

21 April 2021

To Whom it may Concern,

**Planning Application in respect of Hever Stud Farm, Hever, Edenbridge, Kent, TN8 7NG**

The Thoroughbred Breeders' Association represents around 2,000 breeders of thoroughbred racehorses – an industry that is worth around £3.5 billion to the UK economy annually, with over £4 million of that directly attributable to the stud sector.

A large proportion of our members are small breeders and their business activities are primarily conducted in rural economies, from where they source feedstuffs (hay, grains), bedding (straw) and horse wear (head collars, rugs), and access professional services (veterinary, farrier, equine physio, horse transport).

Mr Ronald Popely is an active and valued member of the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association and we understand that he would like to build two isolation facilities at Hever Stud Farm, one with integral accommodation for a Stud Groom.

Equine infectious disease presents a significant strategic risk to breeders and with Strangles, Equine Influenza (EI) and Equine Herpesvirus (EHV) being endemic across Europe, there is an on-going requirement to quarantine horses before they are re-introduced to the resident herd. High biosecurity standards can help contain disease outbreak to those housed within the isolation facilities and prevent infection of other stock, which is especially important with Equine Herpesvirus, which can cause a pregnant mare to abort her unborn foetus or produce a non-viable full term foal. Transportation is also considered to be stressful for horses and these conditions can cause asymptomatic carriers of disease to become unwell or start shedding, as such new arrivals are of heightened risk of sickness and transmission. These individuals therefore require close monitoring from attending staff.

The Thoroughbred Breeders' Association recommends on-site supervision of valuable bloodstock at all times; as horses (particularly thoroughbreds) are flight animals they are at an increased risk of injury in comparison to other species. The knowledgeable and experienced individuals responsible for their care need to make regular and immediate decisions based on changing weather conditions; the particular health requirements of the equines they manage; and other external factors beyond their control (such as firework displays), to ensure their optimum welfare. This requirement for close monitoring is particularly true for pregnant mares, who may require assistance at foaling; and for young foals, who need incremental exercise regimes and close observation of nutritional intake (suckling from the mare), as well as demonstration of normal behaviours.

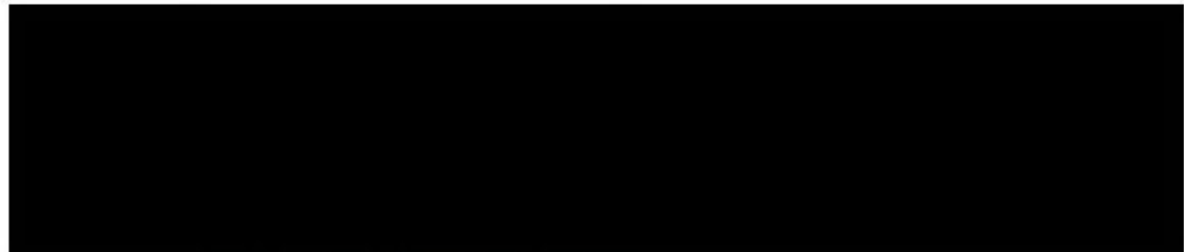
Thoroughbred breeding is an extremely labour-intensive industry and the provision of a highly qualified and motivated labour force is essential to developing and ensuring the longevity of these thriving rural businesses.





Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours faithfully,



Claire Sheppard  
Chief Executive