

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 2 FEBRUARY 2017
REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (PUBLIC PROTECTION, PLANNING AND
GOVERNANCE)

6/2016/1953/FULL

WARRENWOOD MANOR, HORNBEAM LANE, BROOKMANS PARK, HATFIELD, AL9 6JF

RETENTION OF SINGLE STOREY EQUESTRIAN STORAGE BARN

APPLICANT: Mr Nigel Brunt

(Hatfield East)

1. Background

- 1.1 The application was withdrawn from the Development Management Committee meeting held in January as the applicant submitted a late submission to the Council after the officers report was published (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 The applicant instructed JSP Management Ltd to comment on the Independent Appraisal undertaken on behalf of the Council by KWA Architects and Planning Consultants, attached as Appendix 2. Within that report they summarise that there is a defined need for a storage barn separate from the stables. In that report they outline the justification for a separate storage barn and provide an analysis of incorporating the storage area into the existing stable block.
- 1.3 With regard to the need for a separate storage barn paragraph 3.61 of the applicant's report outlines that KWA Architects agree that a separate storage barn is a good addition to any equine yard, and confirms what was said in the original report. The report prepared by KWA Architects outlines in paragraph 7.7 that it is widely accepted that stable yards do create an increased fire risk and that the storage of hay, bedding and machinery all create potential fire hazards and that it is best practice to provide a separate building for the storage of hay, bedding and machinery wherever possible, particularly when designing a new equestrian yard. They state however that; -

'Whilst it is functionally preferable to have a separate storage Barn appropriate management processes and fire safety systems can be implemented on yards which have internal storage to reduce the fire risk. We therefore cannot concur with JSP's claim that it is 'never' acceptable to have internal storage but it is acknowledged that it is functionally preferable'.
- 1.4 The applicant's report prepared by JSP makes reference to stables on KWA's website which include separate buildings for storage. These are at different sites and outside the Borough where the full details have not been provided. No weight can therefore be attached to this.

- 1.5 With regard to the section of the applicant's report prepared by JSP which provides an analysis of incorporating the storage area into the existing stable block, reference is made to the fact that KWA Architects did not visit Warrenwood Manor. Whilst KWA Architects did not visit the site they were employed by the Council to provide an independent appraisal of their supporting information on the specific equestrian considerations and advise whether or not there is actually a need for the barn in addition to the existing stables on the site. They were provided with the relevant information and plans concerning the site and were able to clearly make a judgement on the supporting information.
- 1.6 The report prepared by KWA Architect outlines that the stable block has been designed and built with significant storage. That report outlines that even through the stable block does not currently provide suitable access to the first floor storage areas for storing hay and bedding, there is more than sufficient space provided within the building as a whole to meet the storage and functional needs for the proper management of 16 horses. That report outlines that airflow may well have been an issue for the first floor hay storage areas however this would not prevent these areas of the building being used for alternative purposes such as an office, tackroom etc to allow the floor space on the ground floor to be used more productively. It outlines that the building could accommodate simple internal remodelling to provide more than sufficient space internally for the required storage without further encroaching into the Green Belt.
- 1.7 The applicant's report prepared by JSP outlines that the alternatives are not viable on a practical and costs basis. In this instance, the cost is not a material planning consideration. The applicant has built the storage barn without the appropriate planning permission and at his own risk. It is apparent that there are alternative options that are available to the applicant to accommodate the required equipment and hay within the existing stable block.
- 1.8 The report prepared by KWA Architect provides one example of remodelling only, although considers that there are many ways in which the building could be remodelled to meet the storage requirements on site. Therefore whilst the applicant critiques the suggestion made this is only one option available to the applicant and the onus would be for the applicant to remodel the building to provide a situation that would work for him.
- 1.9 The first floor of the building includes two large hay stores in the stable block which the applicant explains cannot be accessed as there are no appropriate openings and a mechanical load lifter is required to manoeuvre hay to these areas. Whilst the report prepared by KWA accepts this claim, the applicant's report prepared by JSP outlines the fire risk is a real threat and putting hay in an enclosed space with minimal airflow is not advisable. Nevertheless, condition 20 of planning permission S6/2012/2656/S73B, which was for '*Time extension of planning permission S6/2009/2574/FP (Erection of new dwelling, three bay garage block, garden store together with retention and alteration of the existing stables, landscaping and all other ancillary works. Following demolition of partially constructed dwelling, adjoining stables and garage blocks)*' sought to have a first floor plan submitted. That condition was also placed on the original application, reference S6/2009/2574/FP, where that officer's report outlines that the finished stable block would provide 16 horse boxes, feed and hay store, tack rooms and rest rooms. The submitted Drawing 703/100 by the applicant to comply with condition 20 of planning permission S6/2012/2656/S73B on the 3 June 2013 shows the first floor of the

stable building as built, attached as Appendix 3. For clarification, the ground floor is attached at Appendix 4. That floor plan includes two large hay stores within the first floor of the stable block. It therefore seems extremely surprising that the applicant is now stating that what was designed, submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval and actually built, is now not appropriate as there is no appropriate access or indeed now considers that there is a real potential of fire risk. Subsequently, it strongly suggests that the vast majority of the first floor of the stable block has no functional use.

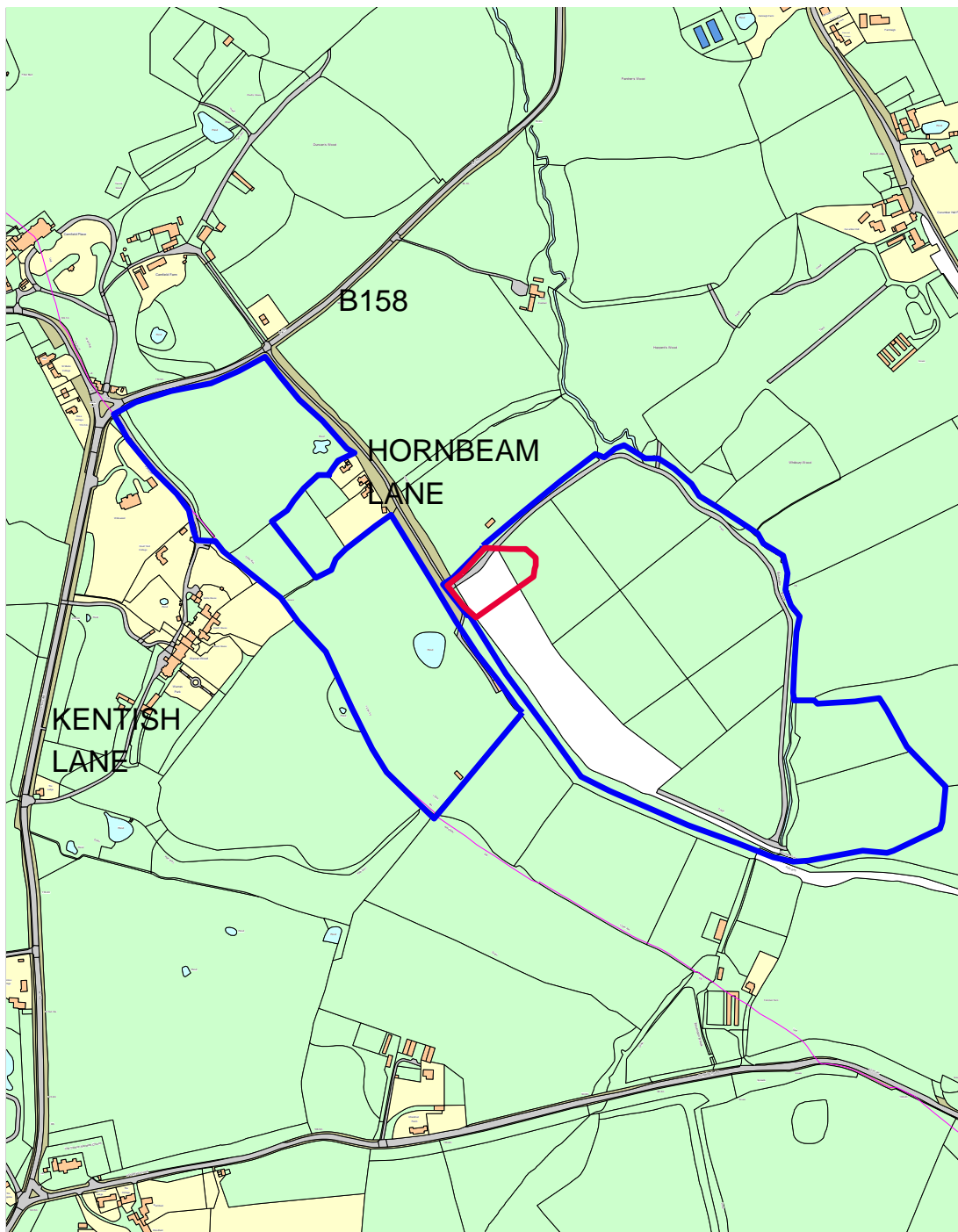
- 1.10 The applicant's report prepared by JSP outlines that the storage space also reduces the size of the existing stables and that they are all currently used. In this instance, KWA's report does not suggest reducing the number of stables. It outlines that certain stables could be remodelled to provide two reasonably sized stables.
- 1.11 The applicant's report prepared by JSP makes reference to other equine yards which include separate buildings for storage. Again, as before there are at different sites where the full details have not been provided. No weight can therefore be attached to this.
- 1.12 The applicant provides the ground floor plans of the stable block as built, which are different to those granted planning permission and which the Council have on file. Whilst there are differences to the internal layout, the footprint of the building has not altered and the first floor space remains as previously granted. Accordingly the findings in the report prepared by KWA Architects remain.
- 1.13 In a supporting letter from the applicant, he outlines that in the field right next to the site consent for a similar size building has been granted. No information has been provided of the exact address of that site and therefore no comment can be made. In any event, every site is assessed on its own individual merits and it is unlikely that this would provide any support in relation to this proposal.
- 1.14 Overall in conclusion, officers consider that the proposed storage barn would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and thus harmful to it, where additional harm is caused to the openness, the purposes and the visual amenity of the Green Belt. There are no other considerations apparent that would weigh in favour of the scheme which cumulatively or individually would outweigh the harm identified and warrant very special circumstances.

Appendix 1 – Case Officer's Report

Appendix 2 – Report prepared for the Council by KWA Architects and Planning Consultants

Appendix 3 – First floor plan of stable block

Appendix 4 – Ground floor plan of stable block



Council Offices, The Campus,
Welwyn Garden City, Herts. AL8 6AE

Title:		Scale: DNS	
Warrenwood Manor, Hornbeam Lane, Brookmans Park		Date: 2016	
Project:	DMC Meeting	Drawing Number:	6/2016/1953/FULL
		Drawn:	Andrew Windscheffel
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