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Planning Department
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10th June 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

Outline Planning Application Proposal for a new equine stable building together with associated car parking and turning area on land at Lower Mount Farm, Long Lane, Cookham SL6 9EE

Please find enclosed an outline planning application seeking approval for details pertaining to: Means of Access, Layout, Scale and Appearance with all other matters reserved (Landscaping) for a proposed equine stable building on land at Lower Mount Farm, Long Lane, Cookham.

This planning application is accompanied by the following:

1. Completed Application Form
2. Proposed Site Plan - (Scale: 1:500).
3. Proposed Floor Plans and Elevation of the Proposed Equine Stable Building - Drawing No.MT/1547/1/REV A drawn at a scale of 1:100
4. Ecology Report - prepared by Clive Herbert of Amphibian, Reptile & Mammal Conservation

Geoffrey W. Copas
Mobile: (07748) 633534

5. The required application fee - (No fee to pay as this is a resubmission on the same site within 6 months of the appeal decision notice and this submission is also in outline form)

I offer the following comments in support of this application.

The application site was the subject of a recent appeal decision/dismissal dated 11th May 2021 (Ref No. APP/T0355/W/20/3251269) for an outline planning application seeking approval for an equine centre for 30 stables, 2 fouling boxes, a rug room/drying room, hay, feed and bedding stores and groom's accommodation, arranged in a large U-shaped building, a car park for 34 cars, horse trailer parking, a horse walker, and a manure clamp.

The previous application was driven by the desperate need for new equine stabling facilities in the local area, following the closure of 3 local equine facilities and the excellent location of this site adjacent to the Cookham bridleway circuit.

The local demand for new equine stabling facilities has not dissipated but following the Appeal Inspectors concerns regarding the size of the previous proposal and the resultant impact upon the openness of the Green Belt, this proposal is now a far more modest scheme and addresses the previous Appeal Inspectors concerns. This application in comparison to the previous appeal scheme reduces the floor area by approximately 440% and is in a detailed form such that the much-reduced scale of the facility can be more easily appreciated.

The principle of an equine stabling facility is accepted on this site. In paragraph 12 of the Inspectors Appeal decision, it states: ***“With the exception of the groom’s accommodation, the main parties agree that the proposal is capable of being an appropriate facility associated with the keeping of horses on land adjacent to the appeal site, for which planning permission was granted in 2018 and subsequently implemented. I concur with this view.”***

The Inspector also confirmed that the quantum of the proposed stables and ancillary equine facilities was justified. In paragraph 16, The Inspector states, ***“The number of stables proposed is thus justified in relation to the number of horses that could be***

kept on the adjoining land. The various other elements of the proposed facility are also justified, as acknowledged by the Council. I therefore consider that the facility is proportionate to the scale of the enterprise”.

Whilst the Inspector confirmed that the principle of an equine facility was acceptable, the concern rested with the scale of the facility. This is demonstrated in paragraph 18 of the Inspector's decision, where there is concern over the “*extensive footprint*” and “*the extent of the large, gravelled car park to the front of building which in combination would have an adverse impact upon the openness of the Green Belt*”.

It is clear, that the scale of the previous proposals, whilst justified and proportionate for the scale of the equine enterprise was felt to have an adverse impact upon the openness of the Green Belt.

This revised submission has carefully considered the comments from the Inspector and this alternative equine stable proposal, offers a significant scaling down from the previous proposal. In this regard we comment as follows:

The attached plans show the revised proposal for just 16 stables arranged and consolidated in a single equine building. The building would have open ends to allow through ventilation for the horses. The proposed side elevations are concrete inset panelling on the lower levels with timber hit and miss boarding resting above again to allow ventilation for the horses. A juniper green coloured reinforced fibre cement roof sheets is proposed for the roof covering, which coupled with the timber sides will assist the building in assimilating into the surroundings.

In comparison to the previous appeal scheme this proposal represents a 50% reduction on the stable numbers. The previous appeal scheme was for 30 stables plus 2 foaling boxes. In addition, there are no foaling boxes, workers accommodation, hay store, rug drying rooms, changing facilities included with this proposal.

In terms of building footprint, the previous appeal scheme had a gross floor area of approximately 1583.5 sqm or 17,045 sqft. This revised scheme has a gross floor area of just 3,875 sqft. This represents a 440% reduction in gross floor area - a huge reduction.

This is also pictorially self-evident when one considers the previous site layout plan - (see *Local App Ref 19/02442/OUT*).

Because the scale of the scheme has been significantly reduced, the required car parking area has also been dramatically reduced from 34 spaces to 12 spaces. The proposed parking area is located adjacent to the eastern side of the building such that this parking area is set well back/over 50m from Long Lane. In addition, the existing established perimeter trees and hedgerows are illustrated to be retained as part of the development proposal to largely screen the proposed building and parking area, although the precise details of existing and proposed new landscaping will be addressed at reserved matters stage, as approval is not sought for these matters at this stage. The parking layout has adequate on-site parking provision and ensures that vehicles will be able to safely enter and exit the site in a forward gear.

In combination, the above factors adequately address the previous Appeal Inspectors' concerns over the large expanse of parking to the front of the site.

The proposed siting of the equine stable building has also been carefully considered, the proposed stable building is now set significantly further back from Long Lane, such that it follows the building line of the adjoining commercial buildings. The footprint and location of the proposed equine stable building now follows the grain and pattern of the adjoining development. The stable barn building is also practically located adjacent to the adjoining equestrian paddock land and will also help to keep the horses and parking area separated.

In terms of openness, the site is well contained with existing perimeter landscaping trees and hedgerows are illustrated to be retained as part of this proposal with the precise details to be addressed at reserved matters stage as part of the consideration of "Landscaping". The proposed building is also set well back from Long Lane in line with the adjoining commercial buildings and Equine World Building. In terms of any longer distance views (where visible) from the Bridleway 19, some 925m to the west of the site, the proposed building would sit in line with the adjoining commercial building such that there would be little if any discernible impact upon this existing long-distance view. In addition, the parking area would also be hidden behind the building from this viewpoint.

In a recent planning approval granted for a new sport pavilion building on the northern side of Long Lane, (App Ref 20/02689/FUL), the Case Officer in his report rightly points out in paragraph 9.14 that *“The test on whether the proposed development would preserve openness cannot be a total bar on new buildings, otherwise that would defeat the purpose of this exception.”*

It is considered that when assessing the lawful use of the site, namely, equine use, the much - reduced scale, form and appearance of this equine building, the siting and the surroundings, the proposed equestrian building would be appropriate to the setting and surroundings.

In summary, the demand for local stabling facilities has not diminished. We have carefully considered the Inspectors comments in the recent appeal decision. The principle of an equine facility was found to be acceptable here, but the impact upon the openness of the Green Belt driven by the size of the previous equine facility was the cause for concern.

This application reduces the footprint of the previous equine building by 440% - a huge reduction. The proposed equine stable building is now more appropriately sited in line with the existing adjoining commercial building and set well back from Long Lane and with a far smaller, more contained car parking area, set back by over 50m from Long Lane at its closest point. All the perimeter landscaping is illustrated to be retained with the precise proposed and existing landscaping details to be determined via a separate reserved matters application.

In combination with the other factors outlined above, it is clear that this application now responds positively to the Inspectors appeal decision, addresses the underlying reasons for the concerns raised and accordingly should be approved.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

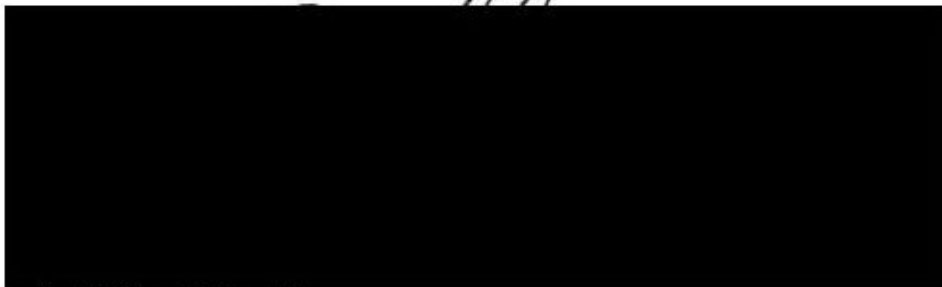
For ease of reference, my contact details are:



Thank you for dealing with this application.

Yours sincerely

Handwritten signature in blue ink.



David Jacobs BSc (Hons)

Estate Manager

Enc: Items 1 – 4