



**TO:** Planning Committee

**BY:** Head of Development and Building Control

**DATE:** 15 February 2022

**DEVELOPMENT:** Erection of a rural workers dwelling and attached agricultural building.

**SITE:** Moralee Farm Haglands Lane West Chiltington Pulborough West Sussex RH20 2QS

**WARD:** West Chiltington, Thakeham and Ashington

**APPLICATION:** DC/21/1375

**APPLICANT:** **Name:** Ms Claire Holloway **Address:** Moralee Farm Haglands Lane West Chiltington West Sussex RH20 2QS

**REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA:** More than eight persons in different households have made written representations within the consultation period raising material planning considerations that are inconsistent with the recommendation of the Head of Development and Building Control.

**RECOMMENDATION:** To refuse planning permission

## 1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the planning application.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

- 1.2 The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a building comprising a 3-bed residential dwelling and a commercial store/sales room.
- 1.3 The building would be located to the west of the site, in close proximity to the shared boundary, and immediately to the north of the existing access. The proposal would comprise an 'H' shaped building including a number of pitched roof features adjoined by a flat green roof. The proposal would be finished in brick and off-white render, with grey plain tiles to the roof.
- 1.4 The building would provide a 3-bed dwelling within living room, kitchen/dining room, pantry, w.c. and integral garage to the east, with the a wine store, yarn store, utility room, w.c. and sales room to the west.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

- 1.5 The application site and wider land is utilised as an alpaca farm and small vineyard, with the Applicant currently benefitting from a temporary planning permission for a residential cabin (sought to be removed as part of the current proposal).
- 1.6 An agricultural building serving the established agricultural enterprise is located to the east of the cabin (outside of the defined development site subject of the current application). Land to the north has been planted as a vineyard, and it is understood that the Applicant has a relationship with a neighbouring wine producer who processes the grapes under an informal agreement.
- 1.7 The wider area is characterised by sporadic residential and agricultural development, with woodland and enclosed fields. The site is located immediately adjacent to the built-up area of West Chiltington Common, with a Grade II Listed Building, known as Old Haglands, located directly to the west.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### STATUTORY BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

### RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

- 2.2 The following Policies are considered to be relevant to the assessment of this application:

#### 2.3 **National Planning Policy Framework**

#### 2.4 **Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF 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 7 - Strategic Policy: Economic Growth
- Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development
- Policy 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
- Policy 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs
- 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 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

### RELEVANT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- 2.5 **West Chiltington Parish Neighbourhood Plan**  
 Policy H2 – Quality of Design  
 Policy H4 – Housing Density  
 Policy H8 – Attention to Detail  
 Policy EH1 – Built-Up Area Boundary  
 Policy EH3 – Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services  
 Policy GA3 – Parking and New Development  
 Policy EE2 – Employment Land

**PLANNING HISTORY AND RELEVANT APPLICATIONS**

DC/17/1452	Proposed siting of temporary rural workers dwelling and erection of 270sqm agricultural building (Revised scheme to previously approved application DC/16/1866)	Application Permitted on 04.01.2018
DC/16/1866	Siting of temporary rural workers dwelling; erection of agricultural building; alterations to access.	Application Permitted on 26.04.2017
DISC/17/0321	Approval of details reserved by conditions 5, 6, 7 and 8 on DC/16/1866	Split Decision on 10.10.2017

**3. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS**

- 3.1 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](http://www.horsham.gov.uk)

**INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS**

- 3.2 **HDC Conservation:** Haglands Lane is named after Old Haglands, named Hagland Farm on the 1870s 1<sup>st</sup> ed. O.S. Country series map. At this time Hagland Farm and Little Hagland Farm were two of a number of dispersed farmsteads on West Chiltington Common. The proposal site lies on what had been an open field and presumably one worked as part of Hagland Farm. The setting of Old Haglands is currently little affected by the small dwelling associated with the agricultural holding. However, there are concerns that the substantial increase in size of the dwelling and its closer proximity to Old Haglands will be detrimental to its setting and an opportunity to experience it in a rural setting. Currently, it is on the edge of this developed area and retains some visual connection to a rural setting and the land that was historically worked by the farm. The proposed dwelling will result in Old Haglands being enclosed on both sides by suburban dwellings and it will be drawn into the suburban expansion of West Chiltington.
- 3.3 The design of the proposed dwelling is incoherent and has an uncomfortable roof line. While acknowledged that attempts have been made to present it as a collection of buildings rather than a single form, it is considered that this is unsuccessful. It is reminiscent of suburban chalet bungalows and will not preserve the setting of the adjacent listed building. The harm will be less than substantial and between the moderate to lower end of that scale of harm.
- 3.4 **HDC Environmental Health:** No response received

## OUTSIDE AGENCIES

- 3.5 **WSCC Highways:** This application is for the erection of rural workers dwelling and attached agricultural building. The site is located on Haglands Lane, an un-classified road subject to a speed limit of 30mph.
- 3.6 From an inspection of the planning history at this site, it appears that a temporary dwelling was granted permission under ref: DC/17/1452. This application seeks permission for a permanent dwelling. The LHA would not raise any highway safety concerns to a proposed permanent dwelling in this location.
- 3.7 The existing access approved under DC/17/1452 will be retained and no alterations to the access are proposed. Visibility was assessed previously and considered sufficient.
- 3.8 The dwelling will be provided with a garage and private driveway, with turning space to enable vehicles to turn on site. Cycle storage and Electric Vehicle charging as proposed within the garage.
- 3.9 The proposed agricultural building will provide a sales office and store area for the existing vineyard and alpaca yarn business. No details of expected trip rate have been provided, however, given the proposed two visitor parking spaces, it is not anticipated that the proposed agricultural building would generate a significant number of trips to or from the site. As such, no highways safety or capacity concerns would be raised to the proposal.
- 3.10 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 111), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.
- 3.11 **Ecology Consultant:** Have reviewed the Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Plan (Anon, undated) supplied by the Applicant, relating to the likely impacts of development on Dormice and the identification of proportionate mitigation. We have also reviewed the Design and Access Statement (Eco Design Consultants, May 2021).
- 3.12 This provides certainty for the LPA of the likely impacts on Protected and Priority species and, with appropriate mitigation measures secured, the development can be made acceptable. This will enable the LPA to demonstrate its compliance with its statutory duties including its biodiversity duty under s40 NERC Act 2006. Satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available for determination.
- 3.13 **Southern Water:** No response received
- 3.14 **Natural England:** Objection
- 3.15 It cannot be concluded that existing abstraction within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone is not having an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC/SPA/Ramsar sites. Developments within Sussex North must therefore must not add to this impact and one way of achieving this is to demonstrate water neutrality. The definition of water neutrality is the use of water in the supply area before the development is the same or lower after the development is in place.
- 3.16 To achieve this Natural England is working in partnership with all the relevant authorities to secure water neutrality collectively through a water neutrality strategy. Whilst the strategy is evolving, Natural England advises that decisions on planning applications should await its completion. However, if there are applications which a planning authority deems critical to proceed in the absence of the strategy, then Natural England advises that any application needs to demonstrate water neutrality.

## PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

3.17 **West Chiltington Parish Council:** Objection.

3.18 No objection to the principle of an agricultural dwelling. However, the size and siting of the accommodation would be incongruous with the size of the enterprise and is not supported. The size of the residential dwelling and shop needs to be significantly reduced, and re-sited within the plot. The proposed shop is in a particularly inappropriate position, right on the boundary with Old Haglands, a Grade II Listed Building. The size of the proposed shop should also raise some concerns about the level of customer traffic that could be expected to use the very narrow Haglands Lane. Business accounts unavailable and not therefore able to analyse the enterprise.

3.19 35 letters of support were received from 33 separate households. 12 of these letters were from households within Horsham District, with 21 of these letters from households outside of the District. These raised the following comments:

- Beneficial countryside enterprise
- High standard and quality
- Benefits to wildlife
- Employment benefits
- No visual impact due to enclosed nature of site
- Benefits to local community
- Supports welfare needs of livestock

3.20 16 letters of objection were received from 13 separate households, all of which were located within Horsham District. These raised the following concerns:

- Impact on the Grade II Listed Building
- Overbearing impact
- Impact on ecology
- Increased traffic
- Unacceptable retail element
- Out of keeping with locality
- Impact on skyline
- Light pollution
- Poor design

3.21 6 letters of representation neither supporting or objecting to the proposal were received, and these were from 5 separate households within Horsham District. These made the following comments:

- Potential light intrusion
- Should be restricted with an agricultural tie
- Removal of temporary dwelling
- Impact of fences
- Potential traffic impacts

## 4. HOW THE PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION WILL PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS

4.1 Article 8 (Right to respect of a Private and Family Life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (Protection of Property) of the Human Rights Act 1998 are relevant to this application, Consideration of Human rights forms part of the planning assessment below.

## **5. HOW THE PROPOSAL WILL HELP TO REDUCE CRIME AND DISORDER**

- 5.1 It is not considered that the development would be likely to have any significant impact on crime and disorder.

## **6. PLANNING ASSESSMENTS**

- 6.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a building comprising a 3-bed residential dwelling and a commercial store/sales room.

### **Principle of Development:**

- 6.2 Policy 20 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) states that outside the defined built-up area, new housing for rural workers will be supported provided that there is a functional need for the dwelling and the occupation of the dwelling is to support the established business use; and evidence is submitted to demonstrate the viability of the rural business for which the housing is required.
- 6.3 Policy 26 of the HDPF states that outside built-up area boundaries, the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside will be protected against inappropriate development. Any proposal must be essential to its countryside location, and in addition meet one of the following criteria: support the needs of agriculture or forestry; enable the extraction of minerals or the disposal of waste; provide for quiet informal recreational use; or enable the sustainable development of rural areas. In addition, proposals must be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location. Development will be considered acceptable where it does not lead, either individually or cumulatively, to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside, and protects, and/or conserves, and/or enhances, the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area.
- 6.4 Planning Practice Guidance entitled "Housing Needs of Different Groups" outlines how the need for isolated homes in the countryside for essential rural workers can be assessed. Considerations that may be relevant include: evidence of the necessity for a rural worker to live at, or in close proximity to, their place of work to ensure the effective operation of an agricultural, forestry, or similar land-based rural enterprise; the degree to which there is confidence that the enterprise will remain viable for the foreseeable future; whether the provision of an additional dwelling on site is essential for the continued viability of a farming business through the farm succession process; whether the need can be met through improvements to existing accommodation on the site, providing such improvements are appropriate taking into account their scale, appearance, and local context; and in the case of new enterprises, whether it is appropriate to consider granting permission for a temporary dwelling for a trial period.
- 6.5 The primary test set out in the NPPF and Policy 20 of the HDPF is an assessment as to whether it is essential for a rural worker to live at, or near, their place of work. The application site benefits from a temporary planning permission for the residential cabin located on the site under planning reference DC/17/1452.
- 6.6 Moralee Farm extends to a total of 9.6 hectares (23.75 acres) which includes improved grassland and an established vineyard covering 1.6 hectares (4 acres). The land holding is owned by the Applicant. The Applicant has established an alpaca breeding enterprise on site known as Moralee Alpacas. Currently the alpaca enterprise comprises a total herd size of 43 alpacas including 26 breeding females, youngstock and breeding males. The Applicant provides the full-time labour input with part-time input from her son plus other casual labour at peak-times.

- 6.7 The supporting documents note that 17 cria are expected to be born this year and notes that the main source of income from the alpaca business is from selling breeding stock, selling halter trained stock, providing livery and stud services. In addition, the first harvest of grapes took place in 2019 with produce sold under a 'swap' contract to a winery, where an agreed proportion of grapes are retained by the winery as payment for the production of wine and an agreed proportion of bottled wine returned to Moralee Farm for retail sale.
- 6.8 As part of the approved application for the temporary dwelling at Moralee Farm, the Applicant produced a comprehensive seven year business plan which on analysis of the supporting documentation and financial evidence provided confirms that the alpaca enterprise and vineyard are well-established and the number of breeding females is in line with the business plan. To date the Applicant has input a significant level of investment in the business.
- 6.9 The current application seeks to provide a permanent residential dwelling for a rural worker following the establishment of the business. An assessment of the essential need for a rural worker to live at or near their place of work requires: an evaluation of the risks involved; the frequency and type of out-of-hours emergency that might arise; the scale and loss that could be incurred should that emergency situation occur; the potential for an on-site worker to identify any problem; and the ability of that resident worker to rectify the problem effectively and expeditiously. Legislation requires that all animals are managed in a manner that accords them freedom from thirst, hunger and malnutrition; appropriate comfort and shelter; freedom from fear; freedom to display the most normal patterns of behaviour, and it is accepted that without good stockmanship, animal welfare can never be adequately protected.
- 6.10 The accepted and confirmed essential needs for the Applicant's alpaca enterprise are detailed in the supporting documents. In summary these are: care, close supervision and welfare of all livestock on site; care and welfare and close supervision of female alpacas at birthing, assistance may be required; care and welfare and close supervision of new born cria and ensuring they suckle properly and receive adequate colostrum, assistance may be required or supplementation may be required through individual bottle feeding; management and close supervision of breeding females and males at mating; and provision of security. Unforeseen incidents can occur on livestock farms at any time, such as livestock straying, thefts (rustling) or unauthorised access by intruders which can compromise biosecurity and the health status of livestock which can lead to serious economic loss. In addition, adverse weather conditions (thunder and lightning) can cause grazing livestock to stampede which could result in injury. Fire within a livestock building would necessitate immediate action. The permitted temporary rural workers dwelling, occupied by the applicant, has minimised those risks and has ensured that the management and welfare of the alpaca enterprise at Moralee Farm is not compromised. The supporting documents also note that there will be some essential need associated with the vineyard.
- 6.11 The Council's Agricultural Consultant has reviewed the documentation submitted and considers that there is a sufficient essential and functional need for a rural worker to live on-site. The essential need is currently being met by the temporary dwelling and would continue to be met by the proposed permanent dwelling. The principle of a permanent residential dwelling on the site is therefore considered acceptable.
- 6.12 It is however also noted that the proposed development is designed to provide additional space for wine storage, yarn storage, and as a sales room. Limited information and justification has been provided in respect of this proposed operation, albeit that the Planning Statement outlines that this will not act as a Farm Shop, but rather would be undertaken by appointment only. No information has been provided regarding current sales, with the limited information presented in respect of wine sales seemingly indicating that the Applicant contracts this work out. Further clarification on these matters was requested, however no additional information was received.

- 6.13 While there is support for farm diversification within Policy 10 of the HDPF, given the limited information and evidence provided, particularly regarding the processing and sales of products derived from the site, it is not considered that the scale of the proposed development is reflective of the needs of the business. Furthermore, limited information has been provided in respect of the likely number of trips and vehicle movements, albeit that it is stated that this would be by appointment only, with the proposed development likely to result in an increased level of activity within the countryside.
- 6.14 Given the likely informal nature of the sales, particularly as this would be a new branch of the established enterprise, it is not considered that such activity would require the level of accommodation as proposed. In particular, given the suggested appointment based visits to the site, it is not considered that a sales room would be necessary. Furthermore, it has not been demonstrated that additional and wholly separate accommodation would be required for this, and it is queried why such sales could not be undertaken from the dwelling and/or from part of the existing agricultural barn. As such, while some form of additional storage accommodation may be considered appropriate, the amount of accommodation proposed, particularly given the limited evidence/information of the processing of product from the enterprise, is not considered to be reflective of the needs of the established business.
- 6.15 While there is policy support for farm diversification, with the intended activities likely to result in some economic benefits, there is considered to be limited justification for the scale of the commercial development as proposed. The proposed development due to its scale and nature has the potential to result in an intensification of activity within the countryside, with the proposal representing new-build development where it has not been demonstrated that existing buildings are not suitable for conversion. It has not been demonstrated that the development would result in substantial environmental improvement, nor that the development would reduce the impact on the countryside. The proposed development is therefore considered to be in conflict with Policies 10 and 26 of the HDPF in this regard.

#### **Design and Appearance:**

- 6.16 Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the HDPF promote development that protects, conserves and enhances the landscape character from inappropriate development. Proposals should take into account townscape characteristics, with development seeking to provide an attractive, functional and accessible environment that complements the locally distinctive character of the district. Buildings should contribute to a sense of place, and should be of a scale, massing, and appearance that is of a high standard or design and layout which relates sympathetically to the landscape and built surroundings.
- 6.17 Policy 34 of the HDPF states that development should reinforce the special character of the District's historic environment through appropriate siting, scale, form and design, and should make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the area; ensuring that development in Conservation Areas is consistent with the special character of those areas.
- 6.18 Paragraph 130 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting; establish a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit; optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development; and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible.
- 6.19 The proposed development would be set away from the existing built form, in an undeveloped area immediately adjacent to the site entrance. The proposed development would extend across the breadth of the site and would result in a large expanse of development that would enclose the spacious and informal character of the countryside



location. The development would be unrelated to the existing built form on the wider site and would sit as a prominent addition within the immediate context. As such, the scale and extent of the proposed building, which would spread across the breadth of the site, is considered to result in a prominent and dominant built form that would detract from the informal landscape character and would result in adverse harm to the landscape character and visual amenity of the rural setting.

- 6.20 Furthermore, the proposed design would result in a number of juxtaposing elements, which given the pitch of the roof and eaves height, would result in a dominant building that would be unrelated to the locally distinctive vernacular. The design rationale seems unclear, with a number of competing styles that create an awkward juxtaposition between traditional and contemporary. There are also concerns regarding the quality of the build, with the awkward roof junctions likely to be difficult to build and finish to a high standard.
- 6.21 The proposed development would be of a scale, extent and siting that would appear as a dominant and prominent feature within the immediate context, and would be of a design and form that would appear as an awkward and intrusive addition that would fail to reflect the locally distinctive character of the wider area, which includes the setting of a Grade II Listed Building. As such, the proposal would fail to protect, conserve, and enhance the key features and characteristics of the landscape character and countryside setting, contrary to Policies 25, 26, 32, 33, and 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

#### **Heritage Impacts:**

- 6.22 Paragraph 199 of the NPPF sets out that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.'
- 6.23 This follows the requirements of s.66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which sets out that 'In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'. In applying s.66, the identification of harm to a listed building or its setting carries significant importance and weight in the planning balance.
- 6.24 Policy 34 of the HDPF states that development should be reinforce the special character of the historic environment through appropriate siting, scale, form and design; and should make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the area. Proposals should preserve and ensure clear legibility of locally distinctive vernacular building forms and their settings, features, fabric and materials.
- 6.25 Haglands Lane is named after Old Haglands, which is named Hagland Farm on the 1870s 1<sup>st</sup> ed. O.S. Country series map. At this time Hagland Farm and Little Hagland Farm were two of a number of dispersed farmsteads on West Chiltington Common. The proposal site lies on what had been an open field and presumably one worked as part of Hagland Farm.
- 6.26 Following consultation with the Design and Conservation Officer, there are concerns regarding the proximity of the development to the nearby Listed Building, and the potential impact this would have on the setting of the designated heritage asset. Specifically, the proposed development would result in Old Haglands being enclosed on both sides by suburban dwellings, which will draw the designated heritage asset into the suburban expansion of West Chiltington. This would alter the perception, understanding and

appreciation of the Grade II Listed Building, and would result in harm to the setting of this designated heritage asset. The proposed development would not preserve the setting of the Grade II Listed Building, and would result in harm in this regard. This harm would be less than substantial, between the moderate to lower end of the scale.

- 6.27 The proposed development would fail to reinforce the special character and setting of the nearby Grade II Listed Building, and would fail to make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the area. As such, the proposed development is considered to detract from and dilute the special character and distinctiveness of the designated heritage asset, contrary to Policy 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

#### **Amenity Impacts:**

- 6.28 Policy 32 of the HDPF states that development will be expected to provide an attractive, functional, accessible, safe, and adaptable environment that contribute a sense of place both in the buildings and spaces themselves. Policy 33 continues that development shall be required to ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land.
- 6.29 Paragraph 185 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions, and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. Paragraph 187 continues that planning decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities. Existing businesses should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established.
- 6.30 It is recognised that a number of objections have raised concerns with regard to the impact of the proposed development with regard to noise pollution, light pollution, and activity/disturbance.
- 6.31 The application site is currently utilised for agricultural activities in connection with an alpaca farm. This is considered to be reflective of the rural countryside location. The site is separated from the nearby residential properties by a mature tree line, with limited visibility between the site and the adjacent residential dwellings. As such, it is not considered that the proposed development would result in harm to the amenities and sensitivities of neighbouring properties through overlooking, loss of light, and loss of privacy.
- 6.32 It is however recognised that the proposal has the potential to result in an intensification of vehicle movements and activity at this site, particularly given the commercial sales proposed. While this would be the case, it is not considered that the proposal would result in such a significant increase in activity to significantly impact the adjacent residential properties, particularly given the separation distance between the site and the nearby residential properties.
- 6.33 On the balance of these considerations, it is not considered that the proposed development would result in significant adverse harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties to justify a reason for refusal.

#### **Highways Impacts:**

- 6.34 Policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF promote development that provides safe and adequate access, suitable for all users.
- 6.35 The site is located on Haglands Lane, an un-classified road subject to a speed limit of 30mph. Following consultation with WSCC Highways, it is noted that no alterations are proposed to

the access arrangement, with the suitability of this access considered under planning reference DC/17/1452 where it was considered acceptable. The proposal would provide a garage and private driveway, with turning space to enable vehicles to turn on site. Cycle storage and Electric Vehicle charging as proposed within the garage. The Local Highways Authority raise no highway safety concerns to a proposed permanent dwelling in this location.

- 6.36 It is noted that the proposal would also provide a sales office and store area for the existing vineyard and alpaca yarn business. No details of expected trip rate have been provided, however, given the proposed two visitor parking spaces, it is not anticipated that the proposed agricultural building would generate a significant number of trips to or from the site. As such, the Local Highways Authority has raised no highways safety or capacity concerns in this regard.
- 6.37 The Local Highways Authority does not therefore consider that the proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, in accordance with Policies 40 and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

#### **Water Neutrality:**

- 6.38 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.
- 6.39 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.
- 6.40 The proposal falls within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone and would result in a greater level of water abstraction than the site presently generates. Natural England therefore require that the proposal demonstrates water neutrality or that it should be delayed awaiting an area-wide water neutrality strategy.
- 6.41 While recognised that the application site benefits from planning permission for the temporary siting of a dwelling, the proposed development would result in a substantial increase in the level of accommodation provided. In the absence of a strategy to demonstrate water neutrality through the incorporation of on-site measures and/or appropriate offsetting actions capable of achieving water neutrality, there is no certainty that the proposal will not contribute further to the existing adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites. In such circumstances the grant of permission would be contrary to policy 31 of the HDPF, NPPF paragraph 180 and the Council's obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

#### **Climate change:**

- 6.42 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. Should the proposed development be approved, the following measures to build resilience to climate change and reduce carbon emissions would be secured by condition:

- Requirement to provide full fibre broadband site connectivity
- Dedicated refuse and recycling storage capacity
- Cycle parking facilities
- Electric vehicle charging points

6.43 Subject to these conditions, the application will suitably reduce the impact of the development on climate change in accordance with local and national policy.

**Conclusions:**

6.44 While recognised that the proposed development would support the essential needs of the established farming enterprise and would contribute to the sustained and diverse rural economy in this regard, the proposal would be of a scale, extent and siting that would appear as a dominant and prominent feature within the immediate context, and would be of a design and form that would appear as an awkward and intrusive addition. The development would thereby fail to reflect the locally distinctive character of the wider area, which includes the setting of a Grade II Listed Building, and would result in harm in this regard. Furthermore, insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate with certainty that the proposed development would not contribute to an existing adverse effect upon the integrity of the internationally designated Arun Valley Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area and Ramsar sites by way of increased water abstraction. The harm as identified is considered to outweigh the benefits arising from the proposed development, and the proposal is therefore recommended for refusal for the reasons outlined below.

**7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 To refuse planning permission for the following reasons:

- 1 The proposed development due to its scale and nature has the potential to result in an intensification of activity within the countryside, with the proposal representing new-build development where it has not been demonstrated that existing buildings are not suitable for conversion. Furthermore, it has not been demonstrated that the development would result in substantial environmental improvement, nor that the development would reduce the impact on the countryside. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to Policies 10 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).
- 2 The proposed development would be of a scale, extent and siting that would result in a dominant and prominent feature within the immediate context, and would be of a design and form that would appear as an awkward and intrusive addition. The proposal would fail to reflect the locally distinctive character of the wider area, and would dilute the understanding and appreciation of the setting of the nearby Grade II Listed Building. As such, the proposal would fail to protect, conserve, and enhance the key features and characteristics of the landscape character and countryside setting, contrary to Policies 25, 26, 32, 33, and 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).
- 3 Insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate with a sufficient degree of certainty that the proposed development would not contribute to an existing adverse effect upon the integrity of the internationally designated Arun Valley Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area and Ramsar sites by way of increased water abstraction, contrary to Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), Paragraphs 179 and 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

Background Papers: DC/21/1375