reported concerns with the supply are investigated and rectified as soon as possible, including timeframes. This should include notification of the investigation and corrective actions to the local authority

The management and maintenance plan shall be operated in full at all times. No alterations or revisions to the approved management plan shall be implemented without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development is water neutral to avoid an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SACSPA and Ramsar sites in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), and to enable the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

5 **Pre-Occupation Condition**: A Biodiversity Enhancement Layout, providing the finalised details and locations of the enhancement measures contained within the Ecological Constraints & Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNG) (Deepdene Ecology Ltd., October 2024)), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The enhancement measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation and all features shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To enhance protected and Priority species and allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and Policy 31 of the Horsham Development Framework.

6 **Pre-Occupation Condition**: No buildings shall be used until and unless a compensatory Woodland Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The Woodland Management Plan shall include details as to the following: retained tree lines and woodland suitable for foraging and commuting bats, in particular Barbastelle bats; any woodland routes to be used by pedestrians/cyclists to avoid trees which could be used by bats, and inspections ahead of all tree safety works to be undertaken by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist.

The woodland/s and tree lines shall thereafter be managed in accordance with the approved Woodland Management Plan to compensate for loss of Priority habitat unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and Policy 31 of the Horsham Development Framework.

7 **Pre-Occupation Condition**: No part of the development hereby permitted shall be first bought into use until evidence has been submitted to and has been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority that the approved water neutrality strategy (prepared by Motion, received 13.11.2024) for the use has been implemented in full. The rainwater harvesting system shall include suitable storage tanks to provide a minimum 35-days storage capacity (at least 7,700l), and confirm that their initial fill will be supplied with water from outside of the Water Supply Zone or from harvested rainwater prior to the use commencing.

Reason: To ensure the development is water neutral to avoid an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SACSPA and Ramsar sites in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), Paragraphs 193 and 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), and to allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

8 **Regulatory Condition**: The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall strictly accord with those indicated on the application form and approved plans.

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

9 **Regulatory Condition**: All mitigation and enhancement measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Ecological Constraints & Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNG) (Deepdene Ecology Ltd., October 2024), as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination. This includes the Precautionary Method Statement for mobile species in Table 3 of the Ecological Constraints & Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNG) (Deepdene Ecology Ltd., October 2024), which avoids impacts on protected species.

This will include the appointment of an appropriately competent person e.g. an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) to provide on-site ecological expertise during construction. The appointed person shall undertake all activities, and works shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To conserve and enhance protected and Priority species and allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and Policy 31 of the Horsham Development Framework.

10 **Regulatory Condition**: The outbuilding containing 4 stables, and tack/feed room hereby permitted shall be used solely for purposes incidental to the occupation and enjoyment of the land at Gravatts Farm, Guildford Road, Rudgwick, West Sussex (as identified on the approved plans). It shall not be used as a separate unit of accommodation, as habitable living accommodation, for any commercial purposes, or for any other purpose(s)/use(s).

Reason: The establishment of an additional independent unit of accommodation, additional living accommodation, commercial use or any other use(s) would give rise to an over-intensive use of the site and lead to an unsatisfactory relationship between independent units of living accommodation contrary to Policies 26 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

11 **Regulatory Condition**: The development hereby permitted shall not be used for commercial purposes or in connection with any form of riding or livery establishment.

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).

12 **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: To conserve and enhance protected and Priority species and allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and Policy 31 of the Horsham Development Framework

13 **Regulatory Condition**: The use hereby permitted shall not be connected to or draw supply from the mains water supply except for emergency purposes in the event of a temporary failure of the rainwater harvesting system. Where a temporary failure has occurred, the occupiers shall immediately undertake the contingency measures set out in the management and maintenance plan agreed under condition 4 until such time as the system is fully operational. The occupiers of each unit shall keep an ongoing record of all water taken from the mains supply and hold written evidence to explain why it was necessary as an exceptional measure to take water from the mains supply.

Reason: To ensure the development is water neutral to avoid an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SACSPA and Ramsar sites in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), and to enable the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

NOTE TO APPLICANT

Great Crested Newts
The applicant is reminded that, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to (amongst other things): deliberately capture, disturb, injure, or kill great crested newts; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place. Planning permission for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. Should great crested newts be found at any stage of the development works, then all works should cease, and a professional and/or suitably qualified and experienced ecologist (or Natural England) should be contacted for advice on any special precautions before continuing, including the need for a licence.

Biodiversity Net Gain

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: **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**.

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.

Irreplaceable habitat
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.

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/24/1793
Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Supporting Docs	Ecological Constraints & Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment	NONE	27.01.2025
Supporting Docs	Water Neutrality Statement	NONE	13.11.2024
Location plan		3946-PL-01A	27.01.2025
Tree plan	Constraints A	3946-PL-05	13.11.2024
Tree plan	Constraints B	3946-PL-06	13.11.2024
Site plan		3946-PL-02A	27.01.2025
Elevation & Floor plan	Stable	3946-PL-03	13.11.2024
Elevation & Floor plan	Barn	3946-PL-04	13.11.2024
Supporting Docs	Planning Statement	NONE	13.11.2024
Supporting Docs	BNG Metric	NONE	28.01.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial	Shazia Penne	Date:	04.03.2025
Authorising Officer sign/initial	RHERMITAGE	Date:	05.03.2025