



WESTCOTT VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

Mr James Leaver

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Planning Department
Mole Valley District Council
Pippbrook
Dorking
Surrey, RH4 1SJ

13 September 2024

Dear Sirs

MO/2024/1472 Hunters Heath Farm, Coldharbour Lane, Westcott, RH4 3JQ

Prior notification for the laying of hardstanding and an access track and the erection of an agricultural barn of 18m long and 12m wide for the storage of hay, feed and machinery and occasional shelter for lambing.

I refer to the prior notification above and write in my capacity as the lead for planning matters for Westcott Village Association (WVA).

Whilst we welcome the fact that the applicant has scaled back their ambitions when compared to their July 2023 planning application MO/2023/0731, we are unsure whether this qualifies to be processed by prior notification given the fact that this is a

small holding in the AONB. MO/2023/0731 was a full-blown planning application, WVA objected, the Surrey Hills AONB planning adviser was consulted and commented and it was refused on the following grounds:-

1. By reason of the mixed use of the proposed barn and the siting on undeveloped land, the proposed development would be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt and would fail to meet the exceptions set out within paragraph 149 of the NPPF. The proposal would therefore constitute inappropriate development within the Green Belt. No very special circumstances have been advanced that clearly outweigh the identified harm to the Green Belt.

2. By reason of the bulk, size and siting of the barn, the proposal would be dominant from views into the site and disproportionate to the holding it is to serve. It is not considered that the size of the barn would be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture proposed. The proposal would therefore be in conflict with Mole Valley Core Strategy policy CS14, Mole Valley Local Plan policies ENV22, ENV23 and RUD14, and government advice contained within the NPPF.

3. By reason of design, bulk and siting of the proposed barn, the proposed development would harm the landscape and scenic beauty of the Surrey Hills AONB contrary to Core Strategy policy CS13, the Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan and the advice contained within the NPPF.

Given this background I suggest that the Surrey Hills AONB planning adviser should be consulted whether this application can now be treated as a prior notification case and I have therefore taken the liberty of copying this letter to him.

If Officers are minded to grant permission, we suggest a condition should be imposed requiring the building to be removed and the site restored if it is no longer needed for agriculture.

Yours sincerely,



James Leaver

Planning Lead, Westcott Village Association

Cc Clive Smith, Surrey Hills AONB planning adviser