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

8<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Dear Mr Denizer

**DC/19/2117 Pemberley, Copsale Road, Copsale**

**Introduction**

The Parish Council is extremely concerned about numerous deceptive, inaccurate and misleading statements in this planning application and particularly in the Planning Design and Access Statement.

The most significant one is the failure to mention the close proximity of the barn to the Grade II listed building known as Sheepwash Farmhouse which dates to the 17 Century or earlier. The application site was clearly part of the ancient demesne of Sheepwash Farm.

In Section 4 of the Statement, the applicant's agent quotes extensively from the National Planning Policy Framework with the implication that this application fulfils the quoted requirements. Much of what is quoted is irrelevant to this application. Where it is relevant, this application does not meet the requirements. For example:

- Paragraph 4.3(a) - "an economic objective" – this does not achieve an economic objective because it is not a new business but a relocation of an existing accountancy business from a very sustainable location in Steyning to an unsustainable location in the countryside;
- Paragraph 4.11 – it does not meet any of the 5 criteria for development of isolated homes in the countryside:
  - The applicant is not an essential rural worker;
  - It is not a heritage asset;
  - The building is not redundant as it used for stabling horses and storage for hay and machinery;
  - It does not involve sub-division of an existing dwelling; and

- The design is not of exceptional quality – in fact it is a very unattractive industrial style building which does not meet the Nuthurst Parish Design Statement.

In Section 4 of the Statement, the applicant's agent also quotes extensively from the Horsham District Planning Framework again with the implication that this application complies with the requirements of the Framework. It does not for the reasons given in the Parish Council's objection below.

The Parish Council also notes that the applicant's agent quotes a number of past decisions granting planning permission that are claimed to support the application. However, these decisions were made up to 5 years ago when different planning rules were in force and for sites that had actually little similarity with the applicant's site. A much more pertinent decision is HDC's very recent refusal of planning permission for the conversion of a redundant milking parlour to a residential dwelling at New Brook Farm, Nuthurst Road, Maplehurst (DC/19/1198). There are a lot of similarities between the location of this site and the applicant's site including the proximity to a listed building.

The principal reason for HDC's refusal of DC/19/1198 applies equally to this application, namely:

*"The development is within a countryside location outside of then built-up area boundary of any settlement on a site that has not been allocated for development within the Horsham District Planning Framework or an adopted Neighbourhood Plan. The site lies in an unsustainable location where future occupants would be reliant on the use of private motor vehicles for access to day to day services and facilities, and the building subject of the conversion is of limited architectural or historic merit. The Council is able to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply and consequently this scheme would be contrary to the overarching strategy and hierarchical approach concentrating development within main settlements. It has not been demonstrated that there are any material considerations of significant weight to justify a departure from this overarching spatial strategy. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to Policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)."*

## **Objections**

**The Parish Council objects to this planning application for the following reasons:**

1) The application site is outside any Built up Area Boundary or settlement boundary and therefore is development in the countryside. The site is not allocated for development within the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) or the Nuthurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan (NPNP). HDC has a 5-year housing supply and therefore this development is not needed. The proposed development would be inconsistent with the overall strategy for development in the HDPF. It is therefore contrary to policies 1, 2, 3, 4, 26 and 40 of the HDPF (2015), policy 1 of the NPNP (2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2018)

2) The site lies within a rural location outside the limits of any existing settlement and the proposed live work dwelling (for an accountancy business) does not constitute a use considered essential to such a countryside location, such as supporting agriculture or forestry. The proposed development would therefore conflict with policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the HDPF (2015) and the NPPF (2018).

3) The application constitutes inappropriate backland development. The Independent Examiner of the Parish's NPNP required the removal of a site in Nuthurst from the draft NPNP 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 Pemberley.

4) The proposed development would harm the setting of the Grade II listed building, Sheepwash Farmhouse because of the proximity and the inappropriate design of the proposed dwelling, contrary to policy 34 of the HDPF (2015). It is also contrary policy 195 of the NPPF (2018) which states: *"Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss ...."*. The Parish Council maintains that there is no public benefit from the proposed development.

5) The proposed development does not meet policy 33 of the HDPF (2015) and policy 10 of the NPNP (2015) because the development does not reflect the architectural and historic character and scale of the surrounding dwellings. Furthermore, it does not meet the overarching aim of the Nuthurst Parish Design Statement (PDS, 2017) to retain its largely rural character and in particular the proposed "fibrous cement roof" is contrary to section 2.3 of the PDS (2015) because the roof slope is well less than 45° and the roof is not made of traditional countryside materials such as clay tiles.

6) The conversion of the agricultural barn into one very unattractive dwelling – an industrial style structure constructed with a fibrous cement roof and fronted with a large area of glass - would be out of keeping with the surrounding buildings fronting Copsale Road, most of which are constructed of brick and tile while Sheepwash Farmhouse has white plaster walls and a Horsham stone roof. 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) The current barn provides stabling for the applicant's horses and storage for hay and equipment to maintain the applicant's fields for grazing the horses. Conversion of the barn to a dwelling, which is not required to support an agricultural business, would simply mean future pressure to construct another building to house the horses and associated equipment. This is unacceptable.

8) Relocating an accountancy business from a very sustainable location in Steyning to an unsustainable location in the countryside is unacceptable because of the increase in traffic in the countryside with its attendant pollution. Furthermore there is no parking provision for cars belonging to the applicant's clients or indeed for the applicant's own vehicles including horseboxes.

**The Parish Council urges Horsham District Council to refuse planning permission for this application on the above grounds.**

Yours sincerely

*Sarah Hall*

Sarah Hall

Clerk to Nuthurst Parish Council