

**Application no K/9/26/PD**

**Potato Barn, Kingston Lane, East Preston BN16 1RS**

I wish to object to the above application on the following grounds.

**Extent of curtilage - Q.3 (1) (a) and (b).**

This relates to the first reason for refusal of the prior application under K/3/26/PD. The Applicants have attempted to deal with this by reducing the curtilage of the building. However in doing so they have made the proposed development unsuitably tight. There is, for instance, no longer any provision for emergency vehicle turning nor indeed access or turning by delivery or other service vehicles, which would be a regular occurrence. There is no longer any significant amenity land.

**Permissible building operations - Q.1 (j).**

This relates to the other reason for refusal of K/3/26/PD. The Applicants have sought to deal with this by submitting a Structural Planning Statement and stating, at paragraph 6 of their covering letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> May that *"the building is suitable for conversion without the need for extensive structural alteration. The proposed works to the remain [ sic ] largely related to the insertion of windows and doors, and are not considered to go beyond what is "reasonably necessary"*.

It is important to look at the exact wording of Q.1(j) which disallows development under Class Q if the conversion works referred to in Q.(c) *"would consist of building operations other than—*

*(i) the installation or replacement of—*

*(aa) windows, doors, roofs, or exterior walls, or*

*(bb) water, drainage, electricity, gas or other services,*

*to the extent reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse, and*

*(ii) partial demolition to the extent reasonably necessary to carry out building operations allowed by paragraph Q.1(j)(i)."*

The words in (aa) and (bb) are not examples of the type of building operations that might be allowed as being reasonable necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse – they are a definitive list of such operations. This distinction is important in restricting the Local Planning Authority's discretion and providing as objective a test as possible to ensure that the procedure under Class Q is only used in cases of strictly defined simple conversions. The Structural Planning Statement refers at section 9 to the introduction of *"internal structural elements that will improve the overall performance and robustness of the building"* and that *"represent adaptations and not a fundamental rebuild."* With respect this is the wrong test – Q.1 (j) does not merely disallow works amounting to "a fundamental rebuild" but to any building operations at all that are not explicitly specified. Similarly the words "extensive" and "largely" in the expressions *"extensive structural alteration"* and *"largely related to the insertion of windows and doors"* in paragraph 6 of the Applicants' covering letter of 20<sup>th</sup> May 2026 are out of place in formulating a test as to whether Q.1(j) applies. They seem to be following the looser more general words of Q.(c) rather than the more detailed wording of Q. 1 (j) which qualifies Q.(c). It is clear from the application that

for the conversion to be viable there will have to be building operations internally and externally, including new floors, internal walls, hardstanding and even possible foundations.

As a separate issue under this heading the removal of the proposal to widen the access road may partly mitigate the application of Q.1 (j) but it does make the access more unsuitable for a residential development of three units. The access track to the barn is narrow and not in good condition, and vehicular traffic to and from three residential households, with all the support vehicles that this entails, is bound to be of a wholly different character and intensity to that generated by agricultural traffic to a storage barn, particularly one that is not in use! This also impacts to an extent on the track from which the access track leads.

**Possible impracticality or undesirability of location or siting /design and external appearance of building - Q.2(1)(e) and (f)**

Assuming that this properly falls under Class Q at all, which I do not believe it does, I believe that these points need to be properly addressed, particularly in terms of impact of the development on a rural area, in terms of visual amenity and effect on wildlife. The recommendation report for K/3/26/PD stated, on page 9 under "Visual Impact", that *"the location of the barn is not so isolated or so prominent that this alteration would result in harm to the visual amenity of the area which would justify refusal of this permission."* I would suggest that the question of harm to the visual impact is to some degree subjective, and I can definitely say that the appearance of a residential building, of clearly different appearance and character to the existing barn, would make a very significant difference to my own experience of viewing the barn and its surroundings from the north beside the Ferring Rife, as currently the area has a completely rural appearance and even a single residential building in that position would alter that experience. I am sure that I am not alone in this as the area is very popular with people seeking recreation surrounded by nature.

I do not understand how it can be stated that the barn is not prominent – it seems to me to be prominent standing on the edge of open fields and it can for instance be seen from Highdown over a mile away.

The impact on wildlife has been covered in detail by other objections both to this application and to K/3/26/PD but the open land around the barn and along the Ferring Rife has for very many years been a very important area for many kinds of wildlife. This does not seem to have been addressed in the planning officer's report for K/3/26/PD or in the submissions in support of the current application.

Leading on from this I am concerned about the possible implications for future development in the area. The "green gap" in this area is relatively small and that makes it all the more precious for the many people and indeed wildlife that enjoy it, and means that even a small development like this would bring about a change in the character of the area that might not have such an impact in a larger area. Although any future planning applications must be decided on their merits even a small change in the character of the area like this would inevitably risk impacting nearby planning decisions in the future and permanently harm the "green gap".

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I attach my comment on the above application

Chris Sheffield  
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