

Report to **Planning Committee**  
Date **21/11/2017**  
By **Director of Planning, South Downs National Park Authority**  
Local Authority **Horsham District Council**  
Application Number **SDNP/17/02592/FUL**  
Applicant **Mr Richard Scott**  
Application **Proposed erection of single storey training/accommodation building for agricultural and butchery courses**  
Address **Downsview Farm  
Clay Lane  
Cootham  
RH20 4HL**

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**Recommendation: That the application be Approved for the reasons and subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 10 of this report.**

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## **Executive Summary**

### **1 Site Description**

The application relates to a working farm located within the South Downs National Park, south-west of the built up area of Storrington. The application site consists of a working yard to the farm, which is accessed via a track from Clay Lane, and hosts an existing cold store and other associated agricultural outbuildings. To the north, a natural bund screens the site, and includes established shrubs and trees on a raised grassed verge to the south.

### **2 Proposal**

Planning permission is sought for the erection of an agricultural training building within the grounds of the yard of the farm, formed of a 19m wide by 6.2m deep pitched roof building with an eaves height of 2.5m and ridge height of 3.6m. The building would be used for teaching and training butchery courses in relation to the use of the farm, hosting overnight accommodation, kitchen areas, bathroom/WCs, and training rooms.

### **3 Relevant Planning History**

DC/11/0751	Cold store facility to store approx. 50 - 60 carcasses per week, installation of an emergency super silent generator, toilet, changing area and 2 No. deep freezers	Approved	13-MAY-2011
DC/08/1741	Prior notification to erect 5 feed bin stores	Approved	18-AUG-2008

### **4 Consultations**

#### **HO - Public Health & Licensing (Env. Health)**

No objection.

#### **WSSC - Highways**

No objection, following the confirmation of information regarding course dates and number of attendees.

## **Parish Council Consultee**

No objection, subject to a non-severance condition.

## **5 Representations including a letter from The Wiggonholt Association**

Ten letters of representation received objecting to the proposal on the following grounds:

- Inappropriate residential accommodation within the SDNP
- Other courses are available nearby
- Adverse harm to existing traffic in area
- Scale and size of building would be visually prominent
- Impact on Grade II listed dwelling (Cootham Farmhouse)
- No confirmation of materials
- Contrary to agricultural practice and guidance
- No existing butchery use or licence on the site
- Threat of proposed building to be used as residential accommodation over time
- Threat of proposed industrial use on the site over time
- The proposal would result in an adverse increase in journeys within the countryside
- The accommodation is disproportionate to the size of the farm

## **6 Planning Policy Context**

Applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan in this area is the Horsham District Local Development Framework: General Development Control Policies (2007).

The relevant policies to this application are set out in section 7, below.

### National Park Purposes

The two statutory purposes of the SDNP designation are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage,
- To promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of their areas.

If there is a conflict between these two purposes, conservation takes precedence. There is also a duty to foster the economic and social well-being of the local community in pursuit of these purposes.

## **7 Planning Policy**

### Relevant Government Planning Policy and Guidance

Government policy relating to National Parks is set out in English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010 and The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was issued and came into effect on 27 March 2012. The Circular and NPPF confirm that National Parks have the highest status of protection and the NPPF states at paragraph 115 that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in the national parks and that the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations and should also be given great weight in National Parks.

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The following National Planning Policy Framework documents have been considered in the assessment of this application:

- NPPF3 – Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy
- NPPF7 – Requiring Good Design

The development plan policies listed below have been assessed for their compliance with the NPPF and are considered to be compliant with the NPPF.

The following policies of the **Horsham District Local Development Framework: The Core Strategy (2007)** are relevant to this application:

- CP3 - Improving the Quality of New Development
- CPI - Landscape and Townscape Character

The following policies of the **Local Development Framework: General Development Control Policies (2007)** are relevant to this application:

- DC1 - Countryside Protection
- DC4 - Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs)
- DC9 - Development Principles
- DC23 - Sustainable Farm Diversification
- DC25 - Rural Economic Development and the Expansion of Existing Rural Commercial Sites/Intensification of Uses
- DC39 - Tourism
- DC40 - Transport & Access
- DC41 - Parking

#### Partnership Management Plan

The South Downs Partnership Management Plan (SDPMP) was adopted on 3 December 2013. It sets out a Vision and long term Outcomes for the National Park, as well as 5 year Policies and a continually updated Delivery Framework. The SDPMP is a material consideration in planning applications and has some weight pending adoption of the SDNP Local Plan.

The following Policies and Outcomes are of particular relevance to this case:

- Outcome 1 – The landscape character of the National Park, its special qualities and local distinctiveness have been conserved and enhanced
- Policy 1 – Conserve and enhance the natural beauty and special qualities of the landscape and its setting
- Policy 50 – Housing and other development in the National Park should be closely matched to the social and economic needs of local people, and should be of high design and energy efficiency standards

The South Downs Local Plan: Preferred Options was approved for consultation by the National Park Authority on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2015 to go out for public consultation under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The consultation period ran from 2<sup>nd</sup> September to 28<sup>th</sup> October 2015. The responses received are being considered by the Authority. The next stage in the plan preparation will be the publication and then submission of the Local Plan for independent examination. Until this time, the Preferred Options Local Plan is a material consideration in the assessment of this planning application in accordance with paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which confirms that weight can be given to policies in emerging plans following publication.

## **8 Planning Assessment**

### **Principle and Use**

The site is located outside of the defined built up area, and is therefore considered to be located within the countryside. Policy DC1 of the Horsham District Local Development Framework states that development will not be permitted unless it is considered essential to its countryside location and does not lead, either cumulatively or individually, to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside.

Policy DC23 states that proposal for new rural enterprises within established agricultural holdings will be permitted if the diversification scheme would not harm the countryside's rural character, landscape, historical landscape features and wildlife by the nature and level of activity.

Policy DC25 states that development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the development delivers economic benefits to the rural area, in which intensified uses on existing sites is limited to the expansion and/or adaptation plans which are essential to the operation of the established business.

The application proposes to diversify the existing agricultural use on the site, by utilising a proposed building (adjacent to the existing cold store building) for teaching butcher courses to farmers and members of the public. The proposed use would be contained within the proposed building, in which all other existing operations on the site would not be affected. Whilst the provision of an associated agricultural facility, which would be open to the public, would result in the increase in trip generation to the farm, the proposed use on the site is not considered to be of a scale that would result in an adverse increase in activity within the countryside. Further to this, the proposed use of the site would result in a reasonable diversification of the existing agricultural use, which would demonstrate local economic benefits. With this in mind, the principle of the application is therefore accepted.

Neighbouring concerns regarding to the provision of accommodation within the building are noted. However, there is no indication that the accommodation would be used for permanent residential use, and the nature of the use can be controlled via condition.

### **Visual Impact and Setting**

Policy DC4 states that development within or near the Sussex Downs that would adversely affect the character, quality, views, distinctiveness, or threaten the public enjoyment of these landscapes will not be permitted.

Policy DC9 relates to general development principles. It seeks to ensure that development proposals make efficient use of land, integrate effectively with the character of the surrounding area, use high quality and appropriate materials, retain landscaping where feasible (and mitigate loss if necessary) and ensure no conflict with the character of the surrounding town or landscape.

The proposed training building would be sited adjacent to the existing cold store building within the yard of the holding, measuring 19m in width, 6.2m in depth, and would host a pitched roof with an eaves height of 2.5m and a maximum ridge height of 3.6m. Though large, the proposed building would be comfortably accommodated within the wider yard of the farm and would be sited close to an existing building on the site – thus consolidating the built form to one area. The pitched roof and simple form of the proposed building is considered appropriate for its setting, which is of a scale and massing sympathetic with the site and wider surroundings, and would not appear out of context within the rural setting.

The shorter side of the building would be visible from the approach track from Clay Lane, in which the longer side of the building would run parallel to the raised bund to the northern boundary of the site. Given the topography and screening surrounding the application site, coupled with the orientation and relatively low height of the proposed building, views of the building would be largely obscured from view from the north and south, which is within the ownership of the applicant. With this in mind, the proposed building would not result in any harm to the character and appearance or the quality, views, distinctiveness, or threaten the public enjoyment of the South Downs National Park, in accordance with Policy DC4 of the Horsham District Planning Framework: General Development Control Policies (2007). A condition is recommended to secure further details of the building's appearance and materials.

### **Impact on Amenity**

Policy DC9 states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.

Given the site's isolated location within the countryside, the proposed building would not directly neighbour any residential dwellings. The proposed training building would not result in any adverse harm to neighbouring amenity by way of overshadowing or overlooking. Further to this, given the low scale operation of the proposed dwelling, coupled with the existing use of the adjacent cold store, the proposed building would not result in any undue harm by way of noise, smell or nuisance detrimental to neighbouring amenity. The application is therefore considered in

accordance with Policy DC9 of the Horsham District Planning Framework: General Development Control Policies (2007).

### **Transport and Parking**

Policy DC40 relates to transport and access, which states that development should be of a scale that is appropriate to its location, and provides a safe and adequate means of transport.

The proposed training building would be accessible via the existing access to the farm from Clay Lane, in which WSCC Highways have stated access provides adequate and safe visibility and space for cars to access and exit the site. The area leading to and surrounding the application site provides ample space for cars to turn. No alterations to the highway are required to accommodate the use of the building.

As noted, the proposed use on the site would generate additional trips to the farm. In addition to this, the site is not within a sustainable location for access via public transport – as such, it is more than likely that users will be required to drive to the site. Given the use and location of the proposed building/use, the proposal is not likely to generate adverse additional trips which would warrant a refusal of the application on highway grounds. Whilst provision of parking has been indicated on the proposed plans, the application lacks a detailed parking arrangement. Though the principle of the application is accepted, on transports grounds, a condition is attached to ensure that a detailed parking arrangement and management plan is submitted and approved prior to the occupation of the development.

The applicant has advised that courses will run throughout the year, in which accommodation would be included as part of the course, and would accommodated 3-6 people per week. The proposed level of custom indicated is not considered to result in a harmful increase in traffic movement from the site, nor amount to any increased risk on the safety of the highway. With this and the above in mind, the proposal is considered in accordance with Policies DC40 and DC41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework: General Development Control Policies (2007).

## **9 Conclusion**

The proposed development is considered to be appropriately integrated with the character of its surroundings, and would not result in any adverse impact on the quality or enjoyment of the views of the South Downs National Park. Officers therefore recommend the application for approved, subject to the satisfaction of the listed conditions.

## **10 Reason for Recommendation and Conditions**

It is recommended that the application be Approved for the reasons and subject to the conditions set out below.

1. 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.

2. No development above ground floor slab level of any part of the development hereby permitted shall take place until a schedule of materials and finishes and colours to be used for external walls, windows and roofs of the approved building(s) has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing and all materials used in the construction of the development hereby permitted shall conform to those approved.

**Reason:** As this matter is fundamental to enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of amenity by endeavouring to achieve a building of visual quality in accordance with Policies DC4 and DC9 of the Horsham District Planning Framework: General Development Control Policies (2007).

3. The hereby approved building shall only be used for the provision of agricultural and butchery courses, and associated accommodation, in association with the agricultural holding.

**Reason:** The site lies in an area where, in accordance with policy DC1 of the Horsham District Local Development Framework: General Development Control Policies (2007), development unrelated to an essential rural activity would not normally be permitted.

4. The residential accommodation within the hereby approved building shall be occupied solely for purposes ancillary to the primary use of the building for agricultural and butchery courses, and shall not be used as a separate or permanent unit of residential accommodation.

**Reason:** The establishment of an additional independent unit of accommodation would give rise to an over-intensive use of the site and lead to an unsatisfactory relationship between independent units of living accommodation contrary to Policies DC1 and DC9 of the Horsham District Planning Framework: General Development Control Policies (2007).

5. Prior to the occupation of the proposed training hereby permitted, a detailed parking arrangement plan, indicating the proposed parking area to the site, including a statement detailing the proposed expected customer movement to and from the site, stating how movement will be managed, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the agreed details prior to the commencement of the approved use and shall be retained as such thereafter.

**Reason:** As this matter is fundamental to enable the Local Planning Authority to control traffic movement to and from the site, in the interests of amenity by endeavouring to achieve sustainable transport in accordance with Policies DC40 and DC41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework: General Development Control Policies (2007).

6. No external lighting or floodlighting shall be installed without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority. Any that is installed with the permission of the Local Planning Authority shall be maintained in accordance with the approved details.

**Reason:** In the interests of the amenities of the locality and in accordance with Policy DC9 of the Horsham District Planning Framework: General Development Control Policies (2007).

## **11. Crime and Disorder Implications**

- 11.1 It is considered that the proposal does not raise any crime and disorder implications.

## **12. Human Rights Implications**

- 12.1 This planning application has been considered in light of statute and case law and any interference with an individual's human rights is considered to be proportionate to the aims sought to be realised.

## **13. Equality Act 2010**

- 13.1 Due regard has been taken of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010.

#### **14. Proactive Working**

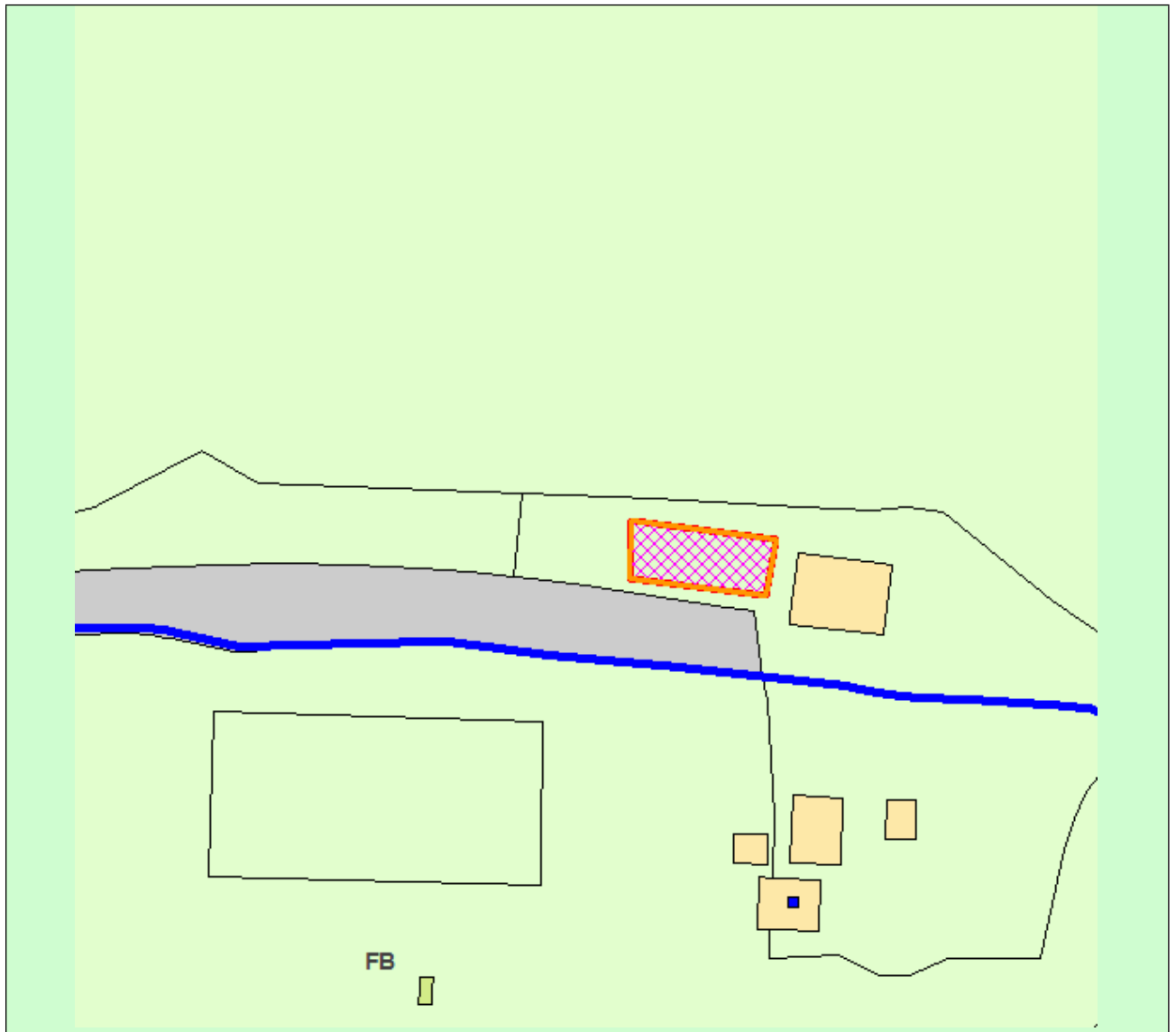
Statement pursuant to Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

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Appendices	Appendix 1 - Site Location Map Appendix 2 – Plans Referred to in Consideration of this Application
SDNPA Consultees	
Background Documents	SDNP/17/02595/FUL

## Appendix I

### Site Location Map



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## Appendix 2 – Plans Referred to in Consideration of this Application

The application has been assessed and recommendation is made on the basis of the following plans and documents submitted:

Plan Type	Reference	Version	Date on Plan	Status
Plans - Location	NONE		16.06.2017	Approved
Plans - Block	NONE		16.06.2017	Approved
Plans - Proposed Elevations	NONE		06.06.2017	Approved
Plans - Proposed Floor	NONE		06.06.2017	Approved
Reports - Noise impact assessment	NONE		18.05.2017	Approved

**Reasons:** For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.