

Report to **Planning Committee**

Date **9 April 2026**

By **Director of Placemaking**

Application Number **SDNP/25/00799/FUL**

Applicant **Mr Stephen Duff**

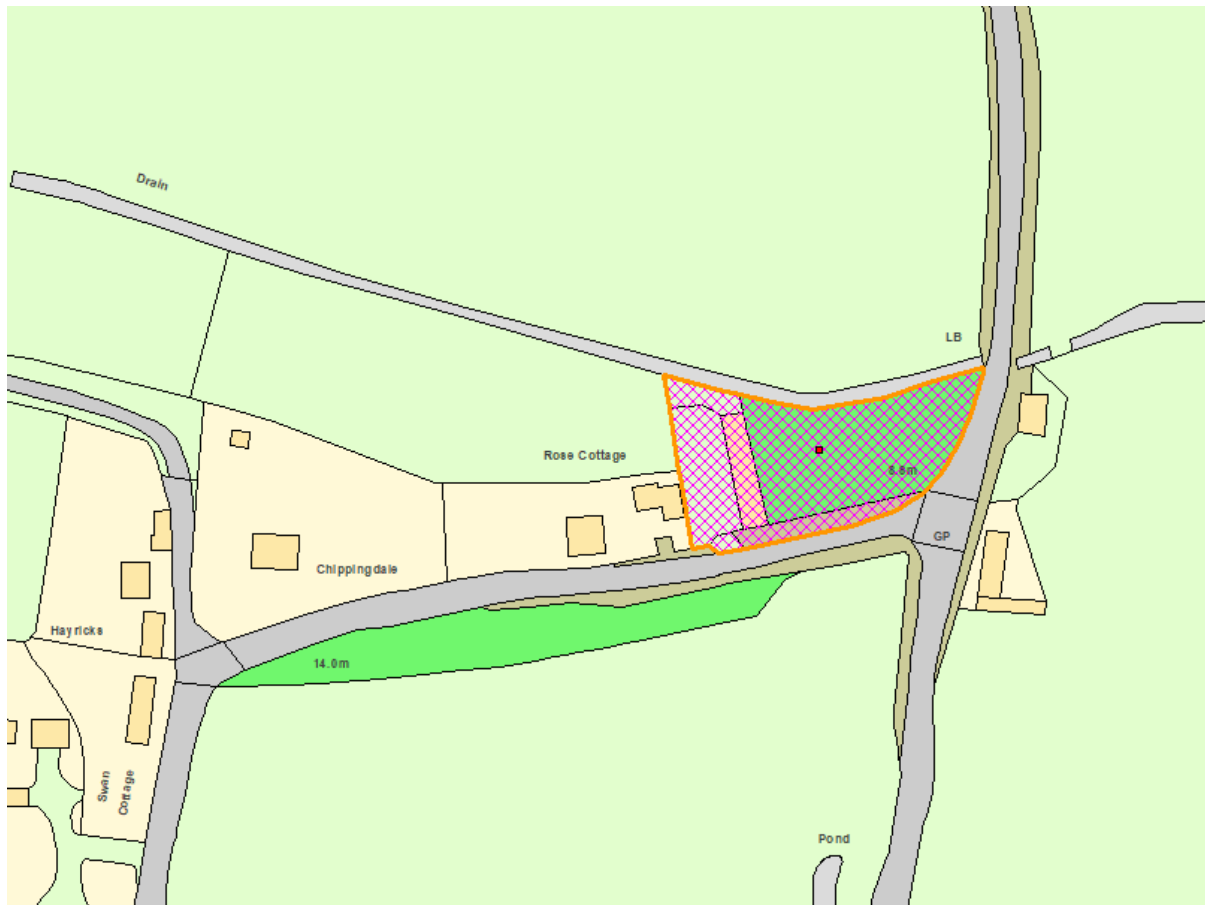
Application **Change of use from equestrian to residential with forestry tie, including the conversion and rebuild of an old stable block and outbuilding into a single story 2-bedroom home (self-build).**

Address **Woodsyard, Land East of Rose Cottage, Rackham Road, Rackham, West Sussex**

Recommendation:

- 1) **That permission be granted subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 8.2 and any amendments or other conditions required to address technical matters.**
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Site Location Plan



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Executive Summary

- The application proposes the change of use of an existing stable and adjoined outbuilding to form a two-bedroom dwelling, with associated works. The dwelling would be for a rural worker and his family.
- The applicant is an established and experienced forester and arborist, working on a self-employed basis within the National Park and the surrounding area. His work is not directly associated with a single enterprise or estate as anticipated by SDNP Policy SD32; however, his work comprises a range of activities which are considered to contribute positively to the special qualities of the National Park through sustainable woodland management, biodiversity enhancement, reduced carbon emissions and public safety benefits. This is therefore considered to broadly accord with Policy SD32.
- The existing building, whilst in lawful equestrian use was, until 2017, an agricultural barn. By virtue of its previous change of use, the building is considered 'previously developed land' and subject to the consideration of other relevant matters, would be considered acceptable provided that the development conserves and enhances the special qualities of the National Park.
- Further, the proposed development would provide for an alternative use of a building that is now redundant. Given that the size of the plot is considered to be insufficient for the safe and suitable grazing of even one horse, it is not unreasonable that the equestrian use has been abandoned and an alternative use is sought.
- The application is before members given the unique policy considerations.

1. Site Description

- 1.1 The application site is located to the north of 'Crossgates' and to the west of Rackham Street in the small village of Rackham, about 1.6 kilometres from Amberley (as the crow flies) to the south-west. The application site is outside of any settlement boundaries.
- 1.2 The application site comprises a stable building with three looseboxes and an adjoined outbuilding, with a large area of hardstanding. To the east of the built form is a small paddock bound by trees and hedgerow.
- 1.3 The existing building is constructed in timber frame, timber boarding, brick and flint, in a state of disrepair in places.
- 1.4 The site is accessed via an existing vehicular access with brick piers and a double five-bar gate, set back slightly from the road.
- 1.5 To the west of the application site is the closest residential property, Rose Cottage, a detached two-storey dwelling with a detached garage/outbuilding on the common boundary. To the east, on the other side of Rackham Street is a small former agricultural barn which has been converted to a 2-bedroom dwelling.

2. Relevant Planning History

- 2.1 SDNP/23/04524/PRE Change of use from equestrian to residential. Conversion of old stable block (including rebuilding a previously ruined part within the original foundations) into a single story 2-bedroom home. Advice given 07/03/2023

Officer comment: Officers considered that the site was in an unsustainable location for

market residential development, with the re-use of an existing building and potential re-use of previously developed land not considered to represent sufficient justification for an exception to the general spatial strategy of the development plan. The proposal, therefore, would be considered contrary to policy SD25 of the SDLP (2019).

- 2.2 SDNP/21/02919/PRE Conversion and extension of the existing buildings to provide holiday accommodation. Advice given 05/07/2021.
- 2.3 SDNP/20/04451/PRE Develop the old stables into a family home. Advice given 06/11/2020.
- 2.4 SDNP/18/03279/PRE Potential extension and conversion of existing stables to residential dwelling, or erection of new dwelling with an enlarged footprint. Advice given 09/04/2018.
- 2.5 SDNP/16/06063/FUL Change from Agriculture to equestrian, plus 3 internal stable partitions. Approved 27/06/2017.
- 2.6 SDNP/15/04528/FUL Proposed Barn Conversion with hardstanding and Replacement 5 Bar Gate and Gateposts. Refused 09/11/2015.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 The application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the existing stable to a 2-bed, single-storey residential dwelling with a forestry tie. The development would be self-build. The associated works would include:
 - The conversion of the stable block and outbuilding, with associated works.
 - The re-building/reinstatement of part of the outbuilding on existing footings.
 - The change of use of the existing paddock to residential curtilage/private garden.
- 3.2 The application discusses a proposal to alter the access arrangements by moving the existing entrance piers and gates further back into the site. These proposals are not included within the submitted plans and do not form part of the application.

4. Consultations

- 4.1 **Environment Agency:** No comments to make.

Officer note: EA consulted as a precaution to understand any requirements relating to the composting toilet and the disposal of associated waste. They have confirmed that they have no comments to make on the proposal. Officers have recommended a condition (Condition 9) to ensure further details are submitted and approved by the Authority prior to above ground works.

- 4.2 **Hampshire County Council (HCC) Ecology Officer:** No objection, subject to conditions.

Advice re.: BNG

- A Biodiversity Gain Plan is required to be secured via a pre-commencement condition.
- As per the guidelines, any habitat creation or enhancement within a garden cannot count towards BNG and given the change of a paddock habitat (modified grassland –

condition unknown) to vegetated garden, there will be a net loss in biodiversity due to the change in habitat distinctiveness, regardless of their efforts to enhance the site.

- As per national legislation, a BNG Metric should be submitted.

Officer note: Comments regarding BNG were given without the understanding that the proposal is self-build and therefore exempt from statutory BNG.

4.3 **Parham Parish Council:** Objection:

- Supports the environmentally sensitive design but raises serious concerns about the practical viability and suitability, particularly in a rural setting.
- Limited information is provided re. 'off-grid' nature of proposal.
- No reason is given for the second outside door.
- The plans show an outside tap; how will the property adhere to its sustainable position?
- Question the impact drought would have on a home reliant on water harvesting.
- Both the proposed composting toilet and rainwater system introduce risks of smell, system failure, visual clutter (tanks), or insect nuisance, all of which could affect neighbouring properties.
- Full technical documentation should be provided for waste and water systems, and long-term maintenance and health compliance should be demonstrated.
- Cannot support the application in its current form as it does not fully explain the owners' statement of intent.

Officer note: There is no requirement for the dwelling to be 'off grid'. The sustainability measures are of the applicant's choosing, which Officers are supportive of in principle as set out in the following report. A condition is recommended which would secure a range of sustainability benefits for the proposed development.

4.4 **Southern Water:** No objection, subject to ensuring all public apparatus is protected in landscaping proposals.

Officer note: Southern Water would be consulted on the discharge of the recommended landscaping condition (Condition 4).

5. **Representations**

5.1 Two third-party representations have been received in support for the proposal for the following reasons:

- Proposal to convert an otherwise semi-derelict building into a modest 2-bedroom low impact home with a forestry tie makes a good use of a corner plot that is well screened.
- A long-term solution for the benefit of the community.
- Very glad to see the site developed rather than decline into disuse.
- Plot is not large enough to graze horses.

- The forestry tie will create more affordable housing for future generations of working within the SDNP.
- The applicant has undertaken paid tree surgery work locally.
- Applicants are considerate and responsible stewards of the property.
- The proposed conversion is aesthetically sensitive and ecologically sound.

6. Planning Policy

6.1 Most Relevant Sections of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024):

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

6.2 Most relevant Policies of Adopted South Downs Local Plan (2014-2033) (A full list of relevant policies and applicable legislation can be found in Appendix I):

- SD4: Landscape Character
- SD5: Design
- SD9: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- SD11: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
- SD25: Development Strategy
- SD32: New Agricultural and Forestry Workers Dwellings
- SD41: Conversion of Redundant Agricultural or Forestry Buildings

6.3 Relevant Objectives of South Downs Partnership Management Plan (2026-2031):

- Objective 1.1 – To improve, expand, connect and increase the resilience of wildlife-rich habitats and land managed for nature to ensure we are on track to reach 60% managed for nature by 2060.
- Objective 2.1: To support businesses and local communities to take positive climate action to ensure they are adapted and resilient to climate change.
- Objective 7.2: To support the needs of local communities through affordable, accessible and low-carbon housing.

6.4 The New South Downs Local Plan:

The First Publication (Regulation 18 Consultation) of the New South Downs Local Plan took place in 2025, with future consultation planned to take place in Summer of 2026. Currently,

the New South Downs Local Plan does not carry weight in decision making. As it progresses through the adoption process, it will gain more weight for the purposes of decision making.

6.5 Other Relevant Policy Documents (including SPDs and TANs):

- Design Guide SPD
- Dark Skies TAN
- Biodiversity Net Gain TAN
- Ecosystem Services TAN

7. Planning Assessment

Principle of development

7.1 The application seeks the conversion of an existing stable building into a dwelling for a rural worker employed in forestry in the National Park and the wider area.

Relevant Policy Discussion

7.2 The application site is located outside of any defined settlement boundary. SDNP Policy SD25 'Development Strategy' refers to sustainable development and seeks to keep development within settlement boundaries unless there are exceptional circumstances where the development complies with relevant exception policies and one of the criteria set out in 2. a) to d). One of these criteria is 'd) *it is an appropriate reuse of a previously developed site, excepting residential gardens, and conserves and enhances the special qualities of the National Park*'.

7.3 Policy SD32 'New Agricultural and Forestry Workers' Dwellings' sets out that development proposals for agricultural and forestry workers' dwellings will be permitted where it has been demonstrated that the nature and demand of the work concerned make it essential for one or more people engaged in agricultural and forestry enterprises to live at, or very close to, the site of their work. The policy states that development proposals for new buildings or structures for the purposes of agriculture or forestry will be permitted where:

- a) There is an agricultural or forestry need for the development within the National Park and its scale is commensurate with that need;
- b) The development occupies the site best suited to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park. Wherever possible, development should re-use or be on the footprint of an existing agricultural building, otherwise it should be related physically and functionally to existing buildings associated with the enterprise, unless there are exceptional circumstances relating to agricultural or forestry necessity for a more isolated location;
- c) The buildings are in keeping with local character and of a design that reflects the proposed agricultural or forestry use;
- d) The proposals include structure planting to integrate the development into the existing local landscape framework;
- e) A building has not been disposed of or converted to an alternative use at the holding in the past three years, which could have met the need of the development proposed; and

- f) Existing redundant buildings within the application site which have a negative impact on landscape character are removed where appropriate.
- 7.4 Paragraph 84 of the latest NPPF (2024) states that *'planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:...a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside...'*.
- 7.5 Emerging Policy SD32 'New Rural Workers Dwellings' is drafted to conform with the NPPF, rather than referring solely to 'agricultural' or 'forestry' workers, as the current SD32 wording does not refer to 'rural workers' engaged in land-based enterprises. At this stage, the emerging policy itself carries limited weight, however, as the NPPF supports dwellings for rural workers and as such, subject to wider issues discussed above and below, the general principle for a rural worker can be supported in policy terms.
- 7.6 Policy SD41, in specific circumstances, supports the conversion of redundant agricultural or forestry buildings outside of defined settlement boundaries to an alternative use. Whilst the existing building was last lawfully used as equestrian stabling, up until permission was granted in 2017 (SDNP/16/06063/FUL) the application building was an agricultural barn. Whilst therefore not directly applicable owing to the previous change of use from agriculture to equestrian, Policy SD41 g) provides for a cascade for determining the most appropriate viable use for a redundant building. Point i) of this cascade is *'housing for essential agricultural or forestry workers, or succession housing for former agricultural or forestry workers'*.

Analysis

- 7.7 The purpose of made Policy SD32 is to address an essential need for agricultural or forestry workers to live either permanently or temporarily at, or closely sited to, their place of work. For permanent dwellings, the policy requires a demonstration of the need for the worker (and their immediate family) to be housed on an established and extensive agricultural or forestry enterprise in line with the criteria set out in the policy. The worker needs to be engaged in actual operational work, actively contributing to the management of the land. The policy requires the applicant to demonstrate the economic viability of the enterprise and that the residential need cannot be accommodated elsewhere on the enterprise or in the local area. It could be considered that Policy SD32 envisages the provision of appropriate accommodation for workers employed by an 'enterprise' in one location, such as a large estate or woodland.
- 7.8 The application is supported by a Forest Tie Statement. Rather than working for one specific enterprise or estate, the applicant is a self-employed forester and arborist, working both for private clients and other companies. Invoices have been provided relating to work within the National Park and the surrounding area. The applicant has also completed work for neighbouring occupiers, as indicated by a letter of support submitted.
- 7.9 The submitted statement demonstrates that the applicant operates (albeit on a self-employed basis) an established and viable business as a suitably qualified and experienced arborist. The work undertaken contributes positively to the special qualities of the National Park through sustainable woodland management, biodiversity enhancement, reduced carbon emissions and public safety benefits. By virtue of the applicant's self-employed status, the proposal does not strictly accord with Policy SD32's requirement for an association with a specific enterprise in one location.
- 7.10 The Forest Tie Statement sets out that the applicant has found no suitable or affordable alternative accommodation locally to meet the operational, security and practical needs of

the business. The current application provides an opportunity to convert an existing appropriately scaled, modest and redundant building with no requirement for additional agricultural or forestry buildings. As set out above, whilst the existing building is lawfully in equestrian use, up until 2017 it was an agricultural barn and workshop. The proposed dwelling is for a forestry worker, as such it meets Point i) of the cascade set out within Policy SD41 in relation to the conversion of redundant agricultural or forestry buildings outside of settlement.

- 7.11 By virtue of the previous change of use from agricultural to equestrian, the existing building is considered to be 'previously developed land' (PDL). As set out in SD25 2.d), the appropriate reuse of PDL is supported, where the proposed development complies with an exception policy and where it conserves and enhances the special qualities of the National Park.
- 7.12 Further, in terms of the suitability of the existing building and plot, the application site has most recently been used as equestrian stabling and grazing land. The existing stable building has three loose boxes which are approximately 4.4m by 3.43m. These loose boxes are considered by the British Horse Society (BHS) to be of a sufficient size for large horses (17 hands and above). However, in terms of grazing, general guidance from the BHS recommends a ratio of one horse per 0.4-0.6 hectares on permanent grazing (1-1.5 acres per horse). The paddock at Woodsyard is approximately 0.1 hectares (0.27 acres), meaning that it is insufficient for the grazing of even one horse and alternative grazing would be required to safely accommodate horses at the site. On this basis, it is not unreasonable for a change of use to be sought. Further, prior to the applicant purchasing the property, the site was marketed as an equestrian property for two years but received no relevant enquiries.

Summary

- 7.13 The applicant is an established and experienced forester and arborist, working on a self-employed basis within the National Park and the surrounding area. Whilst not directly associated with a single enterprise or estate, the applicant carries out a range of activities which are considered to contribute positively to the special qualities of the National Park through sustainable woodland management, biodiversity enhancement, reduced carbon emissions and public safety benefits.
- 7.14 The existing building, whilst in lawful equestrian use was, until 2017, an agricultural barn. By virtue of its previous change of use, the building is considered PDL and as the proposed change of use would broadly accord with Policy SD32, and subject to the consideration of other relevant matters, would be considered acceptable provided that the development conserves and enhances the special qualities of the National Park.
- 7.15 Further, the proposed development would provide for an alternative use of a building that is now redundant. Given that the size of the plot is considered to be insufficient for the safe and suitable grazing of even one horse, it is not unreasonable that the equestrian use has been abandoned and an alternative use is sought.
- 7.16 Other relevant matters are discussed in the following report, however on the basis of the above, and considering the unique circumstances of this case, the principle of development is considered acceptable. In accordance with Policy SD32, the occupation of the dwelling by a forestry worker (or an agricultural worker to encompass other rural workers) shall be secured via condition (Condition 5) in perpetuity.

Landscape and Design

- 7.17 The application proposes to convert an existing equestrian building to residential use including the rebuilding of a section of the outbuilding on existing foundations. The existing building is low-profile and unobtrusive in the landscape. The site is largely bound by substantial hedgerow, with significant trees and vegetation on the site.
- 7.18 The proposal would see the three loose boxes removed from the stable block, with the old oak frame retained and the original boarding reinstated over structural insulated panels. The existing roof trusses would need to be replaced to support a domestic roof.
- 7.19 The proposal includes the rebuilding of part of the existing adjoined outbuilding on existing foundations, using materials stored on site. This would extend the existing building by approximately six metres. Notwithstanding this, the building would remain a modest, single-storey building which would respect the rural character of the area.
- 7.20 Doors and windows positioned within original openings are proposed which would help to retain the agricultural/equestrian aesthetic. Minimal additional fenestration is proposed.

Materials

- 7.21 In terms of materials, the application sets out that the conversion of the building would entail the use of brick, flint and mortar with timber boarding. Timber framed windows and doors would be used, stained dark. These materials are considered appropriate and acceptable. A condition is recommended requiring the proposed materials to be in accordance with the submitted details and in keeping with the existing building (Condition 3).

Landscaping

- 7.22 The applicant intends to enhance the site with native planting, trees and hedgerows. Given the sensitive location of the site, it is considered reasonable to attach a condition requiring the submission of a detailed hard and soft landscaping scheme (Condition 4).
- 7.23 Southern Water have advised that they have restrictions on tree planting adjacent to sewers, rising mains or water mains, and that they wish to be consulted on any landscaping proposals. Officers consider it appropriate that Southern Water could be consulted on the above recommended condition, rather than add another condition.

Summary

- 7.24 The proposed development would respect the rural character of the area and would restore and enhance an existing building, bringing it back into active use. Suitable materials would be used which would be in keeping with the surrounding area.
- 7.25 Given the principle of development and the sensitive rural location, Officers consider it reasonable to restrict permitted development rights to ensure that any future development requires consideration by the Authority. This relates to both extensions and alterations and boundary treatments. Conditions are recommended (Conditions 6 and 7).
- 7.26 In this regard, the proposal is considered to conserve and enhance the landscape character and make a positive contribution to the appearance and visual amenity of the area, in accordance with Policies SD4 and SD5.

Amenity

Neighbouring occupiers

- 7.27 The existing building is approximately 11 meters from the closest residential property, Rose Cottage to the east of the application site. The proposal would introduce a residential use which would alter the relationship between the site and the adjacent occupiers. However, it is considered that the modest dwelling proposed is unlikely to intensify the use of the site in a harmful manner.
- 7.28 The single-storey nature of the dwelling and the setback from the boundary would ensure that there would be no harmful impacts by way of overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light or overbearance.

Future occupiers of the site

- 7.29 The proposed dwelling would be single storey with two bedrooms, with a floor area of 95.7m², which exceed the minimum nationally described space standard. The habitable rooms would all be served by at least one window to provide natural daylight and ventilation.
- 7.30 Owing to the separation distance and orientation of Rose Cottage and the intervening outbuildings and boundary treatment, Officers are satisfied that the proposed dwelling would not be harmfully overlooked such as to impact on the privacy of future occupiers. Further, the future occupants would benefit from a generous amount of private amenity space.
- 7.31 On this basis, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy SD5 k) which requires proposals to have regard to avoiding harmful impact upon, or from, any surrounding uses and amenities.

Highway, access, parking and cycling

- 7.32 The application site is accessed via an existing vehicular access from Crossgates which is served by brick pillars and a 5-bar timber gate. The application discusses plans to adjust the vehicular entrance by moving the existing gates back by two meters into the site. No plans have been provided so separate permission would be required for these works if the applicant wishes to pursue this. This does not form part of the application.
- 7.33 Notwithstanding this, the current access is considered suitable for the proposed change of use given the previous agricultural and equestrian uses of the site and the anticipated low level of vehicular movements to and from a dwelling of this size. The space available on site would enable vehicles to turn within the site, particularly once all of the materials currently stored on site are removed or relocated.
- 7.34 Sufficient space exists on site for off-street vehicular parking for a number of vehicles. Sufficient space also exists for the provision of cycle storage. Details of this provision are recommended to be provided via condition (Condition 14).
- 7.35 In this regard, Officers are satisfied that the proposal would not negatively impact the ongoing safe and efficient operation of the strategic and local road networks, in accordance with Policies SD19 and SD22.

Flooding, Water and Drainage

- 7.36 The application site is located within Flood Zone 1 which has a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea.

- 7.37 Southern Water have raised no objection to the proposal but provide advice in relation to the provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).
- 7.38 Officers note the concerns raised by the Parish Council regarding the compost toilet and reedbed system in terms of odour and insects etc. The principle of this provision is considered acceptable by Officers, but full details are recommended to be secured via condition to ensure that the details are acceptable (Condition 9). The Environment Agency have been consulted on this provision but confirmed that they had no comments to make owing to the small scale of the proposal.
- 7.39 Details of the proposed rainwater harvesting and surface water drainage are also recommended to be secured via condition (Condition 10), however the principle of these measures are encouraged and considered acceptable, in line with Policy SD50.

Dark Skies

- 7.40 The site is located within the 'Dark Sky Core', zone E0, where the dark sky conditions are considered to be the best within the National Park and where every protection should be given to the skies to retain them in this form. The applicant has set out that there are no floodlights, skylights or lightwell proposed for the dwelling and that windows will be fitted with black-out blinds or thermal curtains to minimise light spill during the hours of darkness.
- 7.41 In the event that future occupiers require external lighting, a condition is recommended requiring the submission of a scheme of external lighting to be submitted and approved by the Authority (Condition 11). This is in accordance with Policy SD8 in this regard.

Trees, Ecology, Biodiversity Net Gain and provision of Ecosystem Services

Trees

- 7.42 Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the separation distances involved, the proposed conversion of the building, including the rebuilding of part of the adjoined outbuilding would not involve the loss or pressure on any existing trees.
- 7.43 Notwithstanding this, given that there are some significant trees on the wider site that contribute positively to the character of the area, Officers consider it reasonable to attach a condition requiring the submission and agreement of a scheme of tree protection measures prior the commencement of development (Condition 15).

Designated sites

- 7.44 HCC Ecology had originally advised that a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) was required, to consider the potential impacts of increased abstraction within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone (SNWSZ) on the Arun Valley designated sites, however this is no longer a requirement, so no further action is required in this regard.

Protected species

- 7.45 The submitted Ecological Impact Assessment (EIA) identified that the application building was confirmed as a day roost for two common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus* bats. As such, a bat mitigation license from Natural England will be required should planning permission be granted and before works commence. The surveys which supported this assessment are now out of date. HCC Ecology have advised that given that a roost has already been identified that, in exceptional circumstances, a follow-up survey to confirm the status of the

roost should be carried out prior to the commencement of development. A condition is recommended (Condition 17).

- 7.46 HCC Ecology advise that the development should proceed in accordance with the measures set out in Section 5. 'Impact Assessment, Mitigation and Enhancements' of the above document. A condition is recommended (Condition 16).

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 7.47 Legally mandatory BNG came into effect for major development in February 2024, where certain types of development are required to provide 10% BNG. Policy SD9 requires it to be demonstrated that development proposals identify and incorporate opportunities for net gains in biodiversity.
- 7.48 Small scale and self-build and custom build applications, as defined in Section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, for developments of up to 9 dwellings with a site area no larger than 0.5 hectares are exempt from mandatory BNG requirements. The application site is 0.16 hectares, and the proposed development would constitute 1 self-build dwelling. As such, the development is exempt from statutory BNG.
- 7.49 In terms of incorporating opportunities for net gains in biodiversity in line with Policy SD9, the application proposes a number of enhancements:
- Creation and maintenance of a wildlife corridor connecting the site to neighbouring fields and Pulborough Brooks to the north of the site.
 - Establishment of varied habitats: long meadow grass, wildflowers, native scrub, and a shaded pond for water and shelter.
 - Additional hedge, tree and scrub planting.
 - Development of an earthen bank and log piles for microhabitats.
 - The incorporation of bee bricks, bat tiles, swift and bird boxes.
 - Vegetable growing space created on raised beds on existing hardstanding.
- 7.50 A condition is recommended requiring the submission of an Ecological Design Strategy (EDS) (Condition 18) to ensure that these benefits are realised. In light of the above, the scheme would accord with Policies SD2, SD9 and SD11.

Sustainability

- 7.51 The applicant intends to include the following sustainability measures within the proposed development:
- Roof-integrated photovoltaic tiles;
 - Ground-source heat pump;
 - Electric vehicles and bicycle charging;
 - Rainwater harvesting and recycling;
 - Low-energy devices;

- Compost toilet and reedbed system; and
 - The re-use of existing materials on site.
- 7.52 The dwelling would not be connected to the electrical grid. Instead, solar panels in the form of photovoltaic slates would clad the roof, with solar power feeding a 12-volt battery. Heating would be provided via underfloor heating from a ground source heat pump. Foul waste would be managed via a compost toilet and reedbed system.
- 7.53 Officers note the comments from the Parish Council regarding the legitimacy of the proposed sustainability credentials. The applicant has aspirations, as set out in the application submission, to be as environmentally friendly as possible. It is understood that the existing water connection would be retained but water saving measures are to be deployed to reduce any reliance on mains water. Policy SD48 encourages all new developments to incorporate sustainable design features, as appropriate to the scale and type of development. There is no requirement for the dwelling to be 'off-grid', however, the proposed measures are considered appropriate and a benefit of the proposed development.
- 7.54 Further, the proposed re-use of an existing building, albeit with a degree of reconstruction and conversion works, is considered a benefit in terms of reducing carbon emissions. A condition is recommended requiring the submission of sustainability measures (Condition 13) to ensure that any benefits are realised. This would be in accordance with Policy SD48.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 7.55 The proposed development would be in broad accordance with Policy SD32, and in accordance with Paragraph 84 of the NPPF. The proposal is considered to constitute an appropriate reuse of a redundant building, and its conversion would conserve and enhance the application site, the wider area and the landscape character, whilst providing accommodation for a rural worker in perpetuity.
- 7.56 It is considered that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the character of the application site or surrounding area and will not unduly impact neighbouring amenities. The proposed development is exempt from statutory BNG but proposes a range of enhancements, which would be secured via condition. A number of sustainability measures are also proposed, which are a material benefit of the scheme.
- 7.57 The proposal is considered to accord with the Development Plan and is recommended for approval on this basis, subject to the matters set out below.

8. Reason for Recommendation and Conditions

8.1 It is recommended:

- 1) **That planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 8.2 and any amendments or other conditions required to address technical matters.**

8.2 Planning Conditions and Reasons

Time Limit

- I. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Approved plans and documents

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the plans listed below under the heading "Plans Referred to in Consideration of this Application".

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

Materials and landscaping

3. All external materials used in the construction of the development hereby approved shall match the type, texture, composition, colour, size and profile of those used on the existing building and shall be retained permanently as such, unless prior written consent is obtained from the Local Planning Authority to any variation.

Reason: To safeguard the appearance of the building and the character of the area.

4. Prior to the commencement of development, full details of both hard and soft landscaping works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include all planting details including species, boundary treatment and means of enclosure, car parking layout and surfacing materials. The development shall thereafter be carried out in full accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the character and amenity of the area, and to protect public apparatus.

Occupation

5. The occupation of the dwelling shall be limited to a person solely or mainly working, or last working, in the locality in agriculture as defined in Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, or in forestry, or a widow or widower of such a person, and to any resident dependants.

Reason: The dwelling is to be provided in support of the rural business where an unrestricted residential development would otherwise not be justified in this location.

Removal of Permitted Development Rights

6. Notwithstanding the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no buildings, structures or works as defined within Part 1 of Schedule 2, classes A - E inclusive of that Order, shall be erected or undertaken on the site unless permission is granted by the Local Planning Authority pursuant to an application for the purpose.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to regulate and control the development of land.

7. Notwithstanding the provisions of Part 2, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure and no building as defined in Section 336 of the

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 shall be erected at the site, unless permission is granted by the Local Planning Authority pursuant to an application for the purpose.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to regulate and control the development of land.

Amenity

8. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, details of the proposed refuse and recycling storage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in full accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure an adequate and satisfactory provision.

Water and drainage

9. Prior to above ground works, details of the proposed compost toilet and reedbed system shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in full accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure an adequate and satisfactory provision.

10. The development hereby permitted shall not commence unless and until details of the proposed surface water drainage and means of disposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The building shall not be occupied or brought into use, until all the approved drainage works have been carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To ensure that the proposal is satisfactorily drained.

Dark Night Skies

11. No external lighting shall be installed on the building or within the site unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to protect the South Downs International Dark Skies Reserve and protected species.

12. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted, the windows and doors will be fitted with glazing with a visible light transmission range of 0.65 +/- 0.05 and shall be permanently retained in that condition thereafter. The glazing will be fitted with automated blackout blinds/curtains and shall be permanently retained in that condition thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to protect the South Downs International Dark Skies Reserve and protected species.

Sustainability

13. No development shall take place until a sustainability strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter, the sustainability measures shall be implemented in full accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure an environmentally sustainable development.

14. Prior to above ground works, details of cycle parking/storage for the dwelling shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved cycle parking / storage details shall be implemented prior to the occupation of the development and thereafter retained.

Reason: To provide for alternative modes of transport.

Trees, Ecology and BNG

15. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted a full Arboricultural Method Statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority which shall include numbering and detailing trees, confirming root protection areas, routing of service trenches, overhead services and carriageway positions and any details of no dig techniques along with associated use of geotextiles and an indication of the methodology for necessary ground treatments to deal with compacted areas of soil. The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity and the landscape character of the area.

16. Development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the measures set out in Section 5. '*Impact Assessment, Mitigation and Enhancements*' of the submitted Ecological Impact Assessment by Imprint Ecology (August), unless varied by a European Protected Species (EPS) license or a Bat Mitigation Class Licence issued by Natural England. Thereafter, any replacement bat roost features shall be permanently maintained and retained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the favourable conservation status of bats.

17. Prior to the commencement of development, a single bat emergence survey shall be completed and submitted to the Local Authority alongside a statement of actions to inform the bat mitigation license. No works shall commence until the Local Planning Authority is satisfied, and has confirmed in writing, that the status of the roost has not changed and the mitigation provided is still relevant.

Reason: To ensure the favourable conservation status of bats.

18. No development shall take place until an Ecological Design Strategy (EDS) addressing ecological compensation and enhancement in accordance with the submitted 'Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy Statement' has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter, the EDS shall be implemented in full accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that any adverse environmental impacts of development activities can be mitigated, compensated and restored.

19. The development hereby permitted shall be constructed and occupied as a self-build/custom build dwelling, as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 for a period of at least three years from the date of the first occupation of the dwelling.

Reason: The development is exempt from biodiversity net gain because it is self-build/custom build residential development.

Informatives

1. Community Infrastructure Levy

The proposed development referred to in this planning permission is liable to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

In accordance with CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended), the South Downs National Park Authority will issue a Liability Notice in respect of the chargeable development referred to in this planning permission as soon as practicable.

Please note that failure to comply with the CIL Regulations may result in you forfeiting any reliefs which might be available.

Further details on CIL can be found on the South Downs National Park Authority website. If you have any further questions, then please email CIL@southdowns.gov.uk.

2. Pre-commencement Conditions

This permission contains pre-commencement conditions which require specific matters to be approved by the Local Planning Authority before a specified stage in the development occurs. This means that a lawful commencement of the approved development / works cannot be made until the particular requirements of the pre-commencement conditions have been met.

Please be advised that a formal consent will need to be made to discharge the details of these conditions. This process may be subject to a fee.

Please also note that this approval process may take up to 8 weeks from the date of the request.

3. Approved Plans

The development hereby permitted must be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and specifications unless the prior approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority has been obtained.

If changes are proposed, you should first contact the Local Planning Authority to obtain the necessary approval. Any changes carried out without permission may render the applicant / developer liable to enforcement, stop notice or other legal proceedings in order to rectify the matter.

4. Wildlife and Countryside Legislation

Your attention is drawn to the provisions of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and in particular to Sections 1 and 9. These make it an offence to:

- kill or injure any wild bird,
- damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird (when the nest is being built or is in use),
- damage or destroy any place which certain wild animals use for shelter (including all bats and certain moths),
- disturb certain wild animals occupying a place for shelter (again, all bats and certain moths).

The onus is therefore on you to ascertain whether such birds, animals or insects may be nesting or using the tree(s), the subject of this consent, and to ensure you do not contravene the legislation. This may, for example, require delaying works until after the nesting season for birds. The nesting season for birds can be considered to be March to September.

You are advised to contact Natural England for further information.

5. Commencement Notices

Under Section 93G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), this decision notice informs you that a 'commencement notice' must be served on the Local Planning Authority – subsections (2) and (3) are set out below:

(1) Before the development is begun, the person proposing to carry it out must give a notice (a "commencement notice") to the local planning authority specifying the date on which the person expects the development to be begun.

(2) Once a person has given a commencement notice, the person—

- may give a further commencement notice substituting a new date for the date previously given, and
- must do so if the development is not commenced on the date previously given.

The notice should be provided to the Local Planning Authority a minimum of seven (7) days before the development commences.

Failure to provide the commencement notice could lead to the Local Planning Authority serving notice on them to require information to be provided, and if that is not provided within 21 days, they will be guilty of an offence, as below:

- (1) Where it appears to the local planning authority that a person has failed to comply with the requirements of subsection (2) or (3)(b), they may serve a notice on any relevant person requiring the relevant person to give the authority such of the information prescribed under subsection (4)(a) as the notice may specify.
- (2) A person on whom a notice under subsection (5) is served is guilty of an offence if they fail to give the information required by the notice within the period of 21 days beginning with the day on which it was served.
- (3) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (7) is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.

PLEASE NOTE: The requirement under Section 93G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) is separate from any requirements under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended).

6. Building Regulations

Compliance with the Building Regulations will be required and before commencing works, it is recommended that discussions take place with the Building Control section of Horsham District Council.

Where a building regulations approval differs from your planning permission, you should discuss this matter with the Local Planning Authority.

Tim Slaney

Director of Placemaking

South Downs National Park Authority

Contact Officer: Philippa Smyth

Tel: 01730 819296

Email: Philippa.Smyth@southdowns.gov.uk

Appendices: I Information concerning consideration of applications before committee

SDNPA Consultees: Director of Placemaking, Legal Services.

Background Documents: [SDNP/25/00799/FUL All planning application plans, supporting documents, and consultation and third party responses](#)