

Ms Maria Tomalova
Senior Planning Officer
Arun District Council
Arun Civic Centre
Maltravers Road
Littlehampton
West Sussex
BN17 5LF

Your Reference: Y/33/21/PL
Our Reference: 243001

6 May 2021

Dear Ms Tomalova

Plum Pudding Barn, Hoe Lane, Flansham, PO22 8NS
Application ref Y/33/21/PL

We refer to the consultation responses and representations received by Arun District Council up until 4 May 2021 (with 1 May being the expiration of the formal consultation period) in respect of our client's planning application for the conversion of the existing barn to a residential dwelling with associated parking, for occupation by the applicant and her family.

We see that the Environment Agency, The Environmental Health Officer, West Sussex Fire and Rescue Services, Southern Water and WSCC Highways have confirmed that they have no objection to the application, subject conditions which our client is willing to accept.

In addition, we attended Yapton Parish Council Planning Committee meeting on Tuesday evening (virtually) and we were very pleased to hear that the Committee agreed to inform Arun District Council that they do not object to the application, subject to conditions

Whilst a total of 33 representations have been uploaded to the planning website, we note that there are duplicate versions of some of the representations. We would therefore be grateful if you could confirm that you will be treating this as a total of 28 representations, of which 18 are representations in support of the application with 10 letters of objections.

We note that one of the representations is from by Mr Andrew Burns on behalf of the Flansham Residents' Association. Our client has owned property and/or land within Hoe lane, Flansham, since 2003. At no stage has she been approached or invited to join the Residents' Association, seen any notices of AGMs or other public meetings, or indeed seen any agendas and minutes of such meetings. We therefore query the status of the Residents' Association as a democratically created constitution.

As you will have seen, there have been a significant number of letters in support of the proposal to convert this existing building into a two bedroom family home.

These representations have been submitted from residents and landowners along Hoe Lane, residents living in the wider area, along with family members who own adjacent land. The representations make reference to the following scheme benefits:

- Enhancement/improvement to the character of the area through the sensitive/rustic conversion of this existing building, thereby ensuring nothing will be spoilt;
- Improved outlook from neighbouring property;
- The proposed conversion would maintain its original agricultural design;
- No detrimental effect on the character of the area;
- Provision of much needed housing for a long standing local resident;
- In keeping with and similar to other barn conversions including Westward Hoe and Barley Cottage, thereby blending into the surrounding countryside;
- Ongoing maintenance of the land by the applicant has enhanced the character of the area, deterred fly tipping, whilst preserving its rural characteristics;
- The lane would benefit from additional residential use in a manner which is not out of keeping. Also likely to result in better maintenance of the unmade track;
- Likely to be less movements as the applicant currently uses the track several times a day;
- A lot of Flansham has evolved from the conversion of former farm buildings; and
- The proposals would not set a precedent for new house building on the land and surrounding area.

To assist you in the assessment of this application, we set out in the table below our response to the concerns raised to this application:

Summary of Objection	Applicant's response
Playing the system by building a barn style house under the guise of an agricultural building, then attempting to change the use to residential without it being used for its originally intended purpose.	The barn, as constructed, is lawful for planning purposes. It is currently being used for the storage of equipment and tools in connection with the maintenance of the land and the grazing of animals (horses) on the land.
The recently completed barn has been built for conversion to a dwelling with steel structures.	The application is accompanied by a Structural Survey and Conversion Method Statement, which includes a specification of the existing building and photos of the existing timber rafters. The applicant contends that local residents' assertions that the barn has been built specifically for conversion to a dwelling are unfounded.

Proposal, if permitted, will set an unwanted precedent for further housing. The site is outside of the development area and residents had understood from the council that the northern side of the A259 would be protected from further development. Alleged rumours about the applicant's intention to develop surrounding land further. If permission is granted a local landowner will give serious consideration to the offers made from local and national housebuilders for the land.	Both National Planning Policy Guidance and Local Plan Policy H DM4 allow for the conversion of <u>existing</u> buildings for residential use in rural locations like this, subject to specified criteria. As part of our planning submission, we have demonstrated in detail how these criteria have been met. The applicant has never indicated her intention to build any further buildings on the land. Each application will be considered on its own merits in accordance with the development plan and any other material considerations. It would not set a precedent for large scale residential development in this area.
Yapton Parish Council is currently assessing Flansham as an area of Special Character, being one of the last unspoiled old settlements on the whole of the coastal strip from Chichester to Eastbourne. The proposal will degrade the area, detract from one of the few places of beauty the local residents and visitors can enjoy, and will undo the work undertaken by residents to protect the natural and undisturbed nature of the lane and to preserve the special character and uniqueness of Flansham hamlet.	Flansham hamlet is not currently designated as either a heritage asset or an area of Special Character. The application site is also somewhat physically detached from the centre of the hamlet. It lies within a ribbon of development, comprising of a mix of farmland, paddocks and housing, including a number of converted buildings. The Council, in granting planning permission for the building in 2011, considered that the design, external cladding and location of the barn was appropriate for this rural location. The scheme has been carefully designed to comply with the Arun Design Guide for building conversions. New windows have been added sparingly to ensure that the building would retain its traditional, rural appearance. It would benefit from sympathetic landscaping within a limited curtilage to ensure that the resultant building and associated residential use does not have an adverse effect on the rural character of the area.
Hoe Lane, which has become an important lane for local walking,	Vehicle movements would decrease as the applicant would be on site to maintain

cycling or dog walking, is inadequate / unsafe for increased traffic and will pose safety issues for existing road users. The owner of Maggie Meadow has filled in potholes from the pump station up to the site's access gates, which is presumptive of him being granted permission for the proposed conversion.	her horses, rather than visiting early morning, midday and last thing at night. The Highway Authority has been consulted on the planning application. They have confirmed that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal. These improvements have been undertaken by the applicant at her own expense to improve access to her site by horse related vehicles from the unmade lane. The works have not been undertaken in anticipation of planning permission being granted.
Representations in support of the application have been received from friends, family or associates of the applicant who do not live in the lane or even locally. Their views do not reflect the residents and users of the lane.	Any member of the public is entitled to submit a representation of support or objection in response to the council's publicity of the application. In this case, representations in support of the application have been made by residents living along the lane, owners of adjoining land, along with residents in nearby villages and settlements who have seen the three site notices posted in Hoe Lane whilst enjoying walks along the Lane.
Prior to the applicant acquiring the land, the site was prime agricultural land for the growing of crops.	The Council has acknowledged in various officer reports that the use of the land has been limited to the rearing of pigs (up until circa 2013) and for the keeping of horses (since 1987), and not for agricultural cultivation.
Query whether two storage containers placed on the land have planning permission.	One of the containers has been used for the storage of hay over the winter months, as the applicant was required to buy in bulk due to a national shortage of hay. This will be removed shortly. The other is owned by a contractor who is undertaking repairs to a pumped sewer on the land. This, again, will be removed once the works are completed.

Conclusion

The residential use of this building would represent a good use of this previously developed site. It would also be more neighbourly and generate less traffic than the re-introduction of an intensive pig rearing use, or similar agricultural use, which local residents have previously complained about to the Council.

We maintain the view that the proposal would result in a much needed, small family dwelling in a sustainable location at a time when Arun District Council is unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply and is not meeting its Housing Delivery Test targets. This will be achieved through the sensitive conversion of an existing rural building which would provide high quality living accommodation for a long-established local family, without harming the rural character of the area or neighbouring residential amenity and without having an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

Under these circumstances planning permission should be granted without delay.

We would be grateful if the above comments can be fully considered prior to a decision being made on the planning application.

Yours sincerely

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Tania Tindale.

Tania Tindale

cc: Sarah Bennett – Plum Pudding Barn, Hoe Lane, Flansham