

22 December 2025

Planning Department
Horsham District Council
Parkside, Chart Way
Horsham, West Sussex
RH12 1RL

SL/Let/P2197i

Dear Sir, Madam

Prior Approval for the Conversion of 1no. Agricultural Barn into 4no. Dwellings (Class C3) at Jacksons, Hammerpond Road, Plummers Plain, Horsham, RH13 6PE

We are contacting you on behalf of our client, Lake Investments Ltd for the Prior Notification for the changes of use of a single building with associated operational development at Jacksons, Hammerpond Road from agricultural use to residential use (C3).

Introduction

This application includes the following documents and drawings to accompany this Prior Approval Planning Application:

- Application Forms
- Planning Covering Letter
- Suite of Architectural Drawings including Location and Block Plans
- Transport Covering Note
- Ground Contamination, Risk Assessment and Remediation Strategy
- Structural Report
- Previous Officer Report and Decision Notice DC/25/1740.

The reports above were written in support of the previous application reference DC/25/1740 for 8 units, however the findings of these reports are considered entirely valid for this smaller scheme, which would have lessened impacts. Such an approach was agreed with Adrian Smith, Major Applications Team Leader, Horsham District Council.

The Site

The application site is located on the south side of Hammerpond within a countryside location. Current access to the site is immediately off the road, Hammerpond Road which has good viability splays as existing.

The existing barn is set near to the boundary of the road; in which, the land to the rear falls southwards towards open countryside to the west and towards the boundary of Hammer Cottage. To the east of the application site is Stonehouse Farm, which is also within the applicant ownership.

The surrounding area is characterised mainly by open countryside and other sporadic residential dwellings.

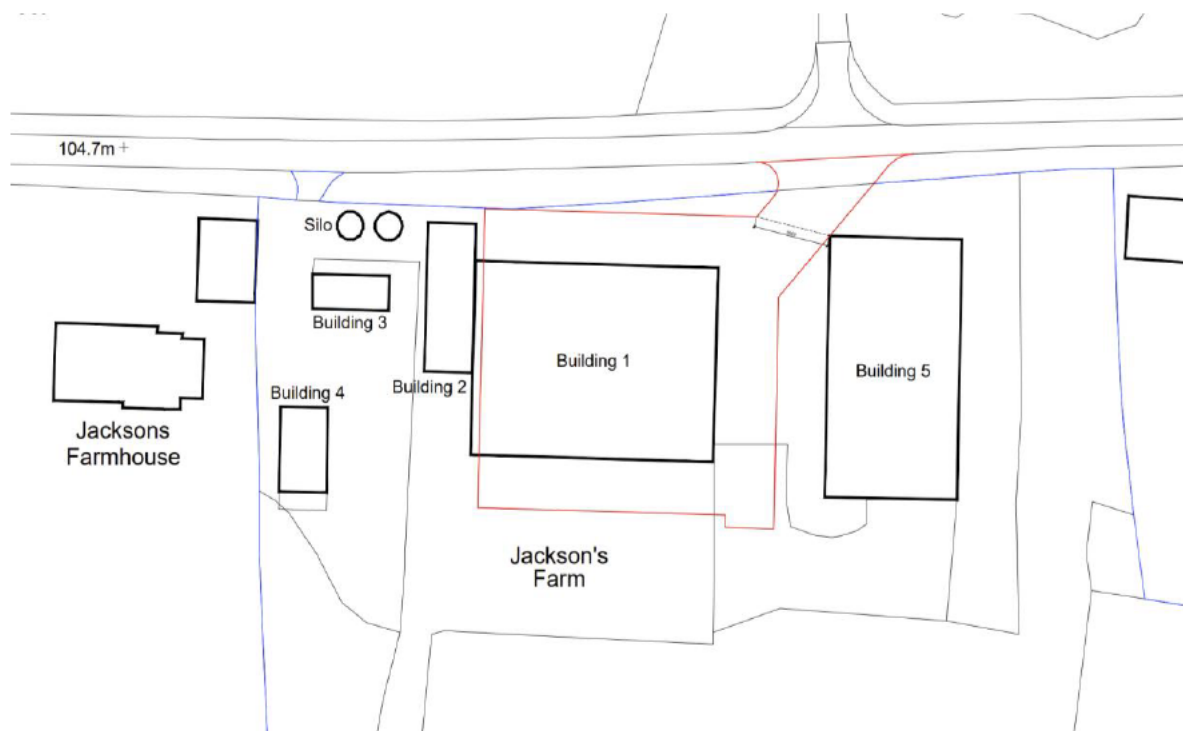


Figure 1- Site Location Plan

The barn subject of this prior approval has formed part of the established agricultural unit at Stonehouse Farm for several decades prior to 24 July 2023, having been used continuously for the storage of fodder, machinery, and equipment associated with the former dairy enterprise. This ongoing agricultural use is evidenced by aerial imagery (including tractor activity observed between 2018 and 2020) and historic site photographs. Refer to Figure 2.



Figure 2- September 2018 Aerial (Google Earth) star annotates barn subject to this application

The long-standing agricultural nature of the site is further supported by the planning history, which consistently demonstrates the operation of a working farm and associated agricultural activities. See below.

This extensive record provides clear evidence that the site has been in long-term and continuous agricultural use.

The application site is located in Flood Zone 1.

Planning History: Barns and Surrounding Buildings

Reference DC/25/1740 - Prior Notification for Change of Use of 2no. Agricultural Buildings to 8no. dwellinghouses (C3 Use Class). Refused on the following grounds only.

Building 5 was subject of a condition following the grant of planning permission DC/06/0408, which stated that the building shall be used for agricultural purposes only, as defined in Section 336(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Article 3(4) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) states that development contrary to any condition imposed on by any planning permission is not permitted. Therefore, building 5 is unable to benefit from the provisions of Class Q of Schedule 2, Part 3 of this Order.

This application therefore seeks consideration only of Building 1 as identified on the submitted plans. The officers report, pursuant to this application is clear that Barn 1 would benefit from permitted development rights. All other matters were considered acceptable in relation to application reference DC/25/1740. Officers report attached.

Reference DC/14/2276 - Retention of mobile home for a further period of three years whilst the dwelling approved under application DC/13/0134 is constructed (for use by herdsman). Application Permitted 08/01/15 and Enforcement Appeal Hearing 3 October 2023. Case Closed.

Reference DC/14/1405 - Creation of a farm workers dwelling (Approval of Reserved Matters) Application Permitted 27/08/14.

Reference DC/13/0134 - Erection of a farm worker dwelling (Outline planning). Application Permitted 30/04/13.

3.4.6. Reference DC/12/2090 - Erection of a farm workers dwelling. Withdrawn Application 09/05/13, Subsequent Appeal Withdrawn.

Reference DC/11/1313 - Retrospective permission for a milking parlour (Resubmission of DC/09/1620). Application Refused 14/09/11.

Reference DC/11/0296 - Internal fitting out of livestock shed to facilitate robotic milking, at Jacksons Farm, Hammerpond Road (Lawful Development Certificate - Proposed). Application Permitted 20/06/11.

Reference DC/10/2030 - Retrospective permission for a pole barn for agricultural use - tractor store (DOESN'T RELATE TO HAMMERPOND SITE). Application Permitted 23/12/10.

Reference DC/10/1018 - Change of Use of land for siting of mobile home for agricultural stock persons for a temporary period of one year. Application Permitted 10/12/13.

Reference DC/09/1779 - Retrospective application for installation of underground slurry storage tank, maintenance track and access ramps to fields for cows and machinery. Application Refused 07/10/10.

Reference DC/09/1620 - Proposed new milking parlour and retrospective consent for access road and additional close boarded fence 1.8 metre high adjacent to highway. Application Refused 07/10/10.

Reference DC/09/0819 - Retrospective application for location of 2 feed silos within 25 metres of a highway. Application Permitted 07/10/10.

Reference DC/09/0804 - Re-positioning of entrance door and concrete apron to southern elevation of cattle feed store (approved under DC/06/0408) retention of extended yard and landscaping area with improvements. Application Refused 07/10/10.

Proposal

This Prior Approval Application seeks written confirmation from Horsham District Council in relation to the proposed development being compliant with Part Q of the General Permitted Development Order (2015) (As Amended). The proposal seeks to convert a single larger agricultural building into four residential dwellings.

The proposal has been tailored to be in-keeping with the rural character of the area and buildings within and adjacent to the site.

Permitted development – Class Q.1 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) allows for:

Q. Development consisting of—

(a) a change of use of—

(i) a building that is part of an established agricultural unit and any land within that building's curtilage, or

(ii) a former agricultural building that was (but is no longer) part of an established agricultural unit and any land within that building's curtilage, to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order,

(b) development referred to in sub-paragraph (a) together with the extension of the building referred to in sub-paragraph (a), or

(b) development referred to in sub-paragraph (a) together with the extension of the building referred to in sub-paragraph (a), or

(c) development referred to in sub-paragraph (a) together with building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building referred to in sub-paragraph (a) to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of that Schedule or to extend that building.

Development not permitted

Q.1. Development is not permitted by Class Q if—

(a) in the case of a site that is part of an established agricultural unit, the site was not part of the established agricultural unit—

(i) on 24th July 2023, or

(ii) where the site became part of the established agricultural unit after 24th July 2023, for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins,

(b) in the case of a site that was (but is no longer) part of an established agricultural unit

(i) the site was part of an established agricultural unit on 24th July 2023

The building subject to this application have been in situ as part of the established agricultural unit at Stonehouse Farm for several, decades prior to 24 July 2023.

(ii) where the site ceased to be part of an established agricultural unit after 24th July 2023, the site has not been part of the established agricultural unit for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins, or

- (ii) since ceasing to be part of an established agricultural unit, the site has been used for any non-agricultural purpose.

The barn has been used for agricultural storage for Stonehouse Farm

(c) the floor space of any dwellinghouse developed under Class Q having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order exceeds 150 square metres,

The proposed dwellinghouses will not exceed 150sqm, as designed. This is demonstrated by the supporting plans which demonstrate the GIA floor areas of the scheme.

Plots 1 - 4 G.I.A = 136sq.m

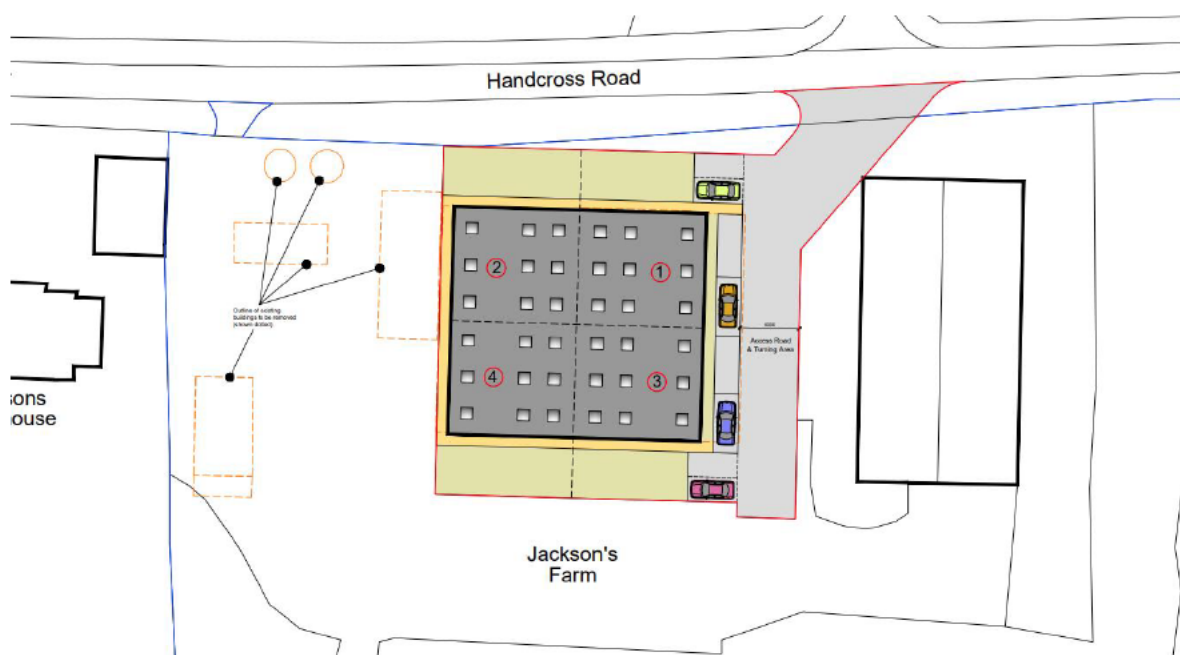


Figure 3- The proposal

Q, within the original limits of an established agricultural unit (see paragraph Q.3(2) of this Part) would result in—

- (i) the cumulative number of separate dwellinghouses having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order exceeding 10, or

As outlined in the supporting plans and documents, the proposal is for four new dwellinghouses. Consequently, the total number of dwellinghouses in the proposed development will remain below 10.

(ii) the cumulative floor space of dwellinghouses having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order exceeding 1,000 square metres,

The proposed development will comprise a total floor space of 1000sqm. Therefore, within the requirements of a Class Q Application

(e) the site is occupied under an agricultural tenancy, unless the express consent of both the landlord and the tenant has been obtained,

There is no Agricultural Tenancy on the site.

(f) less than 1 year before the date development begins-

(i) an agricultural tenancy over the site has been terminated, and

Not applicable.

- (iii) the termination was for the purpose of carrying out development under Class Q, unless both the landlord and the tenant have agreed in writing that the site is no longer required for agricultural use,

Not applicable.

(g) development under Class A(a) or Class B(a) of Part 6 of this Schedule (agricultural buildings and operations) has been carried out on the established agricultural unit during the period which is 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins,

The part of the building subject to this application has been in situ in their current form for many years. No development under Class A(a) or Class B(a) of Part 6 of the Schedule has been undertaken.

(h) the development would result in the external dimensions of the building extending beyond the external dimensions of the existing building at any given point, other than—

(i) extension of the building allowed by paragraph Q.1(i);

Not applicable.

(ii) protrusions of up to 0.2 metres to accommodate building operations allowed by paragraph Q.1(j)(i),

Not applicable.

(i) the development under Class Q(b) would result in an extension that—

(i) has more than one storey,

Not applicable. As detailed within the supporting plans, all proposed dwellinghouses will be one storey.

(ii) is sited anywhere other than to the rear of the existing building.

Not applicable.

(iii) extends beyond the rear wall of the existing building by more than 4 metres.

Not applicable.

(iv) has eaves the height of which exceed the height of the eaves of the existing building.

As detailed within the supporting plans, all dwellinghouses will have eaves which do not exceed the existing eaves of the building.

(v) is higher than whichever is the lower of—

(aa) the highest part of the roof of the existing building, or

(bb) a height of 4 metres above the ground,

As detailed within the supporting plans, all dwellinghouses will not be higher than the highest part of the roof of the existing building.

(vi) extends beyond a wall that forms a side or principal elevation of the existing building, or

As detailed within the supporting plans, no part of the dwellinghouses will extend beyond a wall that forms a side or principal elevation of the existing building.

(vii) would be sited on land that, before the development under Class Q(b), is not covered by a hard surface that was provided on the land by virtue of any development, and—

(aa) the hard surface was not provided on the land on or before 24th July 2023, or

As shown in aerial imagery, hardstanding is existing in place around the subject buildings, which pre-dates 24 July 2023.

(bb) where the hard surface was provided on the land after 24th July 2023, the hard surface has not been situated on the land for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class Q(b) begins,

Not applicable. The hardstanding has been in situ for at least two decades prior to July 2023.

(j) the development under Class 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),

As detailed within the supporting plans and documents, the proposed development would comply within the scope outlined above.

The proposed curtilage of each converted dwelling is confined strictly to the extent of existing hardstanding and immediately adjacent areas historically used for agricultural access and turning, as shown on the submitted Block Plan. These curtilage areas do not extend beyond land lawfully forming part of the established agricultural unit as of 24 July 2023.

In addition, the Structural Appraisal prepared by McCarey Simmonds Ltd confirms that both the barn is structurally sound and capable of conversion without substantial rebuilding, requiring only localised repairs and reinstatement of minor elements such as roof cladding, wall panels, and openings. This confirms that the proposed works fall wholly within the scope of Class Q.1(j).

(k) the site is on [article 2\(3\) land](#).

The site is not located within Article 2(3) land.

(l) the site is, or forms part of—

(i) a site of special scientific interest;

The site does not form part of a site of special scientific interest.

(ii) a safety hazard area;

The site does not form part of a safety hazard area.

(iii) a military explosives storage area,

The site does not form part of a military explosives storage area.

(m) the site is, or contains, a scheduled monument,

The site does not contain a scheduled monument.

(n) the building is a listed building,

The site does not contain a listed building.

(o) the existing building, excluding any proposed extension under Class Q(b) but including any proposed building operations under Class Q(c), would not be capable of complying with the nationally described space standard issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government on 27th March 2015 as read with the notes dated 19th May 2016 which apply to it, or

As detailed within the supporting plans and documents, all proposed dwellinghouses comply with nationally described space standards.

(p) the building does not have suitable existing access to a public highway.

The site has an existing suitable access that has facilitated the agricultural use for many years.

Conditions

Q.2. —(1) Where the development proposed is development under Class Q(a) together with development under Class Q(c), development is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development, the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to—

(a) transport and highways impacts of the development. See Appraisal Section.

(b) noise impacts of the development, See Appraisal Section.

(c) contamination risks on the site, See Appraisal Section.

(d) flooding risks on the site, See Appraisal Section.

(e) whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the building to change from agricultural use to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order, See Appraisal Section.

(f) the design or external appearance of the building, and See Appraisal Section.

As detailed within the supporting plans and documents, the proposed design of a high quality.

(g) the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses, and the provisions of paragraph W (prior approval) of this Part apply in relation to that application.

As detailed within the supporting plans and documents, all proposed dwellinghouses have been designed to receive good natural light and are fully compliant with the provisions of paragraph W.

(2) Where the development proposed is development under Class Q

(a) only, development is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development, the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the items referred to in sub-paragraphs (1)(a) to (e) and (g), and the provisions of paragraph W (prior approval) of this Part apply in relation to that application.

The proposed development is fully compliant with the above and with the provisions of Paragraph W.

(3) Where the development proposed includes development under Class Q(b), the developer must also apply, as part of the application under sub-paragraph (1) or (2) (as the case may be), for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the impact of the proposed extension on the amenity of any adjoining premises.

There is no impact on the amenity of the surrounding area. The closest neighbouring dwellings are approx. 20 metres from the closest proposed dwellinghouse. There will be no impact to the amenity of these neighbours as a result of the development.

(4) Development under Class Q is permitted subject to the condition that development under Class Q(a), and under Class Q(b) or (c), if any, must be completed within a period of 3 years starting with the prior approval date.

The proposed development would be completed within 3 years of the prior approval date.

Appraisal

In accordance with the (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), we request a determination as to whether the Prior Approval of Horsham District Council is required with Class Q(a) development with regards to:

- (a) Transport and Highways impacts of the development,
- (b) Noise impacts of the development,
- (c) Contamination risks on the site,
- (d) Flooding risks on the site,
- (e) Whether the Location or Siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the building to change from agricultural use to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order,
- (f) The Design or External Appearance of the building,
- (g) The provision of adequate Natural Light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses

Transport

The site is served by two existing access points from Hammerpond Road, both of which have historically accommodated intensive vehicle movements associated with the former dairy farm, including HGVs and tractors with trailers. No new or altered accesses are proposed.

A Transport Appraisal prepared by i-Transport LLP (Ref: ITS19302-013A, dated 18 September 2025) has been submitted in support of this application. The report identifies that the historic agricultural and B8 uses (reference DC/22/0842) of the site could generate between 33 and 55 daily two-way vehicle movements, a significant proportion of which would be heavy vehicles.

In comparison, the proposed conversion of the existing barns to four no. three-bed dwellings is forecast to generate between 24 and 41 daily two-way movements, depending on the dwelling type scenario used, and these would comprise almost entirely of private car trips rather than heavy agricultural vehicles.

The resulting traffic levels are therefore comparable to, or lower than, those historically associated with the site.

Access will be taken from the easternmost existing entrance, with vegetation clearance within the highway verge (undertaken under a Section 142 licence) providing a visibility splay of 2.4m x 120m.

The submitted Transport Appraisal concludes that the proposed development will not result in a material increase or change in the character of traffic using Hammerpond Road. As such, Prior Approval is not required in respect of transport and highways matters. This matter was considered acceptable in relation to application reference DC/25/1740.

Noise

There is no noise issues associated with the development which would represent an adverse impact upon any existing residential amenity within the area. There are no intensive or noisy agricultural uses in proximity to the site. There are nearby residential properties on Hammerpond Road. This matter was considered acceptable in relation to application reference DC/25/1740.

Contamination

A Preliminary Ground Contamination Risk Assessment and Remediation Strategy has been prepared by Ashdown Site Investigation Ltd in support of this application. The report assesses the potential for contamination arising from the site's historic agricultural use and associated activities.

The investigation, undertaken in accordance with CIRIA C552 guidance, included intrusive sampling and laboratory analysis. Results identified limited areas of made ground containing elevated levels of lead and PAH compounds beneath part of the existing barn.

No contaminants of concern were detected in the natural underlying soils, and the risk to groundwater and controlled waters is considered low, as no groundwater was encountered and the site does not lie within a Source Protection Zone.

A remediation strategy has been proposed, comprising the removal of any locally affected material or the introduction of a verified clean cover system to break the contaminant pathway. Once implemented, the site will be suitable for its intended residential use, with no significant residual risks to human health or the environment.

Further details are contained within the submitted Ashdown Site Investigation Report (Ref: R16834).

This matter was considered acceptable in relation to application reference DC/25/1740.

Flood Risk

The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and therefore has a very low flood risk.

This matter was considered acceptable in relation to application reference DC/25/1740.

Location and Siting

The dwellings proposed are considered to be reasonably located and would not constitute inappropriate development on the site.

In addition, the location of the building is not considered to be undesirable or impractical for a change of use.

The potential curtilage areas associated with the building would provide sufficient amenity space and the existing access onto Hammerpond Road would be suitable to serve the new dwellings with parking associated within the curtilage.

This matter was considered acceptable in relation to application reference DC/25/1740.

Design

The proposed conversion seeks to provide high-quality dwellings that respect the form, proportions and agricultural character of the existing barns while sitting comfortably within the rural landscape. The design retains the distinctive utilitarian appearance of the original buildings, with limited and sensitive alterations to reflect their former function.

The proposed dwellings have been designed to exceed the Nationally Described Space Standards in terms of internal layout and overall size, ensuring a high standard of residential amenity. The proposed elevations demonstrate that the external appearance of the barns will be largely maintained, with the use of high-quality, durable materials appropriate to the rural setting. The selected material palette will complement the surrounding countryside and reflect the simple agricultural vernacular of the existing structures.

This matter was considered acceptable in relation to application reference DC/25/1740.

The proposed curtilage of each converted dwelling is confined strictly to the extent of existing hardstanding and immediately adjacent areas historically used for agricultural access and turning, as shown on the submitted Block Plan. These curtilage areas do not extend beyond land lawfully forming part of the established agricultural unit as of 24 July 2023.

This matter was considered acceptable in relation to application reference DC/25/1740.

Structural Integrity

A Structural Appraisal has been prepared by McCarey Simmonds Limited (Ref: MS07260/DS, dated 17 January 2025) in support of the application. The report confirms that both the precast concrete portal frame barn and the steel portal frame barn are structurally sound and suitable for conversion, with only minor localised repairs required. The appraisal concludes that the existing structures can accommodate the proposed works without the need for substantial reconstruction, thereby meeting the requirements of Class Q(b) of the General Permitted Development Order (2015).

Further details are provided in the submitted Structural Appraisal Report prepared by McCarey Simmonds Limited.

This matter was considered acceptable in relation to application reference DC/25/1740.

Natural Light

The internal layout is reflective of appropriate levels of daylighting across all habitable rooms with appropriately sized external windows to maximise adequate light levels.

This matter was considered acceptable in relation to application reference DC/25/1740.

Conclusion

Overall, the proposed development seeks to make an efficient and effective use of an underutilised rural building at Jacksons Farm, in accordance with the General Permitted Order, creating four no. dwellings.

The 2024 amendments to Class Q are also material to this application, as they removed the previous requirement for a building forming part of an established agricultural unit to have been used *solely* for agricultural purposes. As clarified in the Explanatory Memorandum, this change was introduced to recognise that agricultural buildings may also be used for ancillary or related activities linked to farming, without affecting their eligibility under Class Q.

In this context, the barn at Stonehouse Farm clearly meet the requirements of the updated Class Q provisions. There is no evidence to suggest that the site has not functioned primarily as an agricultural unit for in excess of ten years, and the submitted planning history and site evidence confirm this.

Accordingly, the proposed conversion to residential use fully accords with the updated provisions of Class Q of the General Permitted Development Order (2015, as amended 2024).

We trust that this view, as supported in the previous officer's report relating to application DC/25/1740 will be taken forward on this amended scheme, relating to Barn 1 independently.

If you have any further queries or require further information, please contact me on 01903 248777.

Yours sincerely
ECE Planning



Chris Barker MATP MRTPI
Managing Director