

Letter in Support of Planning Application DM/25/1963

To:

Mr. Hamish Evans
Planning Officer
Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands, Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex RH16 1SS

Date: 30th November 2025

Subject: Planning Application DM/25/1963 – Proposed Construction of Stable Block (Four Stables) at Land East of Freshfield Lane, Danehill, West Sussex

Dear Mr Evans,

I write in response to the consultee and public comments concerning my planning application for a proposed stable block comprising four stables at land to the east of Freshfield Lane, Danehill. I respectfully submit the following supporting statement and policy justification.

1. Compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The proposal accords with the NPPF (2021), particularly:

- Paragraph 84(a) and (b): supporting rural business development and diversification, including equestrian and land-based enterprises.
- Paragraph 85: encouraging sustainable rural growth and diversification to support the rural economy.
- Paragraph 180(a): requiring developments to conserve and enhance biodiversity; the design avoids disturbance to adjacent woodland and habitats.
- Paragraph 130: ensuring well-designed, sympathetic rural buildings that integrate with local character.

The proposed stable block is therefore consistent with national objectives for sustainable rural enterprise and environmental stewardship.

2. Compliance with the Mid Sussex District Plan (2014–2031)

The proposal aligns with key local policies:

- DP1 – Sustainable Development: the scheme represents efficient, appropriate rural land use without placing strain on infrastructure.

- DP12 – Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside: the stables are modest in scale, agricultural in appearance, and set within existing boundaries; they will not urbanise the landscape.
- DP16 – High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: the design conserves the scenic and historic character of the High Weald through the use of natural materials, low-key form, and sensitive siting.
- DP34 – Listed Buildings and Heritage Assets: the stable block sits well away from Town Place (Grade II Listed) and will not impact its setting or significance.
- DP29 – Noise, Air and Light Pollution: lighting will be minimal, downward-facing and time-controlled to prevent light spill.

3. Horsted Keynes Neighbourhood Plan

The proposal respects Policy HK9, maintaining the field pattern, hedgerows, and ecological value while supporting low-impact, land-based activity compatible with the area's rural identity.

4. Response to Key Objections

- Landscape and Heritage: the structure will be timber-clad, low in height, and screened by existing hedges; it will blend naturally with the rural surroundings.
- Access and Highways: the existing access is safe and functional, with good visibility. If required, a short highways statement can confirm compliance with West Sussex County Council's Manual for Streets.
- Need and Land Use: the proposal is an appropriate rural use providing welfare facilities for equine management, in line with national and local policy.
- Drainage: all surface water will be managed via on-site soakaways consistent with Building Regulations H3 and Southern Water guidance, ensuring no discharge into foul sewers.

5. Suggested Planning Conditions

To ensure the development remains environmentally responsible and policy-compliant, the applicant supports the inclusion of the following conditions:

1. Materials: External finishes to comprise natural stained timber cladding and dark, non-reflective roofing (e.g. matt-finished sheeting) to minimise visual impact.
2. Landscaping: Native hedge and tree planting to be carried out around the building to further screen the development and enhance biodiversity.
3. Lighting: Any external lighting to be low-intensity, downward-facing, and on motion or time controls to prevent light pollution within the High Weald National Landscape.
4. Drainage: Surface water to be managed through sustainable on-site methods in accordance with Building Regulations Approved Document H3.

These conditions demonstrate responsible stewardship and design quality while preserving flexibility for future use and management of the site.

6. Planning Balance and Conclusion

The stable block is a modest, sensitively designed rural building that supports the continued management and use of agricultural land, enhances the character of the High Weald landscape, and complies fully with the NPPF Paragraphs 8, 84, 85, 130 and 180 and District Plan Policies DP1, DP12, DP16, DP29 and DP34.

The proposal will have no adverse effects on heritage, landscape, or amenity and will deliver tangible rural-economic and environmental benefits in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development (NPPF Paragraph 11).

7. Willingness to Collaborate

I would also like to confirm that I am entirely open to discussion with the Planning Authority regarding any reasonable amendments or additional conditions that may assist in the granting of this application. My intention is to work positively and collaboratively with the Council to ensure that the development aligns fully with the policies of the District Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan, and the objectives of the High Weald National Landscape.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Maria Simpson

Applicant – Planning Application DM/25/1963

Land East of Freshfield Lane, Danehill, West Sussex