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The Planning Inspectorate

COMMENTS ON CASE (Online Version)

Please note that comments about this case need to be made within the timetable. This can be found in the notification letter sent by the local planning authority or the start date letter. Comments submitted after the deadline may be considered invalid and returned to sender.

Appeal Reference: APP/Z3825/W/25/3369821

DETAILS OF THE CASE

Appeal Reference	APP/Z3825/W/25/3369821
Appeal By	MR SIMON BISHOP
Site Address	Development Site Lot 3 Kent Street Cowfold West Sussex RH13 8BB

SENDER DETAILS

Name	[redacted]
Address	Ridgelands Kent Street Kent Street Cowfold West Sussex RH13 8BB

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

In what capacity do you wish to make representations on this case?

- ☐ Appellant
- ☐ Agent
- ☑ Interested Party / Person
- ☐ Land Owner
- ☐ Rule 6 (6)

What kind of representation are you making?

- ☐ Final Comments
- ☐ Proof of Evidence
- ☐ Statement
- ☐ Statement of Common Ground
- ☑ Interested Party/Person Correspondence

☐ Other

COMMENT DOCUMENTS

The documents listed below were uploaded with this form:

Relates to Section:	REPRESENTATION
Document Description:	Your comments on the appeal.
File name:	Appeal Objection.pdf

PLEASE ENSURE THAT A COPY OF THIS SHEET IS ENCLOSED WHEN POSTING THE ABOVE DOCUMENTS TO US

Ridgelands
Kent Street
Cowfold
RH13 8BB

02nd September 2025

Mr Neil Devereux
Case Officer
The Planning Inspectorate
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Dear Mr Devereux,

Further to my representation letter to Horsham District Council planning officer Hannah Darley dated 27th May 2025, objecting against the retrospective planning application for change of use of existing building from car storage to dance studio (ref:DC/25/0658), I am writing again to set out my concerns and formally **object** to the appeal application APP/Z3825/W/25/3369821 for the following reasons: -

1. Site History and Context
   The site was formally agricultural land with moveable chicken sheds until 2021. Subsequent prior planning approvals were for less intensive uses: a cabinetry workshop (DC/22/0468) and then car storage (DC/24/0245), which was implemented until late 2024. These previous uses were compatible with the area's character and involved limited traffic movements.

2. Concerns Regarding the appeal application
   The application details five dance studios with limited ancillary space, lacking windows or natural ventilation. Extensive opening hours are proposed (9am-9pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat, 10am-4pm Sun/Bank Holidays). Access is via Kent Street a rural single-track lane and a private single-track drive which also serves a few residences and is also a Public Footpath FP1789/1.

   The application does not clearly outline the applicant's full operational intentions, particularly in light of recent recruitment efforts and class enrolment advertisements on social media. Critically, it is supported only by a simplistic Design and Access

Statement, with no objective assessment of traffic generation, water neutrality, or impact on local character and the residential amenity.

3. Grounds for Objection based on Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF)
    - Countryside Protection - HDPF Policy 26 & Rural Economic Development - HDPF Policy 10
        - The proposed development is neither essential nor appropriately scaled for its countryside setting. It results in a substantial increase in activity within the rural area, as evidenced by a recent traffic count conducted on 28th August 2025, which recorded up to 272 vehicle movements along Kent Street at the junction with the access drive between 3:00pm and 9:15pm. This number is expected to rise significantly should the proposed extension to the opening hours be approved, potentially exceeding 500 vehicle movements per day if the dance school operates as planned. Such an increase is inconsistent with Policies 26 and 10 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF).
    - The Natural Environment and Landscape Character - HDPF Policy 25, The Quality of New Development - HDPF Policy 32 & Development Principles - HDPF Policy 33
        - The application does not enhance the Natural Environment and landscape character of the area. It does not provide an easily accessible environment for the users; nor does it integrate within the surroundings or historic landscape contrary to HDPF policies 25 & 32.
        - The application has caused significant harm and disruption to the existing amenity of occupiers and users of property and land through noise disruption from traffic and dance school music (especially through the evenings, weekends and bank holidays) As well as damage to private grass verges and driveways from dance school traffic trying to navigate a single, in places un made private driveway with no passing places only a few residents driveways. The traffic congestion cannot be understated, with up to 64 vehicle movements per hour (recorded by Highways in July 2025). This not only is an issue for residents trying to access their own properties but also users of the footpath FP1789/1 that runs up the private drive. This is contrary to HDPF policy 33.
    - Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation - HDPF Policy 43
        - As a leisure facility outside a built-up area, the appeal application fails to meet Policy 43 as there is no evidence it is the only practicable option or that the site is well-related to an existing settlement. The Dance school used to operate out of Steyning Leisure centre, a far

more suitable location with a good road network, the ability to make use of public transport, good parking and a purpose-built leisure building with amenity facilities.

- Sustainable Transport - HDPF Policy 40
    - Policy 40 states that developments will be supported if they are appropriate and in scale to the existing transport infrastructure, including public transport. The policy seeks to limit environmental impacts of car transport to non-car modes and minimise the distance that people need to travel. It also seeks to ensure that proposals are suitably accessible and are safe for all users including all vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, public transport and the delivery of goods.
    - The proposal fails to meet Policy 40. The proposal site is located off a single-track private drive with no passing places, off of a single-track country lane, with limited passing places that are not highways installed, just areas of rough ground. The nearest public transport link is over 1.5 miles away and therefore dance school users only option is to travel by car to the site. This is causing a significant amount of traffic and congestion along Kent Street and at times grid lock up the access drive, causing safety issues to all who are using the lane and access drive, either as a right of way/footpath or as access to homes.
- Environmental Protection - HDPF Policy 24
    - The significant traffic increase associated with this application will also have an impact on Air Pollution which is contrary to Policy 24, the Districts 'Emission Reduction Area' and Horsham District's Management Area (AQMAs) which has been in effect in Cowfold from 2011.

4. Summary

In Summary, I believe this retrospective application contradicts multiple principles of sustainable and rural-sensitive planning policies outlined in the HDPF. It poses unacceptable transportation health and safety risks, and negatively impacts the local rural environment and residents' quality of life.

I trust my comments will be taken into account in the appeal application decision.

Yours faithfully

[redacted]