



PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

TO: Planning Committee South

BY: Head of Development and Building Control

DATE: 24th May 2022

DEVELOPMENT: Erection of extension to existing indoor riding arena to provide viewing area and pole barn for hay and storage purposes. Provision of tannoy system, circular horse walker, 2x all weather paddocks, additional parking area and associated works.

SITE: Hascombe Farm Horn Lane Henfield West Sussex BN5 9SA

WARD: Bramber, Upper Beeding and Woodmancote

APPLICATION: DC/21/0938

APPLICANT: **Name:** Mr Ralph Gilbert **Address:** Hascombe Farm Horn Lane Henfield West Sussex BN5 9SA

REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA: At the request of Henfield Parish Council.

Planning Committee South resolved to defer decision at the meeting of 15th March 2022 to allow for additional consideration of noise impacts.

RECOMMENDATION: To approve planning permission subject to appropriate conditions

1. INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 This application was considered at Planning Committee South on 15th March 2022 where members resolved to defer decision such as to enable further consideration of the noise impacts of the proposed development.
- 1.2 Subsequent to this resolution a meeting has taken place between officers, the applicant, local members and Henfield and Woodmancote Parish Councils to allow for a further understanding of the proposals, the applicants intentions, and the context of the application site.
- 1.3 The applicant, further, has confirmed willingness to accept certain conditions being attached to a prospective grant of planning permission such as to ameliorate the concerns previously raised.
- 1.4 This report will be confined to a consideration of acoustic impact specifically and advises of any further changes in circumstance subsequent to the resolution to defer at the committee meeting of 15th March. An updated list of recommended conditions, further to the original Committee Report, is also included within this report. The updated conditions list includes a revised condition limiting use of the proposed PA equipment to a maximum of 20-days per

calendar year and requiring full-details of the proposed sound-system, including the findings of a sound-test to be conducted on-site, such as to provide confidence that the proposed system would perform as modelled within the submitted Noise Impact Assessment.

- 1.5 The original Committee Report is included as an addendum to this report (addendum 1), which remains relevant, and considers a full range of material considerations relevant to the Officer recommendation.

2. FURTHER REPRESENTATION AND CONSULTATION RESPONSES:-

- 2.1 Subsequent to the resolution of Planning Committee South on 15th March 2022 the following further consultation responses have been received:-

2.2 Henfield Parish Council: No objection:-

Subsequent to a site visit and meeting with the applicant and the Case Officer, Henfield Parish Council responded to raise no objection to the proposed development. Henfield Parish Council noted the intention to operate up to 40 equestrian shows per-year, divided between indoor and outdoor arenas respectively with up to 40 shows per-year already approved.

The location of the arena where the new tannoy is proposed to be installed is considered far preferable to a neighbouring arena where tannoys are currently installed, being sited in a dip and surrounded by hedge which should act as a partial sound barrier. The existing arena was noted to be sited at the edge of the site and exposed to neighbouring fields and public footpaths.

The Parish Council, further, noted the limited nature of proposed announcements to support equestrian events, comprising of a 'bong' to announce the start of a round, and/or faults and announcements of the riders name and score at the close of a round. The Parish Council acknowledged that an event had been operated recently utilising tannoy equipment projecting from a neighbouring arena, and that no complaints were received from local people.

With this additional information available, Henfield Parish Council resolved to support the proposal, with any future noise problems capable of being addressed through Environmental Health activity.

Henfield Parish Council, further, noted that a number of planning applications have been made consecutively on the site, that in many cases these involve changing the location of components previously granted planning permission. It was considered that the various proposals would allow for a substantial uplift in car-parking within the site, reducing the risk of displaced parking demand elsewhere, and that an agreement pursuant to S.106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 could provide sufficient protection to avoid the implementation of previously approved applications such as to avoid overdevelopment.

Henfield Parish Council, in addition, noted that a historic muck heap has been disposed of, that solar-panels and rainwater-collection systems have been installed and that the route of a public footpath within the site remains, though, a suitable alternative route has been provided avoiding equestrian paddocks.

Subject to the restrained use of tannoy systems and the use of a S.106 agreement to protect against overdevelopment Henfield Parish Council resolved to support the proposal.

- 2.3 An additional letter of representation in support of the proposed development has been received. The main material grounds for support can be summarised as:-

- Hascombe Equestrians inclusion to the showjumping calendar is integral to development the sport within the Region, with competitors ranging from junior to Olympic level;
- The site is currently a very popular training venue;
- It is a condition that all British Showjumping affiliated competitions have a PA system that is clear to hear in all arenas used for competition and warm-up;
- The ability for showjumping officials on the day to communicate to competitors in all areas for is paramount, including for the welfare of the horse and rider. The announcement of competitors to enter the arena and the results of those who have completed a round is a mandatory requirement and which contributes to fairness in competition.

2.4 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

3. ASSESSMENT

Acoustic Impact:-

- 3.1 This application was deferred to allow for further consideration of acoustic impacts at the meeting of Planning Committee (South) on 15th March 2022.
- 3.2 Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015), *inter alia*, provides that development should avoid unacceptable harm to the amenities of nearby occupiers/users of land, including in respect of noise impact. Policy 24 of the HDPF, also, provides that developments should minimise exposure to, and the emission of, pollutants including noise and light pollution.
- 3.3 Paragraph 174 of the NPPF, *inter alia*, provides that planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate to its location, taking account of likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health and living conditions. Development should mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impact resulting from noise and avoid development which gives rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life.
- 3.4 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (2019)¹ in respect of noise acknowledges at paragraph 003 the need to consider the acoustic environment within decision-making, including whether or not a good standard of amenity can be achieved and the differing degrees of acoustic impact which may occur in conjunction with development. Consistent with the Noise Policy Statement for England (2010), Paragraph 004 of the PPG categorises the three observed effect levels (as descriptors as overall acoustic impacts upon persons) as:
- “Significant observed adverse effect level: This is the level of noise exposure above which significant adverse effects on health and quality of life occur.
 - Lowest observed adverse effect level: this is the level of noise exposure above which adverse effects on health and quality of life can be detected.
 - No observed effect level: this is the level of noise exposure below which no effect at all on health or quality of life can be detected.”
- 3.5 Paragraph 004 of the PPG acknowledges that the ‘level’ of observed effect is not solely contingent upon the intensity of a source of noise, but should be understood as a combination of multiple factors including noise exposure, the number of occurrences of the noise in a given period, the duration of the noise and the time of day the noise occurs. Paragraph 006

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/noise--2>

of the PPG advises that noise is more likely to result in an adverse effect during night, and that consideration further needs to be given to the number of noise events, the frequency and pattern of occurrence of the noise, together with its spectral content and general character. Paragraph 005 of the PPG, further, recognises that concern to be attributed to noise impact is not determined solely by audibility, but rather by an understanding of adverse behavioural and/or physiological responses to those affected by noise.

- 3.6 Paragraph 005 of the PPG, in respect of the categorisation of noise impact, identifies that noise may slightly affect an acoustic character of the area, but not to the extent that there is a change in quality of life, where 'no observed effect' and relevant mitigation measures should be considered. A 'lowest observed effect' should be considered where exposure causes small changes in behaviour and attitude, where consideration needs to be given to mitigating and minimising those effects. A 'significant observed adverse effect' would occur where noise exposure causes material changes in behaviour, such as keeping windows closed for most of the time or avoiding certain activities during periods when the noise is present. If the exposure is considered to be at, or above, the significant observed adverse effect level, NPPF paragraph 174 provides that that planning decisions should avoid such an effect occurring.
- 3.7 Existing guidance, therefore, is clear that development can effect a change in acoustic character without resulting in a significant level of exposure to individuals which would warrant a refusal of planning permission, with necessary consideration to be given to measures which might minimise or mitigate the adverse effects associated with acoustic impact where a 'low' degree of impact is considered.
- 3.8 The Noise Impact Assessment provided in accompaniment to this application models a low-acoustic impact associated with the introduction of public-address (PA) equipment as proposed. This conclusion is reached on the basis of a standard acoustic calculation undertaken pursuant to 'British Standards' (BS) 4142 and 8233 with regard to expected changes in noise-levels within external and internal amenity spaces relative to measured baseline values at the closest residential receptors. The submitted Noise Impact Assessment identifies that the anticipated change in noise levels would prove minor and within acceptable levels and tolerances for internal and external spaces respectively. An acceptable acoustic impact is considered to be achievable by limiting the output of the sound-system to 90 dB at 1m from each loudspeaker, and through the conduct of a sound-test as part of the commissioning of the sound system to verify the results of the Impact Assessment.
- 3.9 The response of the Council's Environmental Health team in conjunction with this application recognises that the proposed system is not likely to prove intrusive in terms of decibels, though, raises concern that the proposals will result in some disturbance to nearby residents given the atypical nature of noise and prospect of considerable periods of time. The Council's Environmental Health team consider that the proposals would prove acceptable if the PA system were utilised solely for purposes of announcement, limited to 90dB(A) at 1m and with operation limited to once per-month between the hours of 09:00 and 17:00.
- 3.10 Subsequent to the preceding resolution to defer decision at the meeting of Planning Committee (South) on 15th March the applicant has confirmed willingness to agree to a condition restricting the use of proposed PA equipment to a maximum of 20-days per-calendar year, and has sought to highlight that equestrian events would occur solely during day-time hours with the use of PA equipment limited to announcements necessary for equestrian competition. The applicant has explained that further limits on the frequency of proposed operation, below 20-days per-calendar year, would pose unreasonable constraint on the viability of the equestrian enterprise and upon Hascombe Farm as a venue for equestrian competition.
- 3.11 Paragraph 006 of the PPG confirms that, in considering relevant mitigations against acoustic impact, account should be taken of the socio-economic benefits derived from noise-

generating activity. NPPF paragraph 56, further, requires that planning conditions are kept to a minimum and, in addition, imposed only where necessary, relevant, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all respects. In light of these provisions it is necessary that the Authority balances the impacts of any mitigations designed to limit acoustic impact of proposed development against the socio-economic benefits of proposed development, and, further, considers whether specific mitigations to be secured by way of condition are necessary and reasonable.

- 3.12 As reasoned within the original committee report the proposal would provide support to the continued vitality and viability of Hascombe Farm and the social and economic benefits derived to the rural economy by maintaining employment opportunity as supported by the provisions of HDPF policy 10. The proposed provision of PA equipment is understood to be integral to the ability to operate equestrian competitions safely and in-line with the standards set by sporting bodies.
- 3.13 The submitted Noise Impact Assessment models a minor acoustic impact associated with the provision of PA equipment with regard to expected changes in local noise levels at nearby sensitive receptors, which is accepted by the Council's Environmental Health team. While it is acknowledged that concern has been raised in respect of the potential and frequency of PA equipment to be operated, and as an atypical source of noise, it is advanced that the proposed type of PA equipment and intended pattern of operation would not result in significant adverse effects upon quality of life such as to warrant a refusal of planning permission.
- 3.14 Conditions have been therefore recommended to:
- limit the use of PA equipment solely for use in conjunction with equestrian events,
 - limit the use of PA equipment solely for the purposes of announcements,
 - limit the use of PA equipment for up to a maximum of 20-days per-calendar year (as suggested by the applicant) and
 - subject to the submission and approval of a sound test to verify that sound levels remain as modelled within the acoustic assessment once the sound-system is set-up.

Subject to such mitigations it is considered that the operation of PA equipment would not result in unacceptable harm to the amenities of nearby occupiers/users of land in compliance with the requirements of HDPF policies 24 and 33 in addition to NPPF paragraph 174.

- 3.15 It is recognised that the proposed limit on the frequency of operation (20 days) is greater than the limit of 12-days (one day per month) suggested by the Council's Environmental Health team. It is, though, considered that the operation of PA equipment up to a maximum of 20-days per calendar year would still afford significant periods of respite to nearby occupiers. A further constraint on frequency of operation would be considered to adversely influence the viability and realistic operation of Hascombe Farm, together with the consequential scale of socio-economic benefits to be derived such as to call into question the reasonableness of such a condition. It is, further, considered that a limit requiring use on no more than 12-days per year (once per month) as suggested by the Council's Environmental Health team would not prove necessary to render the development acceptable in respect of its acoustic effects, contrary to the test set out within NPPF paragraph 56 in this regard.

Other Matters:

- 3.16 The applicant, during a site-meeting with local members, Henfield and Woodmancote Parish Council's and the Case Officer advanced an intention to operate PA equipment to support equestrian events, were this application to prove unsuccessful, through the assembly and disassembly of a platform to support PA equipment. It is understood that the applicants intention would be for such a platform to be erected beyond the perimeter of the main outdoor

arena, and on the understanding that such a temporary structure would not require planning permission.

- 3.17 Large sections of the application site are subject to planning conditions restricting the installation or operation of PA equipment without the prior consent of the Local Planning Authority. These include the main outdoor arena, judges-box and a lesser outdoor arena to the south-east by reason of condition 4 attached to ref: DC/11/0524 and condition 5 attached to ref: DC/15/0531 respectively. The applicant, further, has not referred to a relevant permitted development right bestowed by a permitted development 'Class' defined under Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), such as to enable the lawful erection of a temporary structure intended to support PA equipment without the need for planning permission. It is not currently considered that the Local Planning Authority could conclude, on a balance of probabilities, that the prospective provision of a temporary structure to support PA equipment would prove a lawful form of development such as to assign weight to the claimed fallback position.
- 3.13 It is acknowledged that the response of Henfield Parish Council, subsequent to the preceding deferral, has highlighted the need to control previously approved development by way of S.106 agreement in order to avoid overdevelopment arising from the implementation of current applications and existing consents.
- 3.14 The Authority is presently considering five concurrent applications at Hascombe Farm. These applications, collectively, would replace stabling, administrative and ancillary facilities approved pursuant to ref: DC/15/0531, which is considered to remain extant.
- 3.15 Of the concurrent applications presently before the Authority, this application is considered to be the least likely to give rise to an increase in the intensity of activity at Hascombe Farm on an individual or cumulative basis, with the proposed facilities deemed to be acceptable in relation to the requirements of HDPF policy 26 in this regard as reasoned within the Committee Report attached at addendum 1.
- 3.16 Furthermore, the proposed facilities would partly occupy the same footprint as stable facilities consented pursuant to ref: DC/15/0531 such as to ensure that this application and the extant consent are not capable of cumulative implementation. While there may be a need to enter into a legal agreement pursuant to S.106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in respect of concurrent applications on the site, this is not considered to be the case for ref: DC/21/0938, where a legal agreement would not prove necessary to restrict cumulative implementation or avoid the adverse effects associated with an overdevelopment of the site.

4. **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

To grant planning permission subject to the following conditions.

Conditions:

1. Plans list
2. **Regulatory (Time) Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall be begun 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 (Slab Level) Condition:** Prior to the commencement of works pertaining to the construction of the approved pole-barn, paddocks, parking area and viewing platform above ground floor slab level a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy shall be

submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Strategy shall address the following:-

- a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;
- b) detailed designs to achieve stated objectives;
- c) locations of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans;
- d) timetable for implementation demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed phasing of development;
- e) persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures;
- f) details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).

The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to first use and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To secure a biodiversity gain and provide benefits to Protected and Priority Species/habitats in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

4. **Regulatory condition:** Prior to the commencement of works pertaining to the construction of the approved pole-barn and hay-store above ground floor slab level, fire-fighting apparatus shall have been installed in agreement with the West Sussex County Council Fire and Rescue Service.

Reason: In the interests of public safety and to prevent harm to future occupiers associated with the risk of fire in accordance with Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

5. **Regulatory Condition:** The materials to be used in the construction of the development hereby permitted shall strictly accord with those prescribed at section 7 to the submitted application form, unless a schedule and details of alternative materials are submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of relevant works above ground-floor slab level.

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).

6. **Regulatory Condition:** The tannoy/public-address equipment hereby approved shall solely be used for public-address purposes in conjunction with the equestrian events approved pursuant to condition 6 of planning permission DC/15/0531, and operated only on event days. The approved public address equipment shall not operated in excess of 20-days per calendar year (inclusive) and shall be utilised solely for purposes of announcements.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to ensure nearby residential occupiers benefit from respite from possible noise disturbance in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

7. **Regulatory Condition:** The tannoy/public-address equipment hereby approved shall be positioned and orientated as denoted on the approved site master-plan (plan ref: 2018-3, rev E). Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), any change to this arrangement will require the express consent of the Local Planning Authority by way of formal application.

Reason: in the interests of amenity, and to ensure control over potential sources of noise, ensuring an acceptable level of noise disturbance to nearby occupiers in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

8. **Pre-Occupation Condition:** Prior to the first use of the public-address equipment hereby approved, full specifications of acoustic equipment to be installed, together with the findings of a sound-test conducted on site shall be made available and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The approved equipment shall not exceed 90 dB(A) at 1m, and shall be subsequently installed as approved. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), any change to the components of the approved public-address system will require the express consent of the Local Planning Authority by way of formal application.

Reason: In order to verify that an acoustic performance of 90 dB(a) at 1m is achievable, in the interests of amenity, and to ensure control over potential sources of noise, ensuring an acceptable level of noise disturbance to nearby occupiers in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

9. **Regulatory Condition:** The hard surface to the parking area hereby approved shall either be constructed making use of porous materials or provision shall be made to direct surface water-run off from the approved parking area to a permeable/porous surface located within the application site.

Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding and pollution and increase the level of sustainability of the development and to comply with Policy 38 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

10. **Regulatory Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall solely be used for equestrian purposes ancillary to the occupation and use of Hascombe Farm, Horn Lane, Henfield, BN5 9SA.

Reason: To ensure a form of development appropriate and essential to this countryside location in accordance with Policy 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

11. **Regulatory Condition:** Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), no external lighting and/or floodlighting shall be installed or stationed within the application site except without the express consent of the Local Planning Authority by way of formal application.

Reason: in the interests of local character and to ensure the intrinsic qualities and integrity of the adjacent International Dark Skies Reserve in accordance with policies 25, 30, 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

12. **Regulatory Condition:** The proposed development shall be undertaken in full accordance with the ecological 'technical note' (Derek Finnie Associates, ref: 213390, September 2021), and the recommended ecological mitigations, methods and precautions.

Reason: To conserve and enhance protected and Priority species and allow the LPA 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 (Priority habitats & species) and Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).



Horsham District Council

ADDENDUM 1 - PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

TO: Planning Committee South

BY: Head of Development and Building Control

DATE: 15th March 2022

DEVELOPMENT: Erection of extension to existing indoor riding arena to provide viewing area and pole barn for hay and storage purposes. Provision of tannoy system, circular horse walker, 2x all weather paddocks, additional parking area and associated works.

SITE: Hascombe Farm Horn Lane Henfield West Sussex BN5 9SA

WARD: Bramber, Upper Beeding and Woodmancote

APPLICATION: DC/21/0938

APPLICANT: **Name:** Mr Ralph Gilbert **Address:** Hascombe Farm Horn Lane Henfield West Sussex BN5 9SA

REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA: At the request of Henfield Parish Council.

RECOMMENDATION: To approve planning permission subject to appropriate conditions

1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

To consider the planning application.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

- 1.6 Planning permission is sought for various equestrian works, including:
- the provision of an enclosed viewing area as an extension to an existing indoor riding arena,
 - the erection of a hay barn for storage purposes,
 - a horse walker,
 - the provision of 2x 'all weather' pens,
 - a tannoy/public-address (PA) system to support equestrian events and
 - the formation of an additional 28x 12m parking area.
- 1.7 Revised plans were received on 16.02.2022, omitting additional stabling and an external viewing platform originally featured within the original submission. These elements of the original proposal, therefore, no longer form part of this submission.
- 1.8 Proposed equestrian facilities are located within the extent of the existing Hascombe Farm. Proposed all-weather paddocks and a circular horse walker would be formed to the south of the main parking area adjacent to six existing all-weather paddocks at a distance approximately 60m set-back from Horn Lane.

- 1.9 The proposed pole-barn would be positioned at the eastern extent of the holding, arranged to occupy a footprint extending to 28m in length along the eastern site boundary. The proposed barn would, further, extend to a maximum height of 5.5m with an eaves height of 4.4m.
- 1.10 The proposed viewing platform would be provided as an extension to the south of the main indoor riding arena, supported above existing water-storage tanks at first floor level by a series of steel columns/supports. The proposed extension would mirror the roof-form of the existing riding arena, projecting ~6.8m to the south. The proposed viewing platform would be accessed by way of external staircase.
- 1.11 Additional parking facilities are to be formed to the south of the indoor riding arena (and proposed extension), to comprise of an area of hardstanding measures 28x12m.
- 1.12 Proposed tannoy systems are to be sited at the perimeter of the external riding arena/ménage approved pursuant to ref: DC/15/0531 at the southern extent of the holding and existing equestrian yard. The proposed tannoy system would consist of 7x speakers set to the western perimeter of the outdoor arena, positioned to the north and south of the judges box and at the north-eastern corner of the outdoor arena
- 1.13 This application is submitted concurrently with application refs: DC/21/1707 and DC/21/1140, seeking consent for the formation of staff/holiday let accommodation and office facilities respectively in addition to the conjoined applications SDNP/21/05852/FUL and DC/21/0917 for the formation of additional stabling within the South Downs National Park. While made concurrently with this application, these applications are not functionally linked with the current proposal, which can be determined on its own merits.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

- 1.14 This application pertains to Hascombe Farm, a commercial equestrian centre located to the south of Horn Lane within a countryside setting ~1.3km east of Small Dole and ~1.8km south-east of Henfield.
- 1.15 The existing centre is well-developed, benefiting from two-main indoor riding arenas/stables, positioned centrally within the holding, and smaller stables/administrative facilities at the north-eastern extent of the holding. The main site-access is located at the north-western extent of the holding, leading to a large parking/turning area where, in addition, two mobile homes are currently stationed as approved pursuant to ref: DC/18/2418.
- 1.16 The southernmost extent of the site is formed of a large ménage (approved pursuant to ref: DC/15/0531) encompassed by slight embankments featuring Leylandii planting. The site, further, benefits from a well-vegetated boundary to its northern extent (separating the site from Horn Lane) and lesser hedgerows to its western and eastern boundaries, within which a number of mature trees are located.
- 1.17 The site is bounded by farmland to the east and west and to the South Downs National Park to the south, within which a number of equestrian paddocks associated with Hascombe Farm are located. Public right of way (PROW) 2739 passes from the north-west to the south of the site at an approximate distance of 150m.
- 1.18 The site benefits from planning permission DC/15/0531 which restricts the number of events at the site to 40 days per calendar year by way of condition 6. Condition 6 defines events as being competitive show jumping, dressage, eventing, carriage driving, and western riding.

2. INTRODUCTION

STATUTORY BACKGROUND

2.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

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

National Planning Policy Framework

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 9 - Employment Development
Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development
Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 29 - Equestrian Development
Policy 30 - Protected Landscapes
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
Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking
Policy 42 - Strategic Policy: Inclusive Communities
Policy 41 - Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation

Henfield Neighbourhood Plan (HNP 2021)

Policy 1 – A Spatial Plan
Policy 4 – Transport, Access and Car Parking
Policy 9 – Community Infrastructure
Policy 10 – Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 12 – Design Standards for New Development

PLANNING HISTORY AND RELEVANT APPLICATIONS

DC/21/1707	Erection of 4no two-storey terraced residential cottages to be used for holiday lets or staff accommodation.	Pending Consideration
DC/21/1140	Erection of a two-storey detached office building (Use Class E).	Pending Consideration
DC/21/0917	Construction of a stable block.	Pending Consideration
SDNP/21/05852/F UL	Construction of a stable block	Pending Consideration
DC/18/2418	Retrospective application for the siting of two permanent mobile homes.	Application Permitted on 26.04.2019

DC/15/0531	Construction of equestrian facilities	Application Permitted on 11.12.2015
DC/14/2324	Construction of stable block of 9 boxes	Application Permitted on 28.01.2015
DC/14/1011	Construction of horse walker/lunge pen	Application Permitted on 22.07.2014
DC/14/0847	Change of grass arena to an all weather outdoor arena	Application Permitted on 17.06.2014
DC/11/0524	Replacement judges box	Application Permitted on 16.08.2011
DC/10/0344	Outdoor jumping arena (Certificate of Lawful Development - Existing)	Application Permitted on 15.06.2010
DC/08/2625	Retention of a show jumping arena	Application Refused on 24.02.2009
DC/07/2347	Retention of a Sandschool	Application Permitted on 08.04.2008
HF/29/99	Realignment of sand school and erection of a cover Site: Royal Leisure Centre Horn Lane Henfield	Application Permitted on 28.06.1999
HF/68/95	Erection of new bungalow & granny annexe, foaling box, observation box & relocation of stables Site: Royal Riding Stables Horn Lane Henfield	Application Permitted on 07.05.1996
HF/78/93	Retention of judge's box for use on show days only Site: Royal Leisure Centre Horn La Henfield	Application Permitted on 21.01.1994
HF/80/90	Removal of two outbuildings and extension to indoor school buildings Site: The Royal Centre Horn La Henfield	Application Permitted on 14.11.1990
HF/49/65	Chalet caravan and riding school. Comment: Appeal against conds 3 & 4 allowed 29/6/66 (From old Planning History)	Application Permitted on 29.06.1966

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

3.2 HDC Environmental Health: No objection, subject to conditions:

The Council's Environmental Health team, subsequent to the receipt of a Noise Impact Assessment, considered that the proposal would not prove significantly intrusive in terms of decibels. Some possibility of harm was considered given the locality and the atypical nature of noise associated with the external speaker system, which would result in some disturbance to nearby occupiers, especially if to be used for considerable periods of time. The Council's Environmental Health Team recommended that proposed equipment not be used in excess of 12 occasions per-year and limited to achieve 90 dB(A) at 1m as assessed within the submitted Noise Impact Assessment.

3.3 WSCC - Highways: No objection

"No objection is raised to the application. The site is anticipated to generate a similar level of trips as those assessed and consented under application ref: 15/0531."

3.4 WSCC – Fire and Rescue: No objection, subject to conditions

The Fire and Rescue Service identified that the closest hydrant was located at a distance of 280m, advising that the supply of water for firefighting purposes, in respect of commercial premises, should be within 90m.

It was recommended that a condition be attached to any grant of consent requiring the submission and approval of details, together with the installation of any necessary fire-fighting apparatus, prior to the first occupation of such development.

3.5 Ecology: No objection, subject to conditions

The Council's consultant ecologists responded to advise that the ecological information submitted in support of this application was sufficient to provide certainty to the Authority in respect of the likely impacts of development upon Protected and Priority species. It was considered, subject to appropriate mitigations and biodiversity enhancement works, to be secured by way of condition, the proposed development can be made acceptable. The Council's consultant ecologists, further, drew attention to the Natural England Position Statement of September 2019, and the need to demonstrate water-neutrality in order to overcome a holding objection.

3.6 South Downs National Park Authority: Comment

The National Park Authority noted that the application site is located to the adjacent north of the National Park Boundary, comprising of an established equestrian yard/riding centre. The National Park Authority considered that, although the amount of built form would be increased by virtue of the proposals, these are unlikely to have any material impact upon the National Park or its setting.

3.7 Henfield Parish Council: Objection

Henfield Parish Council object to the proposal by reason of conflict considered in relation to HDPF policies 6.3, 33.2, 29.2 and 24.1. The Council, further, considered the application should be linked to DC/15/0531 and raised concerns regarding access to and the reinstatement of public footpaths.

3.8 **Woodmancote Parish Council: Objection**

Woodmancote Parish Council object to this application by reason of the overdevelopment of the site, noise pollution associated with the proposed tannoy system, light pollution and increased traffic movements.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

16 letters of representation, from 15 independent addresses, were received in connection with the proposal. 13 letters of objection were received in objection to the proposal with 3 letters received in support.

The main material grounds for objection can be summarised as:-

- Concern with regard to the noise impact of the proposed development and its effects upon the living conditions of nearby occupiers;
- Concern with regard to the noise impact of the proposed development and its impact upon wildlife;
- Concern with regard to the possible impacts of light pollution upon the South Downs National Park;
- Concern with regard to the possible impacts of light pollution upon wildlife;
- Concern with regard to the potential for increased traffic and resultant effects upon highway safety and operation;
- Concern with regards to the potential intensification of use and resultant effects upon local tranquillity;
- Concern with regards to the adequacy of existing fire-fighting infrastructure on site to support the proposed development;
- Concern with regard to the risk of increased surface water flooding resulting from the proposals;
- Concern with regard to the absence of professional acoustic assessment in connection with the proposed tannoy system;
- Concern with regard to the lack of clarity in the proposed number of events and intended number of events to be split between outdoor and indoor arenas;
- Clearance of land to accommodate the proposed development would detrimentally impact upon existing wildlife;
- Concern that the existing access and proposed parking facilities are not adequate to support equestrian events and may risk the safety of highways users;
- The site is visible from public footpaths;

The main material grounds for support can be summarised as:-

- Hascombe Farm has been operated as an equestrian facility for many years now;
- New investment will enhance existing facilities and provide additional benefits to the equestrian community;
- There is a lack of equestrian facilities in the south-east;
- The proposed would provide employment for local people and bring direct and indirect revenue to the local area;

Other material comments received, neither in objection to, or support of, the proposed development were:-

- Consideration should be given to the installation of an electronic display system in the alternative to a tannoy system;
- Access via public footpaths in the vicinity of the site should be maintained;

- Consideration should be given to the use of a 'silent disco' type system in the alternative to a tannoy;
- Clarification as to intended hours and days of operation is needed.

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

Principle of Development:

- 6.1 The application site is located beyond a defined built-up area, therefore constituting a countryside location for the purposes of planning policy in accordance with paragraph 4.7 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015), and where countryside protection policy set-out at HDPF policy 26 applies. In this context, in accordance with HDPF policy 26, it would be expected that development, *inter alia*, be essential to this countryside location and not lead to a significant increase in overall activity on an individual or cumulative basis.
- 6.2 Policy 29 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015) pertains to equestrian development. This policy provides that equestrian development will be supported where existing buildings on site cannot be re-used before new or replacement buildings are considered, where appropriate to the locality and in terms of scale and level of activity, and, where possible, well related to the bridleway network.
- 6.3 Policy 10 of the HDPF provides that sustainable rural economic development will be supported, in order to generate local employment opportunities and socio-economic benefits to local communities. Policy 10 provides that development which maintains the quality and character of the area, whilst sustaining productive socio-economic use, will be supported in principle. Development should be appropriate to its countryside location and must, contribute to sustainable farming enterprise, or in the instance of other countryside-based enterprises, contribute to the wider rural economy and be contained within suitably located buildings, within an established rural industrial estate or result in substantial environmental improvement. Policy 10, further, requires that car-parking requirements should be accommodated satisfactorily within the immediate surrounds of proposed development, unless an alternative logical solution is proposed.
- 6.4 Policy 1 of the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) (2021) operates to support the spatial strategy of the development plan in seeking to support development beyond defined settlement boundaries where appropriate in location to national and local planning policy.
- 6.5 Hascombe Farm is an established equestrian centre which has operated on a commercial basis for a number of decades. On the basis of preceding planning records planning permission was granted pursuant to ref: HF/49/65 for the creation of a riding school, with subsequent eventing, stabling and riding infrastructure provided in the mid/early 1990s. More recently, planning permission has been granted for the retention of staff accommodation (DC/18/2418), the provision of additional stabling, riding arenas and administrative facilities (refs: DC/15/0531, DC/14/2324 and DC/0847) and a judges box (DC/11/0524).

- 6.6 The current condition of the site reflects these incremental changes over time with the current operation considered of a relatively significant scale. Planning permission was previously granted pursuant to ref: DC/15/0531 for the erection of 6x stable blocks, an operations office, a storage barn, all weather paddocks and an outdoor arena. This consent has been partly implemented through the construction of the outdoor arena, and is deemed to remain extant, though, stabling, administrative and storage facilities subject of this preceding consent have not yet been implemented.
- 6.7 The proposals would seek to provide additional infrastructure and facilities designed to support the existing equestrian operation, including additional storage, horse exercise/turn-out facilities, parking and a tannoy system to support equestrian events to be conducted on the ménage at the southern extent of the holding. It should be noted, however, that consent is not sought in respect of the holding of equestrian events as subject of preceding applications. Planning permission granted pursuant to ref: DC/15/0531 authorises up to 40 equestrian events per calendar year, including show-jumping, dressage, eventing, carriage driving and western riding, and this current application does not seek to amend this.
- 6.8 The provision of supporting infrastructure/facilities within the context of an established equestrian use is considered to represent an acceptable form of development, in-principle. Equestrian related development can reasonably be described as essential to a countryside location, while the proposed storage, exercise, parking and PA systems are not considered to give rise to a significant intensification of use in the context of the existing centre and with regard to the scope and scale of works permitted pursuant to ref: DC/15/0531.
- 6.9 The proposed development would support the continued operation of Hascombe Farm, and would be considered to provide social and economic benefits by sustaining employment opportunity and a viable equestrian enterprise.
- 6.10 Subject to consideration in all other material respects it is considered that the proposal would comply with the requirements of HDPF policies 10, 26 and 29 and can be supported in principle.

Character, Design and Appearance:

- 6.11 Policies 25 and 26 of the HDPF seeks to protect the natural environment and landscape character of the District, including the landform, development pattern, together with protected landscapes and habitats. Development will be required to protect, conserve and enhance landscape and townscape character, taking account of areas or features identified as being of landscape importance, individual settlement characteristics and settlement separation.
- 6.12 Policy 30 of the HDPF provides that the natural beauty and public enjoyment of the High Weald AONB and South Downs National Park will be conserved and enhanced, with opportunities to promote an understanding and/or the enjoyment of their special qualities promoted. Development within, or close to, protected landscapes will be supported where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts upon the natural beauty and public enjoyment of these landscapes and any relevant cross-boundary linkages.
- 6.13 Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF require development to be of a high standard of design and layout. Development proposals must be locally distinctive in character and respect the character of their surroundings. Where relevant, the scale, massing and appearance of development will be required to relate sympathetically with its built-surroundings, landscape, open spaces and to consider any impact on the skyline and important views.
- 6.13 The proposed development comprises of multiple elements situated within different parts of the application site. The most significant aspect of the proposal, in visual terms, is considered the provision of a pole-barn for the storage of hay and equipment. This structure would be

positioned along the eastern site boundary to the east of an internal-access road, being provided to a moderate eave/ridge height.

- 6.14 As observed during the officers site visit the proposed pole-barn would be provided to replace an existing silage clamp, blockwork store and open-air hay-store. The building, further, would be positioned on a pre-existing area of hardstand bounded by a retaining wall and Leylandii planting to the rear.
- 6.15 The proposed pole-barn is of a utilitarian design, form and scale, making use of timber-weatherboard clad elevations and fibre-cement roofing. While it is not considered that the proposed pole-barn possesses any particular design merit, the utilitarian character of this structure is largely representative of its intended function and considered typical to equestrian and agricultural development. The proposed pole-barn is situated within the confines of the existing yard located opposite existing facilities which would screen the pole barn within westerly views from PROW 2793.
- 6.16 To the east there are no designated public rights-of-way in the vicinity of the site, with Bramlands Lane found in excess of 530m to the east, separated by a number of intervening fields and hedgerows. While it is considered that the possibility of distant views cannot be fully discounted, these are unlikely to be prominent in this instance, with the proposed pole-barn likely viewed against the backdrop of existing equestrian facilities.
- 6.17 The siting of the proposed pole barn, further, would preserve existing mature trees to the adjacent east with no encroachment beyond the confines of the existing equestrian yard. Overall, it is considered that the proposed pole-barn would not detrimentally influence the character and appearance of its surroundings, or the setting of the South Downs National Park.
- 6.18 The proposed extension to the indoor riding arena, accommodating a viewing platform, would extend to the south to the existing indoor arena. The proposed platform would be visible from PROW 2793 to the south-west, though, is considered of a scale proportionate to the existing arena and which would largely mirror the character of the existing arena, being provided to the same roof-form and making use of matching materials. It is considered, therefore, that the proposed extension would appear appropriate in terms of its scale, character and design.
- 6.19 Proposed parking and all weather-paddock facilities, in addition to the proposed horse-walker, are not considered to represent a significant form of development in the context of the existing yard. The proposed horse walker would not exceed 4m in height, and would not prominently feature above established vegetation to the eastern and northern site boundaries. Proposed all weather paddocks and parking facilities are, substantially, ground level fixtures well contained within the confines of the existing site and equestrian yard.
- 6.20 Overall, it is considered that the visual impacts of proposed development would not negatively impact upon from the quality or character of their surroundings, or detract from the special qualities of the South Downs National Park. The proposals, therefore, are considered compliant with HDPF policies 25, 26, 30, 32 and 33 in these regards.

Tranquillity

- 6.21 It is recognised that a number of representations have sought to raise concern with the effects of proposed development upon local tranquillity, with particular regard to the potential for a change in the acoustic character of the site and its surroundings.
- 6.22 The proposed introduction of a pole barn for storage purposes, all weather paddocks, parking, a viewing platform and horse walker, by reason of their nature, would not be considered to adversely influence local tranquillity and/or acoustic character, with the proposals, overall, not considered to represent a significant intensification in activity.

- 6.23 The proposed introduction of a tannoy/PA system to support equestrian events does represent the main noise-generating component of the proposals and would give rise to a change in acoustic character when equestrian events are in progress. The proposed PA equipment would be provided to the western perimeter of the outdoor arena, positioned to the north and south of the judges box and at the north-eastern corner of the outdoor arena, comprising of 7x speakers as outlined at paragraph 3.2.5 of the submitted Noise Impact Assessment.
- 6.24 Equestrian events, however, could lawfully be held in accordance with preceding consents and are likely to generate some level of noise derived from audiences and vehicle movements. The applicant has confirmed that proposed acoustic equipment will be utilised to announce upcoming horses and riders, not being used for the playing of music. It is not expected, therefore, that proposed acoustic equipment will be in constant use during events, while a maximum of 40 events per calendar year could presently be held in accordance with condition 6 attached to planning permission DC/15/0531. The proposal seeks no change in the number of equestrian events, and therefore, significant periods without any acoustic impact would remain outside of events days. Subject to a condition limiting the use of acoustic equipment for purposes solely associated with equestrian events and preventing the playing of music it is not considered that the effects of proposed development upon local acoustic character and tranquillity would prove significant, or amount to conflict with HDPF policies 25, 26, 30, 32 and 33. The acoustic effects of proposed development upon the living conditions of nearby occupiers will be assessed under a separate section of this report.

Lighting

- 6.25 The application site is located within a rural context and within proximity to the South Downs National Park and corresponding International Dark Skies Reserve. The proposals, however, do not seek to introduce external lighting/floodlighting, while the potential future introduction of lighting can be controlled by way of appropriately worded condition. Subject to such a condition, therefore, the proposals would not be considered to negatively impact upon local character or the intrinsic qualities of the International Dark Skies Reserve with regard to the use of lighting.

Amenity:

- 6.26 Policy 33 of the HDPF, *inter alia*, seeks to ensure that proposed development does not result in unacceptable harm to the amenities of nearby occupiers/users of land, in terms of privacy, the receipt of natural light and/or disturbance.
- 6.27 The application site is found within a highly rural context, which, with the exception of Caffyns Cottage and Nettle Cottage to the adjacent north-east of Hascombe Farm, is in excess of 280m separated from nearby residential properties on Horn Lane, Oreham Common and Bramlands Lane. With regard to the nature of proposed development it is not considered that the proposals would adversely influence the receipt of natural light by nearby residential property, or the level of privacy enjoyed by residential occupiers.

Noise Disturbance

- 6.28 Policy 24 of the HDPF *inter alia*, provides that developments should minimise exposure to, and the emission of, pollutants including noise and light pollution.
- 6.29 Paragraph 174 of the NPPF, *inter alia*, provides that planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate to its location, taking account of likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health and living conditions. Development should mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impact resulting from noise and

avoid development which gives rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life.

- 6.30 The proposed provision of additional parking, paddocks, a pole barn and viewing-platform extension are not considered to be make a material adverse contribution to local noise levels such as to result in unacceptable harm to the living conditions of nearby occupiers/users of land.
- 6.31 The main noise-generating component of the proposal is the introduction of a tannoy/public-address system intended to support equestrian events conducted on the outdoor arena at the southern extent of the holding. The applicant has confirmed that the proposed equipment will be utilised for the purposes of announcements and will not be utilised to play music.
- 6.32 In support of this application a professionally conducted Noise-Impact Assessment (NIA) has been conducted, which models that the proposed equipment would not significantly increase local sound levels above an established baseline or increase sound levels to nearby residential premises above desirable ambient levels within habitable rooms. The submitted NIA models a slight increase within external amenity spaces when the proposed equipment is in operation, though, at a level well within adopted guidelines for outdoor amenity spaces. In light of the submitted NIA it is considered that the proposed acoustic equipment would result in slight adverse effects to the amenities of nearby occupiers when in operation.
- 6.33 The comments of the Council's Environmental Health team are acknowledged, however, it is considered that a condition restricting the use of tannoy/PA equipment to 12 occasions per-year would prove unreasonable in the context of the 40 events which can currently be lawfully conducted at the holding under condition 6 of planning permission DC/15/0531. Even in the instance of 40 events per year, nearby occupiers would continue to benefit from significant periods of respite when proposed equipment is not in operation.
- 6.34 The proposed equipment would not be operated during night-time hours, while conditions are recommended limiting the use of equipment solely for the purposes of announcements and in conjunction with scheduled equestrian events. In combination with a condition requiring the use of equipment assessed within the submitted NIA, it is not considered that the proposal would result in significant harm to the living conditions of nearby occupiers contrary to HDPF policies 24 and 33 in addition to NPPF paragraph 174.

Parking, Highway Safety and Operation:

- 6.35 Policy 40 of the HDPF states that transport access and ease of movement is a key factor in the performance of the local economy. The need for sustainable transport and safe access is vital to improve development across the district.
- 6.36 Policy 41 of the HDPF stipulates that development must provide adequate parking and facilities to meet the needs of anticipated users, with consideration given to the needs of cycle parking, motorcycle parking and electric/low emission vehicles. Development which involves the loss of existing parking spaces will only be allowed if suitable alternative provision has been secured elsewhere or the need for development overrides the loss of parking and where necessary measures are in place to mitigate against the impact.
- 6.37 The proposal does not seek any change to existing access arrangements, with no evidence before the Authority that the point of existing access onto Horn Lane is operating unsafely, or that the proposals would exacerbate a highway safety concern.
- 6.38 Hascombe Farm can lawfully operate equestrian events, notwithstanding the proposal currently before the Authority. The proposed introduction of supporting equestrian infrastructure/facilities is not considered to give rise to a significant intensification in expected vehicle movements, as similarly considered by the Local Highways Authority. No

unacceptable effects upon highway safety are considered in this instance, neither would the proposal result in a 'severe' impact upon the operation of the highway network contrary to the requirements of HDPF policy 40 and NPPF paragraph 111.

- 6.39 Hascombe Farm already benefits from a large parking area at its north-eastern extent, capable of accommodating a large number of horse-boxes and cars. The proposed provision of additional parking capacity to support equestrian events and existing facilities would be deemed to warrant beneficial consideration in relation to the requirements of HDPF policy 41.
- 6.40 The proposals would not materially influence access to the public rights of way network, which are not directly or indirectly impacted by the proposals.

Ecology:

- 6.41 Policies 25 and 31 of the HDPF seek to protect the natural environment and landscape character of the district. Protected habitats and species will be protected against inappropriate development, and opportunities to enhance green infrastructure and biodiversity will be encouraged.

Biodiversity and Protected Species:

- 6.42 In support of the proposed development the applicant has provided a professionally prepared 'technical note' in response to ecological matters, which seeks to appraise the ecological condition of the site and the likely effects of proposed development upon local species and habitats. The submitted report considered that the site held negligible potential for protected species, and corresponding habitats, with no site-specific ecological constraints to proposed development considered. The submitted report has been reviewed by the Council's consultant ecologists, and has been found to provide sufficient confidence to the Authority in respect of effects of development upon protected species and habitats, with the proposals considered acceptable in ecological terms subject to conditions requiring appropriate mitigation and designed to secure biodiversity enhancement. The proposals, therefore, would be considered compliant with the requirements of HDPF policies 25 and 31 in these regards.

Habitat Sites – Water Neutrality

- 6.43 The application site falls within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone (the Supply Zone) where mains-water is supplied by way of groundwater abstraction within the Arun Valley. The Local Planning Authority received a 'Position Statement' from Natural England in September 2021, advising that the effects of existing groundwater abstraction cannot be objectively demonstrated to be compatible with the conservation objectives of a number of habitat sites. The habitat sites named within the Natural England position statement include the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites.
- 6.44 Within its Position Statement of September 2021, Natural England advise that decisions on planning applications should await the development of a water-neutrality strategy on a strategic basis. In the current absence of a strategic solution to achieving water-neutrality, Natural England advise that individual plans and projects, where it is critical that these proceed, must demonstrate net-neutrality in respect of the use of mains-water such as to avoid contribution to the known adverse effect upon the integrity of Arun Valley habitat sites by reason of water-use.
- 6.45 The Authority has sought to undertake a screening assessment pursuant to the requirements of regulation 63(1) of the Protection of Species and Habitats Regulations (2017) (as amended). Subsequent to the receipt of amended plans on 16.02.2022, stabling originally featured within this application has been omitted. The remaining components of

the proposal would not increase equestrian, staff or residential occupancy within the Supply Zone, neither would the proposals provide for a specific installation demanding the use of mains-water. In this instance, therefore, it is considered that the Authority can reasonably 'screen-out' the possibility of significant effect upon habitat sites with sufficient certainty that the proposals would not demand the use of mains-water such as to contribute to the known adverse effect upon Arun Valley sites associated with the effects of groundwater abstraction.

- 6.46 It is considered, therefore, that the proposal would comply with the requirements of the Species and Habitat Regulations, and corresponding requirements contained with HDPF policy 31 and NPPF paragraphs 179 and 180.

Drainage:

- 6.47 HDPF policy 38 requires that, where required, proposed development adheres to the national sequential and exception tests for flood risk, further, recommending that appropriate drainage infrastructure is incorporated with a preference to the use of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS).
- 6.48 The application site is located within Flood Zone 1, designated as an area at minimal strategic risk of fluvial, surface water or groundwater flooding. The proposed development, further, is of a type and scale where a site-specific flood-risk assessment would not be expected in accordance with the requirements of NPPF paragraph 167.
- 6.49 Appropriate conditions can be utilised to require the use of porous materials to the proposed parking area, or for provision to be made for surface water-run off to be directed to a permeable area within the site. Other additional structures and facilities subject of this application are not of a significant scale, with the proposed viewing platform extension and pole-barn to be provided to pre-existing areas of hardstand. Subject to the use of conditions, therefore, it is not considered that the proposals would provide for a significant change in the surface-water drainage characteristics of the site and its surroundings, or would exacerbate flood-risk elsewhere.

Other Matters:

- 6.50 The comments of the Fire and Rescue Service in respect of distance to fire-fighting apparatus are noted. It is, though, considered that necessary fire-fighting equipment to mitigate against the risk of harm from fire can be secured by way of appropriately worded condition.

Conclusion:

- 6.51 The proposed development would provide supporting facilities and infrastructure to the established equestrian use at Hascombe Farm. It is considered that the proposals would provide socio-economic benefits through support afforded to the existing enterprise, its continued viability and the wider rural economy in accordance with HDPF policy 10. It is, further, considered that the provision of equestrian facilities can reasonably be regarded as appropriate to this countryside location, with the proposals not considered to represent an intensification of use in the context of the existing site and preceding planning history.
- 6.52 The proposed development, further, would be considered of an appropriate type, scale, siting and design, which would not harmfully impact upon the character and appearance of its surroundings, in addition to the special interest of the South Downs National Park and corresponding International Dark Skies Reserve, in compliance with the requirements of HDPF policies 25, 26, 30, 32 and 33.

- 6.53 Subject to conditions to limit the use of the tannoy/PA system, it is not considered that the proposed development would result in unacceptable harm to the living conditions of nearby occupiers/users of land, with regard to the receipt of natural light, level of privacy and acoustic disturbance, nor would unacceptably impact upon the safety of highways users or the operation of the highway network as required by HDPF policies 40 and 41.
- 6.54 Subject to the incorporation of appropriate conditions it is considered that the proposal would deliver a biodiversity gain, with no harmful impact upon protected species, habitats or habitat sites, in accordance with HDPF policies 25 and 31.
- 6.55 It is, overall, considered that the proposed development is compliant with all relevant development plan policy and is recommended for approval accordingly, subject to the conditions listed below.

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
All other development	365	0	365
		Total Gain	365
		Total Demolition	0

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.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

To grant planning permission subject to the following conditions.

Conditions:

1. Plans list
2. **Regulatory (Time) Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall be begun 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 (Slab Level) Condition:** Prior to the commencement of works pertaining to the construction of the approved pole-barn, paddocks, parking area and viewing platform above ground floor slab level a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy shall be submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Strategy shall address the following:-
 - a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;
 - b) detailed designs to achieve stated objectives;

- c) locations of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans;
- d) timetable for implementation demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed phasing of development;
- e) persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures;
- f) details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).

The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to first use and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To secure a biodiversity gain and provide benefits to Protected and Priority Species/habitats in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

4. **Regulatory condition:** Prior to the commencement of works pertaining to the construction of the approved pole-barn and hay-store above ground floor slab level, fire-fighting apparatus shall have been installed in agreement with the West Sussex County Council Fire and Rescue Service.

Reason: In the interests of public safety and to prevent harm to future occupiers associated with the risk of fire in accordance with Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

5. **Regulatory Condition:** The materials to be used in the construction of the development hereby permitted shall strictly accord with those prescribed at section 7 to the submitted application form, unless a schedule and details of alternative materials are submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of relevant works above ground-floor slab level.

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).

6. **Regulatory Condition:** The tannoy/public-address equipment hereby approved shall solely be used for public-address purposes in conjunction with the equestrian events approved pursuant to condition 6 of planning permission DC/15/0531, and operated only on event days. The approved equipment shall not be used to play music at any time.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to ensure nearby residential occupiers benefit from respite from possible noise disturbance in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

7. **Regulatory Condition:** The tannoy/public-address equipment hereby approved shall be positioned and orientated as denoted on the approved site master-plan (plan ref: 2018-3, rev E). Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), any change to this arrangement will require the express consent of the Local Planning Authority by way of formal application.

Reason: in the interests of amenity, and to ensure control over potential sources of noise, ensuring an acceptable level of noise disturbance to nearby occupiers in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

8. **Regulatory Condition:** The tannoy/public-address equipment hereby approved shall consist of the components specified at section 3.2.5 of the submitted Noise Impact Assessment (Southdowns Environmental Consultants, ref: 2441W-SEC-00001-02, February 2022) and shall not exceed 90 dB(A) at 1m. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended),

any change to these components will require the express consent of the Local Planning Authority by way of formal application.

Reason: in the interests of amenity, and to ensure control over potential sources of noise, ensuring an acceptable level of noise disturbance to nearby occupiers in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

9. **Regulatory Condition:** The hard surface to the parking area hereby approved shall either be constructed making use of porous materials or provision shall be made to direct surface water-run off from the approved parking area to a permeable/porous surface located within the application site.

Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding and pollution and increase the level of sustainability of the development and to comply with Policy 38 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

10. **Regulatory Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall solely be used for equestrian purposes ancillary to the occupation and use of Hascombe Farm, Horn Lane, Henfield, BN5 9SA.

Reason: To ensure a form of development appropriate and essential to this countryside location in accordance with Policy 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

11. **Regulatory Condition:** Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), no external lighting and/or floodlighting shall be installed or stationed within the application site except without the express consent of the Local Planning Authority by way of formal application.

Reason: in the interests of local character and to ensure the intrinsic qualities and integrity of the adjacent International Dark Skies Reserve in accordance with policies 25, 30, 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

12. **Regulatory Condition:** The proposed development shall be undertaken in full accordance with the ecological 'technical note' (Derek Finnie Associations, ref: 213390, September 2021), and the recommended ecological mitigations, methods and precautions.

Reason: To conserve and enhance protected and Priority species and allow the LPA 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 (Priority habitats & species) and Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).