



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/0514

Oakridge House, The Street, Thakeham, West Sussex, RH20 3EP

DESCRIPTION:

Conversion of existing barn to form 1no. detached self-build dwelling and associated works.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/19/1928	Erection of an agricultural building for the storage of hay and machinery.	Application PERMITTED on 12.12.2019
DC/24/1711	Prior Notification for Change of Use and extension of an Agricultural Building to 1no dwellinghouse (C3 Use Class).	Prior Approval Required and REFUSED on 30.12.2024

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The subject building of this application sits on land associated with Oakridge House, some 300m northwest of the existing dwelling on land that has been used for grazing horses. Although Oakridge House sits within the built-up area boundary of Thakeham, the application site sits outside of this and is thereby considered a countryside location for planning purposes. The site can be accessed via an existing access point from Duke's Hill (B2139).

The surrounding area is characterised by large detached residential dwellings and agricultural holdings, though residential density does increase towards Abingworth. Thakeham Conservation Area is located to the south of the site and encompasses Oakridge House, which also adjoins a Grade II listed building.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

This application seeks to convert the existing agricultural building permitted under reference DC/19/1928 to a 2-storey detached dwelling, with associated parking facilities and landscaping.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):

Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development

Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development

Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy

Policy 4 - Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion

Policy 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision

Policy 20 - Rural Workers Accommodation

Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection

Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character

Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection

Policy 27 - Settlement Coalescence
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking

Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan (2017):

Thakeham1 - A Spatial Plan for the Parish
Thakeham6 - Design
Thakeham7 - Heritage Assets
Thakeham9 - Development in the Countryside

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

Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Strategic Policy 2: Development Hierarchy
Strategic Policy 3: Settlement Expansion
Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change
Strategic Policy 7: Appropriate Energy Use
Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction
Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality
Strategic Policy 10: Flooding
Strategic Policy 11: Environmental Protection
Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection
Strategic Policy 15: Settlement Coalescence
Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality
Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles
Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment
Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
Policy 25: Parking
Policy 32: Conversion of Agricultural and Rural Buildings to Commercial, Community and Residential Uses
Strategic Policy 37: Housing Provision
Policy 40: Improving Housing Standards in the District
Policy 44: Rural Workers Accommodation

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

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

Parish Design Statement: Thakeham Parish Design Statement (2002)

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

HDC Conservation: No Objection

I am satisfied that the building is at a sufficient distance that the proposed change of use and alterations will not affect the setting of the listed building or conservation area.

HDC Environmental Health: Comment

A preliminary risk assessment including a site walkover should be provided to ensure that the site can be made safe and suitable for development.

HDC Drainage: More information

HDC Drainage note that no drainage information has been provided as part of this application. HDC Drainage therefore request **more information**, needed to determine that the site drainage meets the requirements of the NPPF and PPG, National standards for sustainable drainage systems (June 2025), and the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) – Policy 35 and Policy 38.

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

Ecology Consultant: No objection (subject to conditions)

Impacts will be minimised such that the proposal is acceptable, subject to the conditions outlined.

Southern Water: Insufficient Information Provided

Construction of the development shall not commence until details of the proposed means of foul and surface water drainage disposal have been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with Southern Water.

WSCC Highways: No Objection

The LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 116), and there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Representations:

1 letter of Objection was received, objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- Dwelling would be out of character for the location.
- Urbanisation.
- Utilitarian appearance is inappropriate for a residential dwelling.
- Proposed dwelling is adjacent to an area under Article 4 direction.
- There is sufficient residential development in Thakeham Parish.
- Highways safety.

1 letter of Support was received, supporting the application on the following grounds:

- Good addition to local area.
- Sympathetic design.
- Tucked away location which is only partly visible from the public domain.

Parish Comments:

Thakeham Parish Council: Objection

The applicant previously applied for permission in 2024 and permission was not granted due to Class Q conditions and TPC contend there has been no change of circumstances that would overturn this.

The dwelling would be outside of the built-up area and therefore not in line with the HDPF 2015 or TPC Neighbourhood Plan. The location is in a prominent setting which would cause detriment to the surrounding area, which has been acknowledged by HDC on many a time – particularly in light of enforcement issues with other illegal dwellings in the vicinity.

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**Background:**

The existing agricultural building was granted planning permission in 2019 under application DC/19/1928 for the storage of hay and machinery, deemed necessary at the time to serve the wider land holding.

In 2024, application DC/24/1711 for prior approval for the change of use from agricultural building to 1no. dwellinghouse was refused on the basis that the development did not constitute permitted development under Article 3(4) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended, as the barn is subject to a restrictive use planning condition limiting use to agricultural only.

Principle of Development:

Policy 2 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF, 2015) sets out the overarching growth strategy, specifying that development should be focused in and around the key settlement of Horsham and in line with the identified settlement hierarchy. The adopted settlement hierarchy (Policy 3) represents the most sustainable approach to accommodating growth and directs development to settlements with a good range of employment, services and facilities. The nearest defined built-up area to the proposal is Thakeham, which is classed as a smaller village and located some 350m south.

Policy 4 of the HDPF supports limited settlement expansion outside built-up area boundaries where:

1. The site is allocated in the Local or Neighbourhood Plan and adjoins an existing settlement edge;
2. The scale of growth is appropriate to the settlement;
3. The proposal meets identified local needs;
4. The development does not prejudice long term development; and
5. The development is contained within defensible boundaries that respect landscape character.

While it is acknowledged that there is a district wide need for housing, owing to a lack of 5-year housing land supply, the proposal is not allocated in a Local or Neighbourhood Plan and does not adjoin an existing settlement edge. In addition, it is questioned whether the scale of growth is appropriate given that the nearby settlement of Thakeham is defined as a smaller village with limited services, facilities and social networks. The proposal is therefore not considered to meet the requirements of Policy 4.

As the proposal is in a countryside location, Policy 26 of the HDPF is engaged. This policy seeks to protect rural areas against inappropriate development unless it is essential to its location and meets one of the following:

- Supports the needs of agriculture or forestry;
- Enables mineral extraction or waste disposal;
- Provides for quiet informal recreation;
- Enables the sustainable development of rural areas.

The proposal would provide for one market dwelling with no connection to rural enterprise and is therefore not considered to meet the requirements of Policy 26.

Policy Thakeham9 of the Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan refers to the conversion of agricultural barns to dwellings, stating that:

'Proposals for the conversion of existing agricultural buildings in the countryside to small-scale business or residential use will be supported, provided they:

- i. are confined to the existing area of farm buildings;*
- ii. are constructed from vernacular materials such as brick;*
- iii. do not include inappropriate or insensitive conversion works such as window openings and the creation of new doorways; and*
- iv. do not result in a significant increase in the existing building footprint or height.'*

The supporting text clarifies that *'The desire outcome will be the retention of agricultural buildings of merit within farm settings and the avoidance of sporadic development by preventing conversion of isolated buildings or farm buildings of no merit.'*

In this instance, the existing barn sits alone in a corner of a field with no surrounding farm buildings, is of modern metal construction and, as set out below, is not considered to be proposed for sensitive conversion. Consequently the proposal does not meet the requirements of Policy Thakeham9 with regard to agricultural to residential conversions.

It is acknowledged that the applicant has referred to paragraph 84 of the NPPF in the submitted Planning Statement, which outlines when the development of isolated homes in the countryside would be acceptable. However, when considering the interpretation of 'isolated homes in the countryside' in *Braintree District Council v SSCLG* [2017] as a home "far away from other places, buildings, or people; remote" Officers do not consider the proposal to meet this definition as there are existing dwellings in reasonable proximity as well as the existing settlement of Thakeham. Even if the definition were to apply and the barn considered to be isolated, it is not considered that any of the circumstances listed (a-e) have been demonstrated. It is therefore considered that paragraph 84 of the NPPF does not offer support for the proposal in this instance.

On the basis of the above, it is concluded that the proposal directly conflicts with the overarching hierarchy and locational strategy of the development plan and therefore fails to establish a principle for development. Whether this conflict with Policies 2, 4 and 26 of the HDPF as well as Policy Thakeham9 is outweighed by other material considerations is discussed in the Planning Balance at the end of this report.

Design and Appearance:

Policy 32 and 33 of the HDPF (2015) require that all development in the district be of high quality and complimentary to locally distinctive character. The policies also seek to ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of new development is appropriate as well as that a high standard of building

materials, finishes and landscaping are used. In addition, Policy Thakeham6 of the Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan (TNP) encourages the use of local natural materials (bricks, clay tiles) externally, as well as open fencing or native hedgerows at the front of properties to demark boundaries.

The subject building is typical of modern agricultural construction, built using a steel-frame and clad in dark green metal sheeting. It is located on existing gravel hardstanding and surrounded by fields which are clearly demarked with stock wire fencing. The applicant seeks to retain the original scale and form of the building, adding windows and doors to the existing structure both at ground and first floor level to enable access and natural light. Natural stone paving is proposed to the front and rear of the proposal, as well as along the existing access track and on an area reserved for car parking. A new boundary will be created using post and rail fencing to create a generous garden curtilage and provide separation from the agricultural fields. The existing tree line along the western and northern boundary will be retained.

Having regard to the above policies, the conversion works are considered unacceptable. The proposals would retain the utilitarian form of the existing building with its very shallow pitched roof and green metal cladding, thereby not reflecting local policies on the use of materials as referred to above. Further, the insertion of windows at first floor level would appear incongruous set below such a shallow pitched roof creating a poorly scaled and proportioned dwelling visibly at odds with its rural surrounds. Even if these windows were removed, the building would remain top heavy and poorly proportioned as a dwelling. This impact would be exacerbated by the large residential curtilage being proposed, with associated lawns, formal planting and large parking areas, creating an outcome entirely at odds with its rural setting in the corner of the open field.

While it is acknowledged that the building will retain its original scale and form, for the reasons set out above it is considered that the addition of windows, doors and landscaping will result in an overly domesticated appearance particularly when viewed from PRoW 2476 and the existing dwellings on The Street. This would detract from the rural character of the surrounding area and result in a harmful degree of urbanisation on a site where there is currently no residential development. It is therefore concluded that the proposal would not align with Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF and policies Thakeham6 and Thakeham9 with regard to design.

Heritage:

Policy 34 of the HDPF (2015) states that the Council will sustain and enhance its historic environment through positive management of development affecting heritage assets, stating that development will only be permitted if the proposal would preserve or enhance those heritage assets.

The site is located in close proximity to Thakeham Conservation Area and a Grade II listed building (Martins- originally Thakeham Rectory) and therefore the Council's Heritage Officer has been consulted. They have advised that the proposal is unlikely to lead to an impact upon the setting of either heritage asset, as the subject building is of a sufficient distance from both the Conservation Area and listed building.

Concerns around the presence of an Article 4 Direction within representations are acknowledged however upon further investigation this does not extend to the development site and also relates only to the erection of agricultural enclosure and the use of land for development in Class B of Part 4 of Schedule 2 of the GDPO (i.e. is not relevant to this proposal).

Residential Amenity:

Policy 33(2) of the HDPF (2015) requires development to ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land through loss of privacy, outlook, light, noise, or general disturbance. Similarly, Paragraph 198 of the NPPF requires development to be appropriate for its location and avoid impacts upon living conditions.

The nearest residential properties to the subject building are located approximately 300m south and it is therefore considered unlikely that the proposal would lead to an unacceptable impact on neighbouring properties as a result of loss of privacy, outlook or light. Given the change of use to residential there is unlikely to be a significant impact with regard to noise or general disturbance when compared to the existing agricultural use.

During the site visit it was noted that much of the surrounding land was being used to keep horses, with a wooden stable building located in close proximity to the barn. This raised some concern around amenity impacts to future occupiers of the proposed dwelling however, it has since been confirmed that the stable is not a permanent structure (mobile field shelter) and the horses are there for grazing. In any case, the close stationing of dwellings near to agricultural practices is not uncommon in the countryside and the applicant has included landscaping to ensure clear separation and screening.

It is therefore considered that the proposal aligns with the requirement of Policy 33(2) of the HDPF.

Highways Impacts:

Policies 39 and 41 of the HDPF seek to ensure that both sufficient capacity in the existing infrastructure exists prior to the release of land for development and that adequate parking facilities are provided to meet the needs of anticipated users.

The submitted Location and Block plans show that vehicular access will be gained via an existing access point on Dukes Hill (B2139), a single carriageway road with a speed limit of 40mph. Access to the property would then be facilitated by the existing access track on site. Though there are various PRow routes (ref. 2479, 2474, 2476) in the vicinity of the development, these start c.200m from the proposed access point on Duke's Hill which has no suitable pedestrian infrastructure. In addition, whilst there is a bus stop on Duke's Hill, services are infrequent and residents would need to walk in the road to access. It is therefore likely that the development will be inherently very car dependant.

Concerns have been raised with regard to the proposed access from Dukes Lane within representations due to the road's winding nature and difficult visibility, however the Local Highways Authority has been consulted on the plans and advised that there is no evidence to suggest that the existing access is operating unsafely or that an existing safety concern would be exacerbated. They have concluded their comments by advising that there are no transport grounds on which to refuse the proposal.

It is therefore concluded that the proposal is in line with the requirements of Policies 39 and 41 of the HDPF. This does not though mean that the site should be considered sustainably located. Given the lack of opportunities to access services and facilities by non-car modes, the proposal would not accord with local and national policy.

Ecology:

Policy 25 of the HDPF (2015) seeks to protect existing biodiversity and green infrastructure in the District by ensuring no net loss, while Policy 31 looks to encourage the provision and enhancement of new habitats as well as outlining requirements for areas of particular importance (SPAs, SACs, SSSIs etc.). This is in line with paragraphs 187-188 of the NPPF (2024).

Upon initial review of the site, it is clear that there are no statutory designated sites in close proximity, the nearest being Hurston Warren SSSI some 2.5km to the west. However, the site is located within the 12km zone for The Mens SAC, a site designated for its species of barbastelle and Bechstein's bat and will therefore require a Habitats Regulations Assessment to be undertaken. There are small areas of ancient woodland located approximately 200m (Dukes Rough) to the north however these are unlikely to be impacted by the proposal. The area where the agricultural barn is located is listed as unsuitable for great crested newts (GCN) and therefore no further consideration of impacts to GCN has been made.

The application was originally accompanied by limited ecological information, aside from an email from Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology dated 11 July 2024 advising that the building has no bat roost potential due to its age/building fabric and that no further information is required. This email was reviewed by the Council's Ecological Consultant, who advised that there was insufficient ecological information to support determination.

An updated Letter Report (Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology, June 2026) was submitted by the applicant confirming the building has negligible bat roost potential and that no vegetation is to be removed as part of the works. This enabled the Council's Ecology Consultant to undertake the required HRA for Sussex Bat sites and conclude no likely significant effect. Subject to the recommended conditions being applied, the proposal has been deemed acceptable. It is therefore considered that the proposal is in line with Policies 25 and 31 of the HDPF as well as the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the NERC Act 2006.

Water Neutrality:

A 2021 Position Statement from Natural England identified that it could not be concluded with the required degree of certainty that new development in the Sussex North Water Supply Zone would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites. As a consequence, and to comply with the legal duties set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (known as the Habitat Regulations), all new development since has been required to demonstrate water neutrality.

On 31st October 2025 Natural England formally withdrew the 2021 Position Statement, citing a package of measures that they were satisfied would safeguard the Arun Valley sites. Principal amongst these measures is a reduction in the Southern Water abstraction licence 'by March 2026'. However, given the licence change has not yet taken place Horsham District Council, as competent authority under the Habitats Regulations, cannot yet be certain that new development will not result in adverse impacts on the Arun Valley sites.

To ensure development can come forward as water neutral in the meantime, the Council has agreed with Natural England to use the significant water savings made by Southern Water in 2024/25 through their programme of leakage reduction (amongst other measures). This has generated some 3,240,000 litres per day of water savings that can now be attributed to new development without increasing water abstraction in the Arun Valley beyond baseline. These savings were previously to be used to launch the Sussex North Water Certification Scheme (SNWCS), however following the withdrawal statement SNWCS will no longer be launching. Natural England standing advice dated 10 November 2025 raises no objection to using these savings to enable development to come forward. The standing advice clarifies that it functions as Natural England's formal response pursuant to Regulation 63(3) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 to all relevant planning applications which seek to achieve water neutrality using the above Southern Water savings.

Officers have undertaken an Appropriate Assessment which demonstrates that the anticipated increase in mains water consumption from this development, alongside all other development granted since the 31st October 2025, will not exceed 3,240,000 litres per day.

Accordingly, Officers consider that the proposed development will not have an Adverse Effect on the Integrity of the Arun Valley Site, either alone or in combination with other plan and projects, thereby complying with Regulations 63 and 70 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, HDPF Policy 31, and paragraph 193 of the NPPF.

Drainage and Flood Risk:

Policy 38 of the HDPF states that development should follow a sequential approach to flood risk management, giving priority to development with the lowest risk of flooding and making required development safe without increasing flooding elsewhere. Development proposed will: take a sequential approach to ensure most vulnerable uses are placed in the lowest risk areas; avoid the functional floodplain except for water-compatible uses and essential infrastructure; only be acceptable in Flood

Zone 2 and 3 following completion of a sequential test and exceptions test if necessary; and require a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment for all development over 1 hectare in Flood Zone 1 and all proposals in Flood Zone 2 and 3.

Paragraph 170 of the NPPF discourages inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding by directing development away from the areas at highest risk, while Paragraph 173 states that a sequential risk-based approach should be taken to individual applications in areas known to be at risk now or in future from any form of flooding.

The application site lies within Flood Zone 1, which is land defined by the Planning Practice Guidance for the NPPF for Flood Risk and Coastal Change as having a low probability of flooding. The site is also not at risk from surface water flooding nor is it located within a groundwater vulnerability area.

The Council's Drainage Officer has been consulted on the proposal and has noted that no drainage information has been provided as part of the application. They have therefore requested that a Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy be provided and given a list of aspects to consider. Given the scale of the proposal it is considered appropriate to require these details via condition, should the application be permitted.

Other Matters:

Contaminated Land:

Agricultural buildings and land can be subject to significant contamination risks arising from their use, previous land uses, construction and storage of machinery, equipment, fuels, or other chemicals. Potentially hazardous materials may also be incorporated in made grounds, yards, and hardstanding. Risks arising from the use therefore require evaluation by the applicant.

The Council's Environmental Health Officer has been consulted on the application and recommended that a Preliminary Risk Assessment be provided to ensure that the site can be made safe and suitable for a residential development. Given the scale of the proposal, it is considered appropriate to require these details via condition should the application be permitted.

Climate Change:

Policies 35, 36 and 37 require that development mitigates to the impacts of climate change through measures including improved energy efficiency, reducing flood risk, reducing water consumption, improving biodiversity and promoting sustainable transport modes. These policies reflect the requirements of Chapter 14 of the NPPF that local plans and decisions seek to reduce the impact of development on climate change. The proposed development does not propose the inclusion of any measures to reduce the development's climate change impact; however, conditions are attached to secure the following:

- o Water consumption limited to 110litres per person per day
- o Requirement to provide full fibre broadband site connectivity
- o Refuse and recycling storage
- o Cycle parking facilities

Subject to these conditions the application will suitably reduce the impact of the development on climate change in accordance with local and 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 demonstrated that the development is exempt from the requirement to achieve a minimum 10% BNG by reason of:

- The development qualifies as 'self-build or custom housing' under Regulation 8 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024

Conclusions & Planning Balance:

As the site is not allocated for development within the HDPF (2015) or a made neighbourhood plan, the principle of development is contrary to Policies 1, 2, 4 and 26 of the HDPF, and paragraphs 2, 11, 12 and 47 of the NPPF owing to the site's location outside of the built-up area boundary.

However, it is recognised in Chapter 3 of the Council's most recent Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) that the Council currently benefits from a deliverable supply of housing sites of 1.7 years. Therefore, the presumption in favour of development as dictated by paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged in this instance.

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

It should be noted that neither Footnote 7 nor paragraph 14 of the NPPF applies and therefore the tilted planning balance is not nullified.

Planning Balance

The proposal would provide one additional dwelling. Whilst the Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year housing supply, the provision of an additional dwelling would be of very limited benefit in addressing this supply shortfall.

The proposed dwelling would be located outside of a defined settlement boundary and though it is acknowledged that Thakeham village is located in some proximity, Thakeham is defined as a smaller village with limited services thus occupants would be reliant on larger settlements for the majority of their needs. Though it is acknowledged that there are opportunities for alternative modes of transport (i.e. bus, PRoW routes) these are not accessible from the proposal due to the lack of pedestrian infrastructure and therefore occupants are likely to be heavily reliant on the use of a private motor vehicle. Ultimately this results in the proposal being incompatible with paragraphs 110 and 115 of the NPPF, which focuses development in locations which limit the need to travel, offer a choice of transport modes, and prioritise sustainable transport modes with suitable access for all users.

In addition, the use of windows, doors, detailing (inc materials), and landscaping is considered to lead to an incongruous and poorly scaled and proportioned dwelling which, alongside the curtilage proposed, would represent an overly domesticated appearance which would not conform with the rural character of the site as existing nor the surrounding area. Though it is acknowledged that there are

dwelling within view of the proposal, these are part of the built-up area of Thakeham and align with the existing pattern of development.

It is therefore concluded that, even when applying the tilted balance under paragraph 11(d), the proposal does not constitute sustainable development. For this reason, the application is recommended for refusal.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

Horsham District Council has adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule which took effect on 1st October 2017.

It is considered that this development constitutes CIL liable development.

Use Description	Proposed	Existing	Net Gain
	158	86	72
		Total Gain	158
		Total Demolition	86

Please note that the above figures will be reviewed by the CIL Team prior to issuing a CIL Liability Notice and may therefore change.

Exemptions and/or reliefs may be applied for up until the commencement of a chargeable development.

In the event that planning permission is granted, a CIL Liability Notice will be issued thereafter. CIL payments are payable on commencement of development.

Recommendation: Application Refused

Reason(s) for Refusal:

1. The proposed development would be located within an unsustainable location in the countryside, beyond a defined built-up area on a site not allocated within the Development Plan and would not be essential to this countryside location. Further, the proposed dwelling is not sustainably located in relation to accessing local services and facilities, meaning occupiers would be highly reliant on the use of the private car for all journeys. The proposal does not therefore represent a sustainable form of development, contrary to policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and paragraphs 110 and 115 of the NPPF. Notwithstanding the absence of a five-year housing land supply, and provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) at paragraph 11(d), it is not considered that there are any material considerations which would outweigh harm arising from conflict with the above policies.
2. The proposed works to facilitate the change of use from agricultural to residential would result in a poorly scaled, detailed and proportioned dwelling set in a large domesticated plot, the totality of which would be incongruous in its rural setting. The proposal would therefore detract from the rural landscape character of the site and would not be in conformity with the requirements of Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policies Thakeham6 and Thakeham9 of the Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan (2017).

NOTE TO APPLICANT

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/26/0514

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

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

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Plans	EXISTING FLOOR, ROOF AND ELEVATIONS	2025.498.01	25.03.2026
Plans	PROPOSED FLOOR, ROOF AND ELEVATIONS	2025.498.02	25.03.2026
Location plan	EXISTING	2025.498.03	25.03.2026
Block plan	PROPOSED	2025.498.04	25.03.2026
Plans	PROPOSED LANDSCAPE PLAN	2025.498.05	25.03.2026
Supporting Docs	APPENDIX A - APPEAL DECISION	NONE	25.03.2026
Supporting Docs	ECOLOGY EMAIL FROM LIZARD CONSULTING	NONE	25.03.2026
Supporting Statement	PLANNING STATEMENT	NONE	25.03.2026
Supporting Statement		LLD3892/ECO/SH	04.06.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Sophie Moore Date: 26/06/2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial Adrian Smith Date: 26/06/2026