

Burraton House  
5 Burraton Square  
Poundbury  
Dorchester  
DT1 3GR  
(01305 236237)

Our Ref: GW  
22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020

South Walks House  
South Walks Road  
Dorchester  
DT1 1UZ

Dear Sirs,

**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF STABLES AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW RIDING ARENA  
AT WHITE GATES, SHILVINGHAMPTON, DT3 4HJ - App No.- PP-09201714**

**APPLICANT- MR & MRS B ROLFE**

**COVERING LETTER**

Please find attached completed planning application on behalf of Mr & Mrs B Rolfe for the replacement of (existing) stables and construction of new riding arena at White Gates, Shilvinghampton, DT3 4HJ. Please find attached planning application form and plans, together with this letter setting out the background to the application.

This letter is only to be read in conjunction with the following documents in connection with planning application ref : PP-09201714 -

- Planning Application Form
- Site Plan/s
- Location Plan/s
- CAD Drawing/s
- Design & Access Statement
- Planning Statement

We would ask that this letter forms part of the overall planning application and that all information contained therein should be made available to the Planning Committee and all other relevant interested parties.

## 1. Background & Existing Property

Barrie and Jenny Rolfe are in the process of purchasing White Gates with an exchange and completion date anticipated in November. They currently live in Dorset having relocated from Portugal around a year ago, having owned and occupied a farm in North Devon with extensive equine facilities including an indoor arena. Jenny Rolfe is a very keen horsewoman and until recent years, classically trained dressage horses, predominantly working with stallions on the farm in North Devon. Both are now retired.

Jenny currently keeps her 3 horses at livery in Corscombe, some 19.5 miles from the subject property which represents significant regular expense, inconvenience and is not environmentally sustainable. An outdoor arena is available to use for those with horses at livery on site although it is often busy and not available for use when required. White Gates currently benefits from existing stables (although not fit for purpose) but does not have all-weather riding facilities. Furthermore, with the recent very wet winters, the lack of such facilities will greatly restrict where the horses can be ridden.

Horses require regular exercise but doing so in the grass paddock to the south of the proposed site is not feasible or safe during certain weather conditions and prolonged consistent wet weather, as the land becomes saturated with water and horses become liable to slipping and falling on the wet gradient. The aim of this proposal is to provide the applicant with an outdoor riding arena for private use. This will allow the safe exercising of the applicant's horses all year round. The property is accessed via Grove Lane which joins the busy B5137 some 350m to the South meaning that taking horses onto or crossing these roads for exercise would be dangerous.

The existing stables (erected in 1980) and store are currently in a state of disrepair and are not fit for purpose. As a result, the stables have been used to store household goods in recent years.

In terms of condition, the roof is currently overrun with year worth of vegetative growth of creeping plants such as ivy and brambles which is thought to have deteriorated its integrity. Removal of the vegetation would cause further damage to the roof.

In terms of design, it is thought that these stables were originally designed for housing ponies rather than horses and do not offer enough headroom for larger horses. The small area of concrete in front of the stables is not adequate to prevent poaching of the soil in the winter months as horses are led to and from their stables. If the stables and yard are left in their current configuration it would cause significant soil structure damage. The stables are not currently being used to house horses or ponies for the reasons explained.

Immediately adjacent to the stables is a covered storage area used by the current owner to store firewood and garden equipment. The proposed replacement stable facilities will require an area to store feed and bedding in bulk.

## 2. Proposed Development

This application seeks permission for:

- Replacement of existing stables and adjoining store by demolition and redevelopment to include extension to existing concrete yard area
- Construction of an all-weather surfaced riding arena
- Installation of hardcore tracks to allow pedestrian and horse access from the dwelling house to the stables and from the stables to the riding arena

### 3. Proposed Location

A number of potential sites have been investigated and considered at White Gates, with the conclusion that the proposed site would without doubt be the most suitable with the least impact. One such considered site for the riding arena was immediately South-East of the stables which was deemed not suitable as these works would require removal of a number of tall, mature trees, relocation of the house's septic tank and its proximity to the dwelling house.

The land to the south of the proposed site, near the field access to the highway, is narrow and would not allow the proposed size of arena to be sited there. It is also lower lying and would not drain surface water away from the site and is further from the stables, potentially leading to poaching caused by equine traffic to and from the stables in winter months.

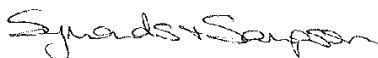
It was also considered that siting the arena in the middle of this field is not feasible as this site would require the most ground works: the site is relatively steep compared to the rest of the field and it would also cause the greatest degree of visual impact from the neighbouring roads; it would also sever the bottom half of the field from the rest of the property.

The proposed site was concluded to be the most suitable having a minimal (if present) visual impact; being a relatively level site with minimal earth moving required and an appropriate distance away from the stables.

Although a natural visual screen of trees or a hedge has not been included in the proposed development as it has not been deemed necessary, the applicants would be happy to oblige to plant one if required to further help reduce and deflect any potential visual impact to high vehicle users of Grove Lane. Users of Grove Lane travelling by way of car, bicycle, motorcycle or pedestrians will not be able to see the proposed site from and public highway or footpath due to the tall hedges currently surrounding the land and property at White Gates.

We trust the above meets with your approval, but please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any further queries.

Yours faithfully,



SYMONDS & SAMPSON

Enc.