From: [redacted]
Sent: 26 October 2026 12:32
To: Planning
Subject: Application DC/26/1531 – Highlands House, Dorking Road, Warnham, West Sussex
Attachments: Video.mov; Video_1.mov

Categories: Comments Received

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For the attention of Daniel Holmes, Case Officer

Horsham District Council

Re: Application DC/26/1531 – Highlands House, Dorking Road, Warnham, West Sussex

Application for a Lawful Development Certificate (Existing): Continuous use of an outbuilding as a store/workshop

26 October 2026

Dear Mr Holmes,

Thank you for your letter dated 13 October 2026 inviting representations from local residents regarding this application. I welcome the opportunity to provide my observations and supporting evidence, and ask the Council to investigate the site's history, the extent of recent construction and the planning status of the works.

1. History of the site and claimed existing building

I have lived at my property since 2009 and have direct knowledge of the application site, having also assisted the previous owner with garden maintenance.

Throughout my 17 years of observation, the area where foundations have recently been laid was used for composting. To the best of my knowledge and recollection, no building stood in that exact location. My understanding is that the previous owner owned the land for more than 50 years.

The previous owner had small wooden sheds elsewhere on the property for storing garden tools and logs. These should not be confused with the building covered by this application or with a separate structure further down the garden, which appears to have been progressively constructed over approximately the last two years. Its external appearance resembles a dwelling, although I cannot confirm its use.

I am concerned that the application may rely on an assumption that a building previously existed on the newly developed area. I ask the Council to establish precisely which building, footprint and use the application covers, and to verify the claimed history against dated photographs, historic aerial imagery, construction records and other available evidence.

In particular, please establish:

- Whether a building previously stood on the former composting area and, if so, its location, dimensions and form.

- When the building now on the site was constructed and when the claimed store/workshop use began.

- Whether that use continued throughout the relevant period and is supported by adequate evidence.

- Whether the structure described in the application is the same building that existed during the period claimed.

I have included a photograph taken on 26 October 2026 showing the foundations as they appeared on that date. To the best of my recollection, these foundations were laid during summer 2026, when several cement trucks delivered substantial quantities of cement to the site. I recognise that the photograph records the condition of the site on 26 October and does not, by itself, establish when the foundations were laid.

My principal objection is that the claimed historic building and continuous use must be established by evidence, rather than inferred from the presence of other sheds elsewhere on the property or from recent foundations. If the evidence does not substantiate the claim, I ask that the certificate be refused. Any certificate granted should accurately identify the building and the precise use demonstrated to be lawful.

2. Construction activity, noise and disturbance

Over approximately the last 24 months, I have experienced recurring construction activity and machinery noise at various locations across the property, including areas several hundred feet down the garden and screened from view. The noise is clearly audible inside our home and interferes with our enjoyment of the house and garden. It also causes our dogs to bark when outside.

I am providing two recordings:

April 2024: Video showing a large digger and other construction machinery creating a vehicular access road alongside our hedge, across an area previously consisting of sloping, weed-covered ground. The route is now regularly used by machinery. Since its construction, the adjoining hedge has shown signs of deterioration, although I cannot establish the cause.

Sunday 25 October 2026: Recording documenting machinery operating into the evening.

I also report recurring wood burning and associated smoke, which I have observed most weeks. These activities, together with the ongoing construction, raise concerns about cumulative disturbance to neighbouring properties.

I contacted the Council in 2024 and was advised that no action could be taken regarding the increased noise and apparent change of use of the garage. Given that the activities have continued, I ask that these concerns be reconsidered and referred to the appropriate planning enforcement or Environmental Health officer, as applicable.

3. Other building works, lighting and wildlife

I am also concerned about the apparent alteration and enlargement of the original garage, including an increase in roof height, a side extension and its apparent use as a dwelling. These changes are visible from our drive and raise concerns about overlooking and loss of privacy. Please establish the building's current use and the planning status of these alterations.

In addition, I am concerned about artificial lighting associated with the building and its potential effects on neighbouring land and wildlife. My garden and the surrounding land support deer, rabbits, squirrels, foxes, hedgehogs, owls and buzzards. In my experience, this has been a relatively undisturbed area, and I am concerned that increased lighting could affect wildlife and alter the area's natural character.

I ask the Council to consider whether the lighting's brightness, direction, duration and operating hours warrant further investigation, including whether a specialist lighting or ecological assessment is necessary.

I have included an earlier satellite image showing the area before the present owners moved in around January/February 2024, and a Google Maps satellite image accessed in 2026 that appears to show woodland clearance and substantial changes towards the rear of the property. Please verify the actual capture dates of these images, as these may differ from the dates on which they were accessed.

The rear of the property is largely screened from view. I am not alleging deliberate concealment, but I am concerned that the full extent and chronology of the works may not be apparent from public viewpoints. I therefore request a site inspection to establish what has been built or altered, when the work took place and whether the relevant planning requirements have been met.

4. Action requested

I recognise that this application concerns a Lawful Development Certificate rather than a full planning application. I therefore ask the Council to distinguish between the evidence required to determine the certificate and the wider concerns that may require separate investigation.

Before determining application DC/26/1531, I respectfully request that the Council:

1. **Verify the building's history:** Establish whether a building previously existed on the exact footprint shown in the application and whether the claimed continuous store/workshop use is adequately evidenced.

2. **Examine the supporting evidence:** Compare the applicant's statements and plans with dated photographs, historic aerial imagery, construction records and my observations of the site since 2009.

3. **Inspect the site:** Establish the extent and chronology of the recent foundations, construction and other apparent alterations, and clarify which structures are covered by the application.

4. **Assess the wider planning concerns:** Refer the apparent garage alterations, possible change of use, access road, woodland clearance and other relevant works to the appropriate officer to establish their planning status.

5. **Refer the ongoing disturbance:** Ask Environmental Health or the relevant enforcement team to consider the recurring machinery noise, evening activity, wood burning, smoke and artificial lighting, including any potential effects on neighbouring residents and wildlife.

6. **Explain the outcome:** Confirm how these representations and the accompanying evidence have been considered, and whether any further information is required from me.

Please also advise how I can formally pursue the ongoing noise, smoke, lighting and other concerns separately if they fall outside the scope of this certificate application.

I raise these matters in good faith, based on my direct observations and the evidence available to me. I am not alleging dishonesty or asserting that a planning breach has been established. My concern is that the facts should be properly investigated and that any decision should be based on accurate, verifiable evidence.

Thank you for considering my representations. Please confirm receipt of this letter and its attachments, and advise me of any further information that would assist your investigation.

Satellite view before the present owners moved in around January/February 2024 showing the woodlands at the end of the property.



Google Maps satellite image obtained in 2026, appearing to show woodland clearance and changes towards the rear of the property; the image capture date requires verification. Separately, my observations over the last two years include weekly construction noise and persistent wood burning with associated smoke, with burning occurring most weeks. These observations are provided as my account of the activities and are not matters established by the satellite image alone.



I raise these concerns based on my knowledge of the site, including the history and construction of the building, the claimed continuous use as a store/workshop, and the potential effects of artificial lighting on wildlife in my garden and the surrounding area. The owner has not contacted us about the construction works and, to the best of my knowledge, has not provided information about them to other neighbouring residents. [redacted].

The lack of contact has left me feeling that engagement is being avoided, but I do not know the owner's reasons. [redacted] the lack of information and the fact that construction is screened from view leave me

concerned that the works and their full extent are not clear to neighbours. I have no proof of deliberate concealment and cannot confirm whether any required planning permission has been obtained. I therefore ask the Council to establish what work has taken place and how extensive it is, check its planning status and investigate whether any planning rules have been breached.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]
Canbury
Dorking Road
Warnham
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 3RZ