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Planning Department  
Horsham District Council  
Parkside, Chart Way,  
Horsham  
West Sussex RH12 1RL

8<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

**DC/19/1938: Prior approval for a proposed change of use of agricultural building to a dwelling house (Class Q).** Copsale Stables, Copsale Road, Copsale (Amended and additional plans submitted 18/21 October 2019)

The Parish Council notes that amended and additional plans (existing elevations, proposed elevations, existing ground floor plan and proposed ground floor plan) were submitted and placed on HDC's planning portal on 18/21 October 2019. The applicant provided no explanation for the submission of these plans. Close examination of these plans showed that they were in fact identical to the original plans submitted for this application.

The Parish Councils finds this behaviour by the applicant totally unsatisfactory as it has caused valuable voluntary Councillor time carrying out examination of these plans.

**Since there is no change to the plans, the Parish Council strongly objects to this application and urges HDC to refuse it. The Parish Council's previous objection still applies and this is repeated below**

#### **Background**

A first full planning application, DC/19/0086, was withdrawn following an e-mail on 19 February 2019 from Tamara Dale to Robert Schiller, the agent for the applicant. In that e-mail Tamara Dale indicated that the proposal would be refused as it was contrary to several local and national policies. Furthermore in the same e-mail Tamara Dale also states that the proposal would fall foul of several paragraphs relating to "Class Q development".

A second prior approval application, DC/19/0499, made under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, in other words a Class Q application, was withdrawn on 17 April 2019. There were no significant

changes to the plans associated with this application compared to the previous one. No explanation was given for the withdrawal of the application.

This current prior approval application, DC/19/1938, is also a Class Q application.

### **Application DC/19/1938**

The Parish Council notes that the plans appear to show only the stable block and not the pole barn would be converted into a dwelling even though the Structural Statement within the applicant's Planning Statement deals with the suitability of conversion of both the pole barn and the stable block. The Parish Council considers that applications must be absolutely clear about what is proposed. The Parish Council maintains that the applicant has not overcome many of the points raised in Tamara Dale's e-mail of 19 February 2019 nor any of the objections that the Parish Council made regarding DC/19/0499.

### **The Parish Council therefore strongly objects to this prior approval (Class Q) application for the following reasons:**

- 1) The proposal is contrary to paragraphs (d) and (e) of Class Q because the site is occupied by a thriving small agricultural business. The Parish Council understands that this business is carried out under a 5 year Licence to Occupy Agreement. Since the Licence to Occupy is long term, rather than short term, and "fixed term" rather than a monthly roll-on agreement, it is similar to a Tenancy Agreement. Indeed the Parish Council understands that it functions as a Tenancy Agreement, despite its title, and therefore it does not fall within the remit of Class Q.
- 2) The agricultural barn and stables form part of a thriving small agricultural business. One of the over-arching aims of the Parish's Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is to support local businesses, including agricultural businesses. Conversion of an actively used stable block into a dwelling is therefore unacceptable and contrary to the NP.
- 3) The proposed development is located outside a built up area boundary in a rural location outside of the limits of any existing settlement. The site is not allocated for development in the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) or the NP. HDC has a five year supply of housing so this dwelling is not needed.
- 4) There is no demonstrated need for a dwelling in this countryside location and it does not constitute a use considered essential to a countryside location.
- 5) The application constitutes inappropriate backland development. The Independent Examiner of the Parish's NP required the removal of a site in Nuthurst from the draft NP purely because it was a backland development. He said the proposed site was behind a row of large houses in large plots, the development would appear incongruous in its setting, out of character with the nearby houses and would fail to protect the rural character of the area. These reasons apply equally to this site at Copsale Stables.

6) The conversion of the agricultural barn into one very unattractive dwelling – an industrial style structure constructed with a metal roof - would be keeping with the surrounding buildings fronting Copsale Road, which are constructed of brick and tile. It would also result in harm to the open and rural landscape character of the area. The proposed dwelling would contravene policy 10 of the NP and various policies in the HDPF. It would also be contrary to the over-arching aim of the Nuthurst Parish Design Statement to make sure that new dwellings fit in well with the rural nature of the Parish.

7) There would be a significant loss of habitat for wildlife, particularly migratory birds such as swallows and swifts, if this open stable block was converted to a dwelling.

8) There has been no assessment of possible contamination risks on the site arising from the agricultural activities and the storage of chemicals.

## **Conclusion**

### **The Parish Council urges HDC to refuse prior approval (Class Q) on the following grounds:**

1) The proposed development is contrary to paragraphs (d) and (e) of Class Q for the reasons given above.

2) The proposed development would mean the loss of a thriving agricultural business contrary to one of the over-arching aims of the HDPF and the Nuthurst NP.

3) The proposed development would be located outside of a built up area boundary on a site not allocated for development in the HDPF or the Nuthurst NP. The proposed development would therefore be inconsistent with the overarching strategy for development within the HDPF. The proposed development is therefore contrary to policies 1, 2, 3, 4, 26 and 40 of the HDPF, policy 1 of the Nuthurst NP and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

4) The site lies in a rural location outside the limits of any existing settlement and does not constitute a use considered essential to a countryside location. The proposal would therefore conflict with paragraph 79 of the NPPF and policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the HDPF.

5) The proposed dwelling (industrial style structure) would result in harm to the open and rural landscape character of the area and the visual amenities of the site and the wider area and would be out of character with the surrounding buildings. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies 25, 26, 31, 32 and 33 of the HDPF and policy 10 of the Nuthurst NP and the overarching aim of the Nuthurst Parish Design Statement.

Yours faithfully

*Sarah Hall*

Sarah Hall

Clerk to Nuthurst Parish Council