

Philip Brown
ASSOCIATES LTD

CHARTERED TOWN PLANNERS
& DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS

Development Control
East Hertfordshire District Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
Herts.
SG13 8EQ

10 February 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

RECEIVED 3 MAR 2023

**RE: PROPOSED STABLE BUILDING AND BARN, INCLUDING THE LAYING OF
HARDSTANDING**

**WHEELWRIGHTS FARM, ROWNEY LANE, DANE END, WARE,
HERTFORDSHIRE, SG12 0JY**

**Please find enclosed completed planning application forms, plans and
requisite fee in respect of the above-mentioned proposal.**

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Use, Scale & Layout

Wheelwrights Farm is in mixed use as a Gypsy caravan site and, for the keeping of horses. Subsequent applications have been made to enlarge the existing Gypsy site (3/20/0177/FUL) and, provide a manège (3/20/1119/FUL). Both applications were refused and are currently pending a decision on appeal.

Application No.3/20/0177/FUL would result in the removal of some of the existing stables, which are in poor condition and unsuitable both in location and state for the continued stabling of horses. The site also contains a barn, also in poor condition. This application seeks to provide replacement stables and a barn in a more suitable location within the site.

RECEIVED 13 MAR 2023

Access

Access is from Rowney Lane, via the existing entrance at the north-western end of the application site. The access is situated on the outside of a gentle bend in Rowney Lane. Rowney Lane is a narrow, lightly used road, where traffic speeds are low and, where wide verges allow good visibility for the drivers of vehicles exiting Wheelwrights Farm. Notwithstanding this, the proposed development would not result in any increase in the use of the access, or in the amount of traffic using Rowney Lane.

A new internal track would be provided as shown on the submitted site layout plan.

Appearance and Landscaping

The application site already contains a substantial block of stable buildings, barn, mobile home and touring caravan. Existing screening along Rowney Lane in the form of substantial tree screening would not be affected by the proposal.

The proposed buildings would be set to the south-western edge of the applicant's land, as shown on the submitted site layout plan. A large woodland would screen views of the proposed development from the south, whilst planting along the western boundary would reduce views from the neighbouring field.

Policy Considerations

The site is designated as lying within the "rural area beyond the Green Belt" on the Local Plan Proposals Map. Local Plan policy GBR2 provides a list of developments to be permitted '*provided that they are compatible with the character and appearance of the rural area*'. The criteria relevant to this application are (a) buildings for agriculture and forestry; (b) facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, including equine development in accordance with CFLR6 (equine development), and for cemeteries; and (d) the replacement, extension or alteration of a building, provided the size, scale, mass, form, siting, design and materials of construction are appropriate to the character, appearance and setting of the site and/or surrounding areas.

With regard to criterion (a), the proposed barn would be for the storage of hay as well as various vehicles the applicant currently uses to maintain the land, including a tractor. As per the submitted floor plan, it would have an internal divide, along with a ventilation system to protect the hay and other feed from exhaust fumes produced by the aforementioned machinery. The tractor is currently stored elsewhere for security reasons, it would therefore be beneficial to the applicant to have somewhere safe to store and maintain it on site. This would also have the effect of reducing traffic using the access.

Criterion (b) points to Local Plan policy CFLR6 when concerning equine development. CFLR6 states that *'Proposals for equine development, whether domestic or commercial, will be permitted when the following criteria are met:*

(a) The proposal is sited or landscaped to minimise visual intrusion;

(b) Where new buildings are proposed, applicants must demonstrate that existing structures cannot be re-used;

(c) The siting, scale and design of the proposal is in keeping with the character of the area, with adequate pasture to support horses. Particular regard will be had to the cumulative effect of proposals on local landscape or biodiversity interests;

(d) The amenity of nearby residential properties is not adversely affected, for example, in relation to floodlighting, noise and disturbance;

(e) The proposal would not (by itself or cumulatively) have a significant adverse impact in terms of traffic generation;

(f) The proposal does not result in harm to the ecological network, including partial or complete loss or degradation of Local Wildlife Sites or priority habitats;

(g) The proposal does not conflict with other policies within this Plan.

The British Horse Society issues guidance entitled "*Horses in the Countryside*" which makes clear that stables are essential for the keeping of horses in this country. They allow horses to be treated when they are ill, and provide shelter during inclement weather. In winter it is recommended that horses should not be turned out on to pasture land, in order to reduce soil and root damage, and encourage earlier spring grazing. As a result, horses are often kept in stables during winter and, apart from loose boxes, storage space is required for food and bedding.

As previously mentioned the stable building is intended to replace the existing stables (criterion (d) GBR2), these are currently in both poor condition and unsuitably located next to the applicant's mobile home. The intention is to provide a new stable building, consisting of the same number of loose boxes, away from the applicant's living area in order to both safeguard his children and, provide far more suitable facilities for the keeping of his horses.

The proposed stable building would be a low level L-shaped structure, measuring 3.5 metres to the apex of the roof, constructed from timber clad walls, timber doors and a felt roof lining. It would consist of 6 loose boxes, each measuring 3.7 metres x 3.7 metres. This would meet the recommended stable size for a horse from the British Horse Society. In addition to the 6 loose boxes, a tack room would also be included.

The total area of the applicant's fields (not including the area containing the existing Gypsy site) is approximately 1.5 hectares. According to BHS advice, this would be suitable to accommodate roughly 3-4 horses. The applicant does not however keep all of his horses on the land at once, instead renting various fields in the local area. The new stable building would enable him to have adequate space when rotating his horses between different pastures and, sufficient stabling during winter time. The stable building is therefore not only of appropriate design but, also of a suitable scale for the proposed equine use of the land.

Further to this, the application site is located in a semi-rural location near the settlement of Dane End. The area is characterised by agricultural fields and holdings, as well as other equine facilities. The provision of stables and associated facilities supports a use of land for outdoor recreation and are not, therefore, inappropriate provided that they are of an appropriate size.

The proposal is, therefore, in keeping with District Plan Policy GBR2, complies fully with the criteria in Policy CFLR6 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Drawing together the above matters, the proposed development would comply with relevant development plan policies and national planning guidance and, therefore, planning permission should be granted in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For the above reasons, I trust that you will feel able to support my client's planning application, and I look forward to receiving the Council's decision in due course. If there are any aspects of the application which Officers consider could be improved upon, please do not hesitate to discuss these with me.

Yours faithfully,



Samuel Brown
Associate
Philip Brown Associates