

[REDACTED] **Walden
Felbridge
Sussex
RH19 2PT** [REDACTED]

Mrs Joanne Fisher
Planning Officer
Planning and Building
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
RH16 1SS

12th. May 2025

Dear Mrs Fisher,

Application No: DM/25/0773: Proposed conversion of an existing outbuilding to a two storey residential dwelling including its partial demolition. Removal of two outbuildings and erection of a detached 3 bay garage. Removal of existing hardstanding for the formation of a domestic garden.

Planning permission for such a conversion appears anyway to be precluded by council protocols such as DP12. Also, an earlier application for self-build housing was refused on grounds, *inter alia*, that the proposed development would not accord with planning policy regarding the location of housing development, as it would harm the character and appearance of the surroundings. The appeals inspector also considered the location of the proposal at odds with the spatial strategy for the area on grounds of consequential harm.

Comment

The conversion of hard standing into grassland is planned for only one-third of this site, meaning hard standing elsewhere will remain – and with it the noise nuisance of heavy plant and machinery. The applicant is permitted to repair *cars inside a building*. December to March saw a wholesale rearrangement of this yard. This included a month of bonfires - a reminder of the 2015 industrial waste-burning which the council's Oliver Benson finally brought to an end.

The applicant states that a 15-metre buffer zone will ensure no works will take place that would impact the Root Protection Zone around ancient woodland to the north, yet the applicant has already undertaken such building work: two sections of walling have been built further along this boundary, without any permission from me (or the council) and without any regard for a buffer zone. For the application to sound credible, this walling should be removed from my land, together with wooden fencing the applicant installed on my property in 2014.

The applicant states the proposed site is located within an existing rural area, with few commercial units in the vicinity. He also says the expanse of hardstanding has been used for vehicle storage but omits to state the use of this yard as a plant and machinery depot and breaker's yard. The proposed construction of a 6-car garage close to the roller-shutter workshop entrance on the applicant's southern boundary thus bodes ill for any cessation of the current noise nuisance.

The applicant acknowledges that light pollution can have a detrimental impact on quality of life of residents – yet his security lights point directly at my house. They glare intrusively all night long.

The applicant states traditional drainage systems will be sufficient since “there are no activities on site which lead to pollutants accumulating on hardstanding areas” – yet the breaking of vehicles clearly contradicts this assertion. Also, ash from the burning of waste (see above) plainly contributes to the pollution of surface water.

The applicant claims the site is not at risk of flooding, but the storm drain directly above my house currently discharges surface water from the whole two-acre yard onto ancient woodland I try to protect. The applicant’s recent reconstruction of this storm drain post-dates the 2011 Surface Water Act. Winter downpours are a constant reminder the yard empties into my property via a single storm drain - the yard being sloped to achieve this end. This is the storm drain in action in September:



More trees in this ancient woodland have recently died - including mature rowan and yew. Some of the hazel looks sickly. All lie in the path of the applicant’s storm drains. ‘Hobby’ vehicle-breaking is hardly contaminant-free. Contaminated industrial sites pose a risk to human health and wildlife, and increase the risk of cancer. Failure to re-route the applicant’s storm drains will leave 7 acres of ancient woodland at continuing risk.

Only when the above issues have been rectified should planning permission be considered.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]