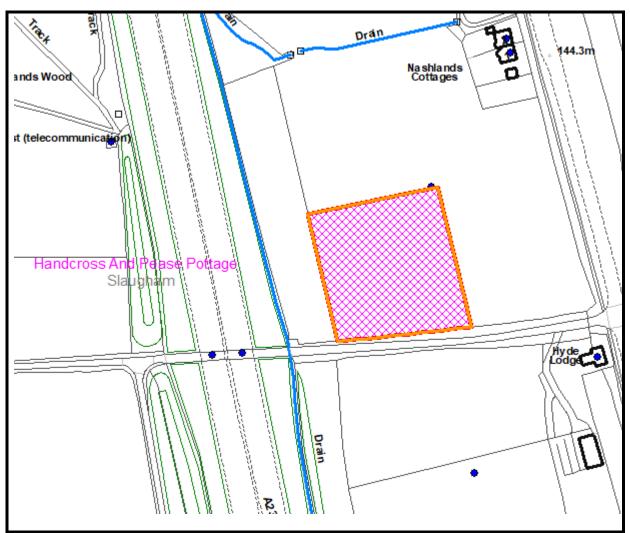
# **Planning Committee**



# **Recommended for Permission**

7th December 2023

# DM/23/2398



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Site:	Land To The West Of London Road Handcross West Sussex			
Proposal:	Change of Use of Land from unused agricultural land to day care facility for Rooddog (Doggy Day Care) to include a reception timber cabin (3m x 6m) and 4 x timber cabins for dog shelters (3m x 4m each), re-use of the existing access gate and fencing to the perimeter of the site.			
Applicant:	Mr Matthew Rood			
Category:	Minor Other			
Target Date:	14th November 2023			

Parish:	Slaugham
Ward Members:	Cllr Eric Prescott /
Case Officer:	Katherine Williams

## Link to Planning Documents:

https://pa.midsussex.gov.uk/onlineapplications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=S0Z0YSKT0G200

# 1.0 <u>Purpose of Report</u>

1.1 To consider the recommendation of the Assistant Director for Planning and Sustainable Economy on the application for planning permission as detailed above.

# 2.0 Executive Summary

- 2.1 Planning permission is sought for the change of use of land from agricultural land to day care facility for Rooddog (Doggy Day Care) to include a reception timber cabin (3m x 6m) and 4 x timber cabins for dog shelters (3m x 4m each), re-use of the existing access gate and fencing to the perimeter of the site on land to the west of London Road, Handcross within the countryside and the High Weald AONB.
- 2.2 This application has been called into committee by Cllr Prescott and seconded by Cllr Marsh due to the impact on the AONB and countryside landscape, along with the creation of business activity which Is unsuitable to the location.
- 2.3 Planning legislation requires the application to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It is therefore necessary for the planning application to be assessed against the policies in the development plan and then to take account of other material planning considerations including the NPPF.
- 2.4 The proposal represents small scale economic development in the countryside and is acceptable in terms of its principle, design, size and scale which is in proportion and appropriate to the rural character of the site and the landscape of the AONB. It would not result in the coalescence of settlements or cause significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties and is acceptable in terms of the impact on the highway and parking provision.
- 2.5 It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with Mid Sussex District Plan policies DP1, DP12, DP13, DP16, DP21, DP26, and DP29 policies 1 and 12 of the Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

# 3.0 <u>Recommendation</u>

3.1 It is recommended that planning permission be approved subject to the conditions outlined at Appendix A.

# 4.0 <u>Summary of Representations</u>

- 4.1 49 letters of representation have been received which raise the following concerns:
  - field is still used for agriculture, livestock and crops
  - proposal would result in the loss of agricultural land
  - loss of green space, contrary to Neighbourhood Plan
  - coalescence between Handcross and Pease Pottage
  - shipping containers and portaloos would out of keeping with the character of the area
  - impact on ecology and would obstruct nature
  - impact on ancient woodland
  - impact on trees and hedging
  - impact on the AONB
  - adverse impact on the surrounding countryside and character of the area
  - noise and disturbance from dogs
  - the noise impact has not been addressed by the noise statement
  - significant harm to amenities of neighbours
  - impact on neighbouring properties views (Officer Comment: An impact on view is not a planning consideration)
  - close proximity to the school
  - impact on property prices (Officer Comment: Impact on property prices are not a planning consideration)
  - increased vehicular movements, noise and highway safety
  - should a dog escape it could cause a collision
  - increase on street parking and congestion
  - business would not benefit local community, customers located in the Brighton area
  - unsustainable due to distance from clients
  - future impact on further development and expansion of the business (Officer Comment: The application can only consider that current proposal)
  - not a suitable business to be located near residential properties or the countryside
  - Application states that Hyde Lodge owns the land, incorrect (Officer Comment: The application has been submitted with Certificate B and has served notice on the owners)
  - proposal blocks access to the rest of the field and adjoining fields
  - contrary to neighbourhood plan policies
  - proposal would create a precedents for further commercial use (Officer Comment: Each application is considered on its own merits and precedents is not a planning consideration)
  - if proposed it requires robust conditions including hours, numbers of dogs, restriction of activities
  - proposal requires license from the Local Authority (Officer Comment: This matters of separate from planning legislation)
  - no information regarding storage of waste
  - no information regarding access to water and heating (Officer Comment: This is not a planning matter)

- development not included in the Neighbourhood Plan
- flooding and pollution

# 5.0 <u>Summary of Consultees</u>

- 5.1 West Sussex County Council: No objection and recommend conditions following the submission of further information
- 5.2 MSDC Environmental Health: No objection, recommend conditions

# 6.0 <u>Town/Parish Council Observations</u>

6.1 Slaugham Parish Council: Object. Whilst this application differs slightly from DM/23/1852 the Parish Council re iterates its view namely: SPC Object. The SPC planning committee object to this proposal and consider it 'non-agricultural' development within the AONB. It reduces the green buffer zone between the 2 villages of Handcross and Pease Pottage and is strategic planning creep from the Hyde Estate. Traffic speed and congestion is a problem within the immediate area being adjacent to the schools and doctor's surgery. The local disturbance to from dogs barking is also considered to be an unwelcome imposition on local residents. We also note that this site is not registered with DEFRA.

We would also note that the Slaugham NHP particularly Policy 1 seeks to protect the local environments from this type of industrialisation. Policy 3 also seeks to maintain Green Infrastructure, which this proposal would break. The NPPF makes clear that conservation areas like an AONB are 'heritage assets' that and are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. We consider this site is one such asset. Furthermore, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to resist the coalescing of the villages, which this this application seeks to achieve.

The application seeks to create an alien urban intrusion into the AONB and is entirely out of keeping with the rural character of the location.

Applications within the AONB are required to show some enhancement or benefit to the AONB. This application offers no benefit to the AONB or the local community. The application is inaccurate in that it suggests that the land is redundant. The land has been regularly cropped until very recently. The position of the proposed fencing will, however, ensure that farm equipment will not be able to access the remainder of the field as the only access is through the gate leading to the compounds. The majority of the dogs being brought to the facility will be from outside of the Parish. There is no benefit to the community. Similar facilities are available in an adjoining Parish.

## 7.0 Introduction

7.1 The application seeks planning permission for the change of use of land from unused agricultural land to day care facility for Rooddog (Doggy Day Care) to include a reception timber cabin (3m x 6m) and 4 x timber cabins for dog shelters (3m x 4m each), re-use of the existing access gate and fencing to the perimeter of the site.

## 8.0 Relevant Planning History

8.1 DM/23/1852 - (Amended Plans received 31/07/2023 to amend the height of the perimeter fencing) Change of Use of Land from unused agricultural land to day care facility for Rooddog (Doggy Day Care) to include 2 shipping containers (12.2 x 2.5m each), 1 port-a-loo and fencing. Withdrawn

## 9.0 Site and Surroundings

- 9.1 The application site is located off the western side of London Road within the countryside and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The A23 lies to the west with Nashlands Cottages to the north east.
- 9.2 The locality is characterised by loose knit sporadic residential and agricultural properties with open fields and areas of woodland. The highway is lined by mature hedging on the western side and woodland to the eastern side which contributes to the verdant character of the area.
- 9.3 The site comprises of the south western corner of the existing field, is roughly rectangular in shape, measuring some 64m by 68m and has an area of approximately 0.43 hectares. The existing field entrance off the northern side of the access road into the Hyde Estate, which is approximately 115 metres from the existing junction onto London Road, would be used to access the site.
- 9.4 The field is line by mature hedging and trees with an area of woodland to the western side which separates the field from the A23.

## 10.0 Application Details

- 10.1 The proposal includes perimeter chain link fence with an overall height of 1.8 metres. This fencing would also divide the main day care area into four sections with smaller 'puppy creche' and 'wash area' in the two southern sections. These areas would adjoin onto a gravel parking area and storage area.
- 10.2 Each of the four pens would have an area of timber decking and a timber cabin, these are positioned within the centre of the four pens with the decking area of a width and length of some 22 metres and 10 metres. Each of the four cabins would be of the same design and form with a width and depth of approximately 4 metres and 3 metres, with a pitch roof and an overall height and eaves height of some 2.5 metres and 2 metres.
- 10.3 The proposal includes a timber reception building which would be positioned within the parking area. This building would have a width and depth of 6 metres and 3 metres with a flat roof and an overall height of some 2.5 metres.
- 10.4 The proposal also includes a portaloo within the parking area.
- 10.5 The proposed dog care use would have up to 30 dogs at any one time with three employees, 10 dogs per employee. The dogs will be rotated throughout the four sections of the site throughout the day to keep them occupied.
- 10.6 The dogs will be brought to the site between 8:30 and 09:30 Monday to Friday by the employees and will be taken home between 15:00 and 16:00. The business would not operate in evenings or weekends.

# 11.0 Legal Framework and List of Policies

- 11.1 Planning legislation holds that the determination of a planning application shall be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 11.2 Specifically Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states:

"In dealing with such an application the authority shall have regard to:

a) The provisions of the development plan, so far as material to application,

b) And local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, and

c) Any other material considerations."

11.3 Section 38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides:

*"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."* 

- 11.4 Under section 38(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 if a policy contained in a development plan for an area conflicts with another policy in the development plan, the conflict must be resolved in favour of the policy which is contained in the last document to be adopted, approved or published.
- 11.5 Using this as the starting point the development plan for this part of Mid Sussex consists of the District Plan, Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan and the Site Allocation DPD.
- 11.6 National policy (which is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Policy Guidance) does not form part of the development plan but is an important material consideration.

## Mid Sussex District Plan

11.7 The District Plan was adopted at Full Council on the 28th March 2018. Relevant policies;

DP1 - Sustainable economic development DP12 - Protection and enhancement of the countryside DP13 – Preventing Coalescence DP16 - High Weald AONB DP21 - Transport DP26 - Character and Design DP29 - Noise, Air and light pollution

## Site Allocation DPD

11.8 The SADPD was adopted on 29th June 2022. It allocates sufficient housing and employment land to meet identified needs to 2031. No policies are considered relevant to this application.

## Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan

11.9 The Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in September 2019. Relevant policies include:

Policy 1 – Protecting the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Policy 12 – Economic Development

# Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039 Consultation Draft

11.10 The District Council is now in the process of reviewing and updating the District Plan. The new District Plan 2021 - 2039 will replace the current adopted District Plan. The draft District Plan 2021-2039 was published for public consultation on 7th November and the Regulation 18 Consultation period ran to 19th December 2022. No weight can currently be given to the plan due to the very early stage that it is at in the review process.

# Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

11.11 The Council has adopted a 'Mid Sussex Design Guide' SPD that aims to help deliver high quality development across the district that responds appropriately to its context and is inclusive and sustainable. The Design Guide was adopted by Council on 4th November 2020 as an SPD for use in the consideration and determination of planning applications. The SPD is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

## National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (September 2023)

11.12 The NPPF is a material consideration with specific reference to decision-taking paragraph 47 states that planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

# **Other Planning Guidance**

11.13 High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024

# 12.0 <u>Assessment</u>

- 12.1 The main issues for consideration are:
  - Principle of Development;
  - Coalescence
  - Impacts on the character of the countryside and AONB
  - Impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties;
  - Impact on highway safety and parking provision
  - Other Matters
  - Planning balance and conclusion.

# Principal of Development

12.2 Planning legislation holds that the determination of a planning application shall be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 12.3 Using this as the starting point, the development plan in Mid Sussex consists of the Mid Sussex District Plan (2018), the Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan and Site Allocation DPD.
- 12.4 Policy DP12 of the Mid Sussex District Plan states:

'The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of builtup area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:

- it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or
- it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.

District Plan policy DP1 concerns sustainable economic development and states in part:

*Provision for new employment land and premises will be made by:* 

Allowing new small-scale economic development, in the countryside, including tourism (in accordance with Development in the Countryside policies).'

12.5 Policy DP16 specifically addresses development in the AONB. It states:

'Development within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as shown on the Policies Maps, will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, in particular;

- the identified landscape features or components of natural beauty and to their setting;
- the traditional interaction of people with nature, and appropriate land management;
- character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern, sense of place and setting of the AONB; and
- the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.

Small scale proposals which support the economy and social well-being of the AONB that are compatible with the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty will be supported.

Development on land that contributes to the setting of the AONB will only be permitted where it does not detract from the visual qualities and essential characteristics of the AONB, and in particular should not adversely affect the views into and out of the AONB by virtue of its location or design.'

12.6 Policy 1 of the Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan states:

'The extent of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is shown

on the Proposals Map.

Development proposals within the High Weald AONB will only be supported where they conserve or enhance natural beauty and have regard to the High

Weald AONB Management Plan in particular:

- The identified landscape features or components of landscape beauty and to their setting;
- The traditional interaction of people with nature and appropriate landscape management;
- Character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern, sense of place and setting of the AONB; and
- The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.

Small scale proposals which support the local economy and social wellbeing of the AONB will be supported where they are compatible with the conservation and enhancement of the AONB.

Development proposals on land that contribute to the setting of the AONB will only be permitted where it does not detract from the visual qualities and essential characteristics of the AONB, and in particular does not adversely affect the views into, and out of, the AONB by virtue of its location and/or design.'

12.7 Policy 12 of the Neighbourhood Plan relates to economic development and states:

<sup>•</sup>Proposals which enable the development of business uses within the Parish will be supported where proposals are:

- Located in a sustainable location;
- In keeping with the character of the area;
- Respect residential amenity; and
- Would not have an unacceptable impact on the local road network.'
- 12.8 Paras 84 and 85 of the NPPF are relevant to the consideration of the application and concern 'supporting a prosperous rural economy'. They state:

84. Planning policies and decisions should enable:

a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;

c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and

d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

85. Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

- 12.9 The number of dogs and employees proposed for the development amounts to new small-scale economic development within the countryside and the AONB which would support the vitality of the rural economy. As set out further below in the report, due to the scale and design of the proposal, it is considered that the development would respect the character of the countryside and would conserve the AONB and therefore comply with policy DP16 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and policy 1 of the Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan.
- 12.10 Access to the site via alternatives to private cars is limited and the site is not considered to be a sustainable location, which is a requirement of policy 12 of the Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan. However, any development in the countryside has the potential not to be sustainably located. This requirement conflicts with the requirements of policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan and policies DP1 and DP16 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, which support small scale development in the countryside and which is also supported by national policy set out in paras. 84 and 85 of the NPPF identified above.
- 12.11 Given the conflict between policies 1 and 12 of this Neighbourhood Plan, the small scale of the proposal and the nature its use, with only staff driving to and from the site to reduce vehicular movements, it is considered that the principle of this development is acceptable in this instance.

## **Coalescence**

12.12 Coalescence has been raised within letters of representation received. This is addressed under policy DP13 of the District Plan which states:

'The individual towns and villages in the District each have their own unique characteristics. It is important that their separate identity is maintained. When travelling between settlements people should have a sense that they have left one before arriving at the next.

Provided it is not in conflict with Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside, development will be permitted if it does not result in the coalescence of settlements which harms the separate identity and amenity of settlements, and would not have an unacceptably urbanising effect on the area between settlements.

Local Gaps can be identified in Neighbourhood Plans or a Site Allocations Development Plan Document, produced by the District Council, where there is robust evidence that development within the Gap would individually or cumulatively result in coalescence and the loss of the separate identity and amenity of nearby settlements. Evidence must demonstrate that existing local and national policies cannot provide the necessary protection.'

- 12.13 The Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan specifically mentions coalescence under Aim 1, however, there is no specific policy.
- 12.14 The application site is some 1.9km from the built up area of Pease Pottage which lies to the north site. Given this, and the single storey nature of the structures, it is

not considered that the proposal would result in coalescence of Handcross and Pease Pottage and would maintain the distinctive identities of both settlements.

## Impacts on the character of the countryside and AONB

- 12.15 The legal framework for AONBs in England and Wales is provided by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000 which at Section 82 reaffirms the primary purpose of AONBs: to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Section 84 of the CRoW requires Local Planning Authorities to 'take all such action as appears to them expedient for accomplishment of the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB'.
- 12.16 Mid Sussex District Plan policy DP16 states: 'Development within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as shown on the Policies Maps, will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, in particular;
  - the identified landscape features or components of natural beauty and to their setting;
  - the traditional interaction of people with nature, and appropriate land management;
  - character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern, sense of place and setting of the AONB; and
  - the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.

Small scale proposals which support the economy and social well-being of the AONB that are compatible with the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty will be supported.

Development on land that contributes to the setting of the AONB will only be permitted where it does not detract from the visual qualities and essential characteristics of the AONB, and in particular'

- 12.17 The ethos of this policies is echoed in policy 1 of the Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan.
- 12.18 A similar ethos is found within The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan requiring proposals to conserve and enhance the AONB.
- 12.19 Paragraphs 176 of the NPPF states that:

'176. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.'

#### 12.21 Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan states:

'All development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, will be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development:

- is of high quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;
- contributes positively to, and clearly defines, public and private realms and should normally be designed with active building frontages facing streets and public open spaces to animate and provide natural surveillance;
- creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;
- protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;
- protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;
- does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution (see Policy DP27);
- creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;
- incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;
- positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;
- take the opportunity to encourage community interaction by creating layouts with a strong neighbourhood focus/centre; larger (300+ unit) schemes will also normally be expected to incorporate a mixed use element;
- optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development.'
- 12.22 A similar ethos for high quality design and character is found within the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD.
- 12.23 The proposal would be located within the south-western corner of the field, which is set away from the public highway and would be partly obscured from view due to the distance and the existing boundary hedging. The proposal includes 5 No. timber cabins, which are of a modest scale and form which would be appropriate and reflect the rural character of the locality and would conserve the natural beauty of the AONB.
- 12.24 The proposal also includes 1.8 metre high chain link fencing around the perimeter of the site as well as within the site create smaller enclosed areas. The design of

the fencing would not create a solid barrier and would allow views through the site and to the countryside beyond, which would reduce the visual prominence of the fencing. Notwithstanding this, the fencing could be erected without requiring planning permission.

12.25 Due to this the proposal is considered not to have a negative impact on the character of the countryside and would conserve the AONB and would comply with policies DP16 and DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

#### Impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties

12.26 DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan states:

'does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution (see Policy DP29);'

12.27 Policy DP29 of the Mid Sussex District Plan states:

'The environment, including nationally designated environmental sites, nationally protected landscapes, areas of nature conservation or geological interest, wildlife habitats, and the quality of people's life will be protected from unacceptable levels of noise, light and air pollution by only permitting development where:

Noise pollution:

- It is designed, located and controlled to minimise the impact of noise on health and quality of life, neighbouring properties and the surrounding area;
- If it is likely to generate significant levels of noise it incorporates appropriate noise attenuation measures;

Noise sensitive development, such as residential, will not be permitted in close proximity to existing or proposed development generating high levels of noise unless adequate sound insulation measures, as supported by a noise assessment are incorporated within the development.

In appropriate circumstances, the applicant will be required to provide:

- an assessment of the impact of noise generated by a proposed development; or
- an assessment of the effect of noise by an existing noise source upon a proposed development;

• • •

The degree of the impact of noise and light pollution from new development or change of use is likely to be greater in rural locations, especially where it is in or close to specially designated areas and sites.'

12.28 To the north of the application site is No.s 1 and 2 Nashlands Cottages, which back onto the field and face onto the western side of London Road. These properties would be some 78 metres from the proposal. To the east of the site is Hyde Lodge, which faces onto London Road and is located to the southern side of the Hyde Estate junction with the public highway. This neighbour is approximately 64 metres from the application site.

12.29 The Council's Environmental Heath Officer has been consulted on the application and has provided the following comments:

'The proximity of the site to residential premises has potential to significantly affect residential amenity by way of noise, particularly disturbance from dog barking, howling, whining etc. Given how noisy large numbers of dogs can be, it is inevitable that there will be some level of disturbance to those within earshot. There will also be some masking effect due to traffic noise at this location.

The actual level of noise and disturbance likely to be caused by the development is impossible to predict as it depends on a number of variables eg number of dogs on site, dog size and temperament, how well dogs are managed etc. The dogs are to be present during the daytime Mon to Fri with a maximum of 30 dogs at any time and 1 staff member per 10 dogs. A comprehensive noise management plan should limit the amount of disturbance.'

- 12.30 The officer concluded that with comprehensive conditions the amenities of surrounding neighbouring properties would be protected. These conditions include restrictions on the Construction and Operational hours, along with a submission of a noise management plan to set out protection measures such as steps to manage noise sources and triggers, policies on persistently noisy dogs, along with staff training and break cover.
- 12.31 The application site is located at least 64 metres from the closest neighbouring dwelling, and although it is noted that structures and fencing my be visible from these neighbours the proposal would not have an overbearing impact or result in a loss of outlook.
- 12.32 The business would operate between 08:30 and 16:00 Monday to Friday, and would not operate during weekends or evenings. In addition to this the application site is located within close proximity to A23 which increases the background noise levels within the area.
- 12.33 The number of dogs on the site would be limited to 30 with 3 members of staff who would monitor the dogs throughout the day as well as keeping them occupier. Given this along with the recommended conditions put forward by Environmental Health it is considered that the proposal would not cause significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties.

#### Impact on highway safety and parking provision

12.34 Policy DP21 of the District Plan states:

'Development will be required to support the objectives of the West Sussex Transport Plan 2011-2026, which are:

- A high quality transport network that promotes a competitive and prosperous economy;
- A resilient transport network that complements the built and natural environment whilst reducing carbon emissions over time;
- Access to services, employment and housing; and
- A transport network that feels, and is, safer and healthier to use.

To meet these objectives, decisions on development proposals will take account of whether:

- The scheme is sustainably located to minimise the need for travel noting there might be circumstances where development needs to be located in the countryside, such as rural economic uses (see policy DP14: Sustainable Rural Development and the Rural Economy);
- Appropriate opportunities to facilitate and promote the increased use of alternative means of transport to the private car, such as the provision of, and access to, safe and convenient routes for walking, cycling and public transport, including suitable facilities for secure and safe cycle parking, have been fully explored and taken up;
- The scheme is designed to adoptable standards, or other standards as agreed by the Local Planning Authority, including road widths and size of garages;
- The scheme provides adequate car parking for the proposed development taking into account the accessibility of the development, the type, mix and use of the development and the availability and opportunities for public transport; and with the relevant Neighbourhood Plan where applicable;
- Development which generates significant amounts of movement is supported by a Transport Assessment/ Statement and a Travel Plan that is effective and demonstrably deliverable including setting out how schemes will be funded;
- The scheme provides appropriate mitigation to support new development on the local and strategic road network, including the transport network outside of the district, secured where necessary through appropriate legal agreements;
- The scheme avoids severe additional traffic congestion, individually or cumulatively, taking account of any proposed mitigation;
- The scheme protects the safety of road users and pedestrians; and
- The scheme does not harm the special qualities of the South Downs National Park or the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty through its transport impacts.

Where practical and viable, developments should be located and designed to incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

Neighbourhood Plans can set local standards for car parking provision provided that it is based upon evidence that provides clear and compelling justification for doing so.'

- 12.35 West Sussex County Council Highways Authority have commented on the application and following the submission of amended information have provided the following final comments:
- 12.36 'The proposal is to change the use of an existing agricultural field at Land to the West of London Road and create a dog daycare facility. The application has been flagged on the Mid Sussex RAGs report by the local ward member with multiple concerns raised. A site visit has therefore been undertaken to further assess the existing situation, the observations made have been taken into consideration whilst assessing this proposal.

This application follows a previously withdrawn application under DM/1852/23 for a similar proposal. Previously the Local Highways Authority (LHA) requested that the applicant provides a Transport Statement to support the proposal as this had not been prepared. The LHA then requested additional information to be provided

regarding the parking arrangements within the site as this had been referenced but not shown within the document. The applicant has now provided these details.

The Transport Planner and Agent have confirmed in correspondence, details pertaining to the parking arrangement and additional spaces have now been shown within the parking plan with swept path tracking for emergency vehicles having been updated.

#### Access

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Parking has been demonstrated for 15 vehicles. Through conversation with the Transport Planner it has been identified that "Large Vans" are in fact not proposed for use, but the current fleet of small vans as pictured within the TS. The agent has outlined that although the company own 11 vehicles, all 11 vehicles are not likely to be used at the site at any one time. Staff will commute to work in Roodogg vans therefore the staff and van parking will be a combined requirement. It is considered

therefore that 15 parking spaces will be sufficient to serve the likely demand generated by the proposal. A swept path diagram has been prepared demonstrating that those vehicles are able to access the parking area and use the parking spaces provided before turning to egress the site in a forwards gear.

Similarly tracking has also been provided for emergency vehicles to show a Fire Appliance is able to enter the site, turn and egress in a forward gear.

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The proposal outlines that 12 vehicle movements will be anticipated in the morning and 12 in the evening peak periods. However it is not considered that an additional 12 movements during these peak times would give rise to a severe material increase in vehicular movements along London Road over that currently generated. On balance, the LHA would not be in a position to substantiate any refusal of this application based upon 12 additional vehicular movements in AM/PM peak periods.

The LHA note representations showing concern over this number of movements given the local schools and surgery, given the level of representations made regarding this issue, the LPA may wish to request that the applicant stagger the trips in intervals to mitigate these pressures and alleviate further concern.

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Representations within the planning portal have outlined that the Agricultural use has been in practise until very recently. The precedent of agricultural farming, harvesting and maintenance vehicles making use of this access therefore alludes to the fact that this access actively serves an existing vehicular use. The number of vehicular movements generated though are unclear but there are no known Highway Safety concerns with the current practise.

Similarly, concerns were raised within the RAGs report for intensifying this portion of London Road given the presence of two schools and a Dr surgery to the south. School uses will often generate an increase in the number of vehicular movements during an AM and PM peak period, surgeries tend to provide a regular churn of visitors throughout the day with no specific peak periods. London Road due to its proximity to the A23 may also be used as a through route to Balcome for instance or Crawley to the north. Handcross Primary school is located approx 215 metres south of the site access within the 30mph zone. Handcross Park School is situated approx 330 metres south and is served via a privately maintained access used solely for the school. The Dr Surgery is located 392 metres from the site access and has designated parking for visitors/clients/staff to use.

Many local representations refer to existing illegal parking and dangerous driving issues within the village. Any parking that occurs on the public highway in a dangerous position on road or obstructing free passage of highway could be dealt with as an offence under Section 22 Road Traffic Act 1988 and Section 137 Highways Act 1980 (respectively). Both of these acts are enforceable by Sussex Police. This can be reported via the Sussex Police Operation Crackdown website.

Sufficient parking provision has been included within the site to ensure that overspill parking does not occur within the Publicly Maintained Highway. Therefore it is unlikely that the proposal would exacerbate any existing parking strain along London Road.

#### Conclusion

The LHA does not consider that the proposal would have a 'severe' impact on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (para 111), and there are no known transport grounds to resist the proposal.'

12.37 The proposal would utilise an existing access onto the pubic highway and would reduce the number of vehicular movements per days by employees bringing the dogs to the site instead of their owners. Given this and the above comments, it is considered that the proposal would provide sufficient parking and would not result in a severe impact on the operation od the highway network and is therefore acceptable.

# Other Matters

- 12.38 Concerns have been raised regarding the impact on the natural environment and wildlife along with the lack of an ecological reports. The proposal would be located within an existing agricultural field and would not result in the demolition, alteration or conversion of existing buildings. Ecological reports are only required on applications where it is a reasonable likelihood the following types are within or adjacent to the application and may be affected:
  - Protected species
  - Species of conservation concern including those listed as Species of Principal Importance in England under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC)Act 2006
  - Designated nature conservation sites (including those of geological conservation importance)
  - Habitats of conservation value, including those listed as Habitats of Principal Importance in England under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act2006
- 12.39 Having visited the site it is not considered that the above applies to the current proposal and that such reports are not required for this application. It should also be noted that protected species are also protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
- 12.40 Concerns have also been raised regarding the impact on trees and ancient woodland. It is noted that the perimeter of the site includes a number of trees. However the proposed works are considered to be of a sufficient distance from these trees not to cause harm. There are areas of ancient woodland with the wider locality however, these are a significant distance from the application site to ensure that there would be no impact on these areas
- 12.41 The closest areas of ancient woodland include Coopers Woodland, some 190 metres from the proposal, Nashlands Wood, located on the western side of the A23 approximately 100 metres from the site, and High Beeches Forest, to the eastern side of London Road and some 120 metres from the proposal.

# 13.0 Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 13.1 Planning legislation requires the application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It is therefore necessary for the planning application to be assessed against the policies in the Development Plan and then to take account of other material planning considerations including the NPPF.
- 13.2 The proposal represents small scale economic development in the countryside and is acceptable in terms of its principle, design, size and scale which is appropriate to the rural character of the site and the landscape of the AONB. It would not result in the coalescence of settlements or cause significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties and is acceptable in terms of the impact on the highway and parking provision.
- 13.3 The proposal is acceptable in terms of its principle, design, size and scale which is in proportion and appropriate to the rural character of the site and the landscape of the AONB, would not cause coalescence or significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties, and acceptable in terms of the impact on the highway and parking provision.
- 13.4 It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with Mid Sussex District Plan policies DP1, DP12, DP13, DP16, DP21, DP26, and DP29 policies 1 and 12 of the Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

# **APPENDIX A – RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

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 interest of proper planning.

3. No external materials shall be used other than those specified on the approved plans and application details without the prior approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the appearance of the building and the area and to accord with Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

- 4. The use hereby permitted shall not commence until a Noise Management Plan (NMP) for that use has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The NMP shall include:
  - Maximum number of dogs to be permitted on site

- Identification of noise sources eg barking, and triggers eg visitors, other dogs, wildlife etc
- Steps to manage noise sources and triggers eg visitor access, visual barriers etc
- Policy for persistently noisy dogs, un-neutered male dogs and bitches in heat
- Staff training, staff cover for breaks, illness etc
- Use of calm zone/timeout for noisy dogs
- Procedure and contact details for addressing noise complaints from neighbours

The NMP shall be implemented in full on occupation (initial or subsequent) and complied with thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the amenity of neighbouring residents and to accord with Policy DP29 of Mid Sussex District Plan.

5. Works of construction or demolition, including the use of plant and machinery, necessary for implementation of this consent shall be limited to the following times:

Monday - Friday 08:00 - 18:00 Hours Saturday 09:00 - 13:00 Hours Sundays and Bank/Public Holidays no work permitted

Reason: To protect the amenity of neighbouring residents and to accord with Policy DP29 of Mid Sussex District Plan.

6. Hours of Use (operational): no commercial activity is permitted unless within the following hours -

0830 to 1700 hours, Mon - Fri.

Reason: To protect the amenity of neighbouring residents and to accord with Policy DP29 of Mid Sussex District Plan.

7. No part of the development shall be first occupied until the vehicle parking and turning spaces have been constructed in accordance with the approved plan. These spaces shall thereafter be retained for their designated use.

Reason: To provide adequate on-site car parking and turning space for the development.

8. No development shall take place unless and until there full details of both hard and soft landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed with the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years from the completion of development, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and of the environment of the development and to accord with Policies DP26 and DP37 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

#### **INFORMATIVES**

- 1. Your attention is drawn to the requirements of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 with regard to your duty of care not to cause the neighbours of the site a nuisance. Accordingly, you are requested that:
  - Hours of construction/demolition on site are restricted only to: Mondays to Fridays 0800 - 1800 hrs, Saturdays 0900 - 1300 hrs, No construction/demolition work on Sundays or Public Holidays.
  - Measures shall be implemented to prevent dust generated on site from crossing the site boundary during the demolition/construction phase of the development.
  - No burning of materials shall take place on site at any time.

If you require any further information on these issues, please contact Environmental Protection on 01444 477292.

2. In accordance with 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.

#### Plans Referred to in Consideration of this Application

The following plans and documents were considered when making the above decision:

Plan Type	Reference	Version	Submitted Date
Location Plan			14.09.2023
Block Plan			14.09.2023
Proposed Floor and Elevations Plan		14.09.2023	
Proposed Site Plan			14.09.2023

#### **APPENDIX B – CONSULTATIONS**

Slaugham Parish Council

Slaugham Parish Council: Object. Whilst this application differs slightly from DM/23/1852 the Parish Council re iterates its view namely: SPC Object. The SPC planning committee object to this proposal and consider it 'non-agricultural' development within the AONB. It reduces the green buffer zone between the 2 villages of Handcross and Pease Pottage and is strategic planning creep from the Hyde Estate. Traffic speed and congestion is a problem within the immediate area being adjacent to the schools and doctor's surgery. The local disturbance to from dogs barking is also considered to be an unwelcome imposition on local residents. We also note that this site is not registered with DEFRA.

We would also note that the Slaugham NHP particularly Policy 1 seeks to protect the local environments from this type of industrialisation. Policy 3 also seeks to maintain Green Infrastructure, which this proposal would break. The NPPF makes clear that conservation areas like an AONB are 'heritage assets' that and are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. We consider this site is one such asset. Furthermore, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to resist the coalescing of the villages, which this this application seeks to achieve.

The application seeks to create an alien urban intrusion into the AONB and is entirely out of keeping with the rural character of the location.

## **MSDC Environmental Health Officer**

The proximity of the site to residential premises has potential to significantly affect residential amenity by way of noise, particularly disturbance from dog barking, howling, whining etc. Given how noisy large numbers of dogs can be, it is inevitable that there will be some level of disturbance to those within earshot. There will also be some masking effect due to traffic noise at this location.

The actual level of noise and disturbance likely to be caused by the development is impossible to predict as it depends on a number of variables eg number of dogs on site, dog size and temperament, how well dogs are managed etc. The dogs are to be present during the daytime Mon to Fri with a maximum of 30 dogs at any time and 1 staff member per 10 dogs. A comprehensive noise management plan should limit the amount of disturbance.

If this development is approved, I recommend the following conditions in order to protect residential amenity:

## Conditions:

Construction hours: Works of construction or demolition, including the use of plant and machinery, necessary for implementation of this consent shall be limited to the following times:

Monday – Friday 08:00 - 18:00 Hours Saturday 09:00 - 13:00 Hours Sundays and Bank/Public Holidays no work permitted

Reason: to protect the amenity of local residents.

Hours of Use (operational): no commercial activity is permitted unless within the following hours -

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Noise Management Plan : The use hereby permitted shall not commence until a Noise Management Plan (NMP) for that use has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The NMP shall include:

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Procedure and contact details for addressing noise complaints from neighbours The NMP shall be implemented in full on occupation (initial or subsequent) and complied with thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the amenity of neighbouring residents and to accord with Policy DP29 of Mid Sussex District Plan.'

## WSCC Highways Authority:

The proposal is to change the use of an existing agricultural field at Land to the West of London Road and create a dog daycare facility. The application has been flagged on the Mid Sussex RAGs report by the local ward member with multiple concerns raised. A site visit has therefore been undertaken to further assess the existing situation, the observations made have been taken into consideration whilst assessing this proposal.

This application follows a previously withdrawn application under DM/1852/23 for a similar proposal. Previously the Local Highways Authority (LHA) requested that the applicant provides a Transport Statement to support the proposal as this had not been prepared. The LHA then requested additional information to be provided regarding the parking arrangements within the site as this had been referenced but not shown within the document. The applicant has now provided these details.

The Transport Planner and Agent have confirmed in correspondence, details pertaining to the parking arrangement and additional spaces have now been shown within the parking plan with swept path tracking for emergency vehicles having been updated.

#### Access

Direct access to the site is via the existing shared Hyde Estate access onto London Road, this route is privately maintained. A passing place exists along the private track to allow conflicting vehicles to pass. It is unclear whether the access into the field will be made up or left as a field access, the applicant is advised to contact the proprietor of the land in order to arrange any surfacing requirements at this access point.

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