

The Planning Inspectorate

COMMENTS ON CASE (Online Version)

Please note that comments about this case need to be made within the timetable. This can be found in the notification letter sent by the local planning authority or the start date letter. Comments submitted after the deadline may be considered invalid and returned to sender.

Appeal Reference: APP/X1925/W/25/3375383

DETAILS OF THE CASE

Appeal Reference	APP/X1925/W/25/3375383
Appeal By	C/O WARNER PLANNING D&A ARCHITECTURAL & STRUCTURAL
Site Address	Land At Chruch Wood Three Houses Lane Codicote Hertfordshire

SENDER DETAILS

Name	MS KATHARINE GILLINGS
Address	The Japanese Garden Hitchin Road Hitchin SG4 8TH

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

In what capacity do you wish to make representations on this case?

- ☐ Appellant
- ☐ Agent
- ☒ Interested Party / Person
- ☐ Land Owner
- ☐ Rule 6 (6)

What kind of representation are you making?

- ☐ Final Comments
- ☐ Proof of Evidence
- ☐ Statement
- ☐ Statement of Common Ground
- ☒ Interested Party/Person Correspondence
- ☐ Other

YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

Dear Sir

I've read the applicants appeal statement and have the following comments:

1. There's no indication as to whether the application or the appeal is for a private facility for their own horses or a publicly available one. The statement talks of there being 'a need for this building as there is a shortage of indoor equine facilities in the area.'

Nor is the scale of the operation clear. The statement describes the 'need for enhanced facilities for horse breeding and person equine use' and the 'active breeding interest locally'. It also highlights the shortage of 'compliant, purpose-built infrastructure for private horse owners on wishing to keep and care for their animals on their own land' and how current facilities are often oversubscribed, require significant travel, or are not designed to meet modern welfare standards.'

2. No details of any sort are provided to show how these will be provided. Any equestrian facility will mean:

- Horse boxes and vehicles coming and going on a regular daily basis. Deliveries of feed and other equipment etc. There's no provision for visitor car, trailer or horse box or delivery parking/turnarounds etc.
- There no hard standing indicated on either the application or appeal documentation which is clearly a serious error as there would have to be a large area of concrete hard standing outside the buildings if a mud bath was to be avoided. This would take up a significant increased area of the field.
- Toilet facilities are not provided, refreshments (?) the proposed lighting for the building and external infrastructure (in a currently unlit field), existing and proposed drainage, details of fencing, signage etc and an assessment in relation to the future noise and disturbance has also not been provided (from a personal point of view, as an adjacent resident with a boundary that abuts the corner of the manege/woodland the potential noise, lights etc fill me with severe apprehension).
- The issue of toxic animal waste / storage/runoff and its fatal impact on trees/woodlands has not been addressed.

3. The visual impact of these proposals (scale, height and mass) of the proposals and the above additional activities, parking, etc, has not been addressed – the barns are shown in isolation and not in the context of the surrounding woodland, the Node countryside estate, its walled garden and Grade II Listed Peach House, the nearby properties and our own Japanese Garden. There are no before and after views, comparison heights, visual models etc.

4. The NPPF encourages the diversification of rural land-based activities etc 'provided they are appropriately located and designed to protect the character of the countryside' which our past comments/evidence and that of many others clearly demonstrate that the application and appeal documentation do not.

5. Neither the application or appeal documentation comply with Green Belt Policy to 'assist in the safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.' On the contrary, the application proposal pose a continued threat to the ancient woodland, and landscape character as they have demonstrated since the unauthorised works first started (documented extensively in my own and others previous comments).

6. The planning references for the two examples have not been provided but a brief glance at the Cladecote Farm Equestrian Centre Farm shows it located close (a matter of a few hundred metres?) to the M1 and not within an area of ancient and semi ancient woodland with veteran trees and Tree preservation Orders etc. It's not clear which North Yorkshire indoor equine centre the appeal statement

refers to.

7. The applicant has had every opportunity to read and address the various detailed comments /concerns that have been submitted in relation to the original unauthorised works and subsequent application (a year later). These have been submitted by adjacent residents, locals, users of Three Houses Lane and people living further afield who value our countryside AND environmental professionals but the applicant has failed to take on board these concerns (apart from planting some non-native species as a boundary hedges enclosing the otherwise open ancient woodland).

8. The outstanding information highlighted in my own and others submitted comments as being required, particularly in relation to the ancient woodland and veteran trees, the British Standard BS 5837 2012, Root Protection Zones, the NPPF in connection with veteran trees, drainage etc has not been provided.

9. Locating the buildings 'set back from the public highway substantially obscured by surrounding woodland' threatens the ancient woodland and countryside character. The scheme does not 'integrate sensitively within its countryside setting' and the activities will have an impact on the 'tranquillity of the wider landscape character.'

10. As a Landscape Architect with many years' experience I can assure you that this is not a 'landscape – led' project.

11. The applicant failed to provide the necessary documents at the outset and has continued to do so, through the course of the unauthorised works and subsequent planning application and here now at an appeal stage has still failed to meet the essential validation requirements. The proposed change of use and application documents pose a serious threat to the ancient woodland, veteran trees and Tree Preservation Order woodland which characterises this area, and its countryside. The location of any manege and its implications CANNOT be dealt with as a condition. The implications threaten the ancient Church Wood trees located within the Japanese Garden and edge of the Node.

12. As such all my previous comments still apply and I kindly ask that the Inspector to refuse the appeal.

Yours faithfully

Katharine Gillings CMLI

The Japanese Garden, Codicote. Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 8TH