Objection to Planning Application DC/25/0234 Calcot Farm Horsham Road Steyning

As the residents and owners of the highly successful, rural hospitality business, The Artisan Bakehouse which encompasses holiday lets, a Bread making & Cookery school and licensed cafe, which borders the above property we wish to object to the above planning application for the reasons given below.

Background

The Artisan Bakehouse is a multi award winning, highly respected, hospitality business of 13 years which has built its reputation and high levels of 5* reviews on affording its customers the highest levels of customer service in a peaceful rural retreat. Key to new and returning guests to the site is that they can relax in the tranquil Sussex countryside either on holiday, eating in the cafe and grounds or learning to make an extensive range of breads, pastries and learning baking and cookery skills from a range of tutors and local artisans in a truly secluded magical setting.
In 2017 planning permission was granted to erect another barn on that site, very close to our boundary as the farm was expanding and needed more storage space for hay etc for the farm's livestock. Now a significant part of this barn is apparently no longer required but is intended to house a manure (raw horse excrement) packaging business only a few metres from our boundary

HDC's Environmental Health Officer has already commented that the machinery to be used in packaging this waste is noisy and will have an impact on the neighbouring properties. Adding to this noise from the bagging plant which is due to be situated only a few metres from our boundary would be delivery lorries arriving and leaving and fork lift trucks/tractors/JCB Loadalls/telehandlers moving the muck and bagged products onto delivery trucks and to and from the barn. All with their built in reversing alarms.
In addition, we will also have the sight of a 3m wide, 6m long and 4m high bagging plant within a few short metres away.
As the yard is at a higher level than our gardens and property, noise and odours carry right into the heart of our business and family life and will cause a considerable loss of amenity and disruption to holidaymakers and visitors who bring significant income into our local communities including the shops and businesses in Steyning & Partridge Green High Street, our local historic pub The Fountain in Ashurst Village and many of the growing number of vineyards and attractions that Horsham District, The South Downs National Park and West Sussex have to offer and want to promote.

Surrounding the farm yard are four residential properties, all of which will be impacted by the relocation of this business and all will suffer a significant detrimental impact from the increase in road traffic, foul odours, noise of the bagging machinery and lorry/tractor alarms and the increase in flies and vermin that are naturally attracted to the manure metres away from our homes. The granting of this Application would seriously blight the lives of all residents.

Application Section 5.1
Refers to agricultural soil improver. This is a euphemism for raw horse excrement or animal faeces being left festering in vast quantities, initially at a location a few hundred metres away on the applicant's property with the resultant foul odours and infestation of flies and vermin to then be transferred and stored metres from our registered food and drink business. In addition, there is a butchery business on the Applicant's site too which will be affected.

This is a commercial waste business trying to avoid the stricter legislation that applies to legal waste operators by claiming they are simply trying to improve the soils of customers. Raw horse excrement is being stored in the open air only a few metres away from neighbouring residential properties and the legality of that in the absence of licenses or permits is entirely questionable.

Questions must also be asked concerning the longer-term plans for the storage of their collected horse manure. Currently being stored some 200 metres from the proposed bagging site, it is inconceivable that in the long term, that having to move it from the current site to the bagging operation would be sustainable and there is no doubt that if this Application is approved then collected manure will be dumped directly on this site, again using large lorries and skips, wholly unsuitable for the B2135 and the driveway and increased hazard, pollution, noise and malodours for the site.

Section 5.2
It is disingenuous to suggest that a successful business 'Puckamuck' in this instance, will confine its bagging activity to just one day per week, when their website boasts deliveries to individual consumers, allotments and garden centres, clients 'from acres of estates to small holdings, including prestigious landmarks and venues such as Arundel Castle, Parham House and Goodwood Estate' It is not credible that this operation would bag only once a week.

Transport movements will be covered under Section 6.5 of the Application

Section 5.3
Shows a photograph of racking that will be used to store the waste products, thus reinforcing the view that telehandlers/fork lifts (presumably diesel driven) will be in operation with resultant pollution from exhausts and noise from engines and reversing alarms

Sections 6.1/6.1.1/6.1.2

This Section is headed up with the claim of how the Application complies with the Horsham Local Plan. However, all of these sections are simply pointing out the Council's Policy. There is no mention in this section of how this Application will meet or comply with any of those Objectives. In fact, it doesn't meet any of them

This is an existing business relocating from a short distance away and will not foster economic growth, reduce travel miles or maintain high employment levels as this is predominantly a rural residential community.

Additional employment opportunities will not be created as it is an existing business with an existing workforce and it isn't facilitating or promoting innovation in the area.

HDC Policy No7
Application Section 6.2. There is no evidence provided for the meeting of any of those objectives

Section 6.2a. The company in question Puckamuck was established in 2009 and isn't a start-up. It has **had to relocate** from its previous base on the A24 at Findon with more suitable transport links with the A27 to their East Hants sites, the A24 itself to Surrey and then the A283 and A272 to the west and east of West Sussex.

HDC Policy No 9.
Application Section 6.3.a Stating the reduction in travelling road miles in the selective district of Horsham totally ignores the travelling miles to other districts and counties.

Application Section 6.4
HDC Policy 10 states '…..*must result in substantial environmental improvement and reduce the impact on the countryside……*
Due to the proximity to and being above an active water course, there is a significant chance of contamination by raw horse excrement as it can contain pathogens and bacteria such as E.Coli, Salmonella and Campylobacter as well as internal parasites such as stronglyes and roundworms. In addition, horse manure is rich in nitrogen and phosphorus which can lead to excessive algae growth reducing oxygen levels and harming fish and other aquatic organisms. Locating this enterprise within a few metres above a water course, where rainfall will easily wash disruptive particles into the stream that leads only a short distance away to the River Adur gives rise to a significant concern of pollution.
HDC Policy 10 states '*There is an ongoing need to maintain and enhance the rural economy.....and maximising visit spending through tourism across the district'*
Our business attracts visitors from all over the world, from all parts of the UK and from districts outside of Steyning/Ashurst bringing in much needed vital income to a whole variety of rural hospitality businesses including our local village pub, Steyning and Partridge Green's High Streets and various restaurants and attractions in Horsham District and Sussex including many in the thriving wine industry which is becoming increasingly more important to the economy in our part of Sussex.

The relocation of the Puckamuck business fails in 'meeting of rural community needs' 'maximising visit spending' 'generating employment opportunities' 'generating social and environmental benefits for local communities' and particularly 'promoting recreation in, and the enjoyment of the countryside, in fact the complete opposite, it will significantly impact negatively on tourism in this area.

Section 6.4a states that 'The enterprise brings flexible part time work to the area, particularly suited to farmers and farm workers' This is deceitful. No new job opportunities are being created, it has an existing workforce.

HDC Policy No 26 Countryside Protection
Application Section 6.5

This Application fails to comply with any of the four criteria in Policy 26.

It **will lead to:** a significant increase in the overall level of activity in this part of the countryside and does not protect and/or conserve and/or enhance.....'characteristics of the landscape character'
Furthermore the stream which runs into the river Adur which is below and within a few metres of this proposed development runs the risk of contamination.

Section 6.5a This doesn't outweigh the significant increase in carbon emissions as a result of the activities of this business on that site.

Sections 6.5b/6.5c/6.5d
The Applicant **fails** to mention traffic movements **into** the site. The Puckamuck website shows a photograph with a large JCB/tractor attached to 6m long tipper truck, unloading manure. This type of vehicle would be unsuitable for turning in and out of the existing driveway onto the busy 60mph stretch of road There is no indication as to how many or when deliveries will be made using the JCB/6m tipper or other large lorries which are being seen regularly in the vicinity on the country B road B2135 full of raw horse excrement even at weekends.
Deliveries will again be another source of nuisance

For deliveries of the bagged manure 6.5.b and 6.5.c uses the vague 'usually' 'such' 'could' and 'may' relating to vehicle movements. The Applicant should be giving much more precise detail to enable a decision to be made
Puckamuck operates out of Findon on the main arterial road, the A24 giving easy access to other main arterial routes, the A27, the A283, the A272 and subsequently onto the main A23.
These main arterial routes are built and maintained to take heavy traffic and by and large don't run through residential communities.

Relocating to a countryside B road, the B2135, is the complete reverse. The company's delivery trucks/lorries are now regularly using this road which runs through many local, rural communities Horsebridge Common, Ashurst Village, Bines Green, Partridge Green and West Grinstead to get to and from the A24 and Shermanbury and Cowfold towards the A272. This is in direct conflict with Policy 26 and is likely to cause harm to the environment and rural communities rather than promote the key aspects of this Policy.

It is claimed that the vehicles will be 3.5 tonne flatbeds such as Ford Transits but Puckamuck's website clearly states that deliveries will be made in a variety of other vehicles not mentioned in the Application including: A 3.5 tonne tipper van with Hi-AB Crane, length 6m, a 7.5 tonne flatbed lorry with Hi-AB Crane length 6m, an 18 tonne skip lorry and a 28 tonne tractor and trailer. In addition, further vehicle movements will come from the carrier Eezehaul Logistics, as stated on the company's website.

All of these large vehicles will have the potential to cause a serious road traffic incident whilst entering or leaving the site in addition to adding additional stress to an unsuitable B road.The access into the site is inadequate for these large lorries and is not owned by the Applicant.

HDC Policy No 33 – Development principles concern the requirement to 'conserve and enhance' existing sites/buildings.

Application Section 6.7a

The current barn was constructed following a Permitted Development Application in 2017 to house straw and hay for animals and some machimery only, not for the storage of raw manure bagged in plastic bags. The addition of plastic and the noise associated with the bagging practice is in direct contravention of Policy 33 and will not enhance or conserve that space or the local environment.

HDC Policy No. 35

Application Section 6.8a Whilst there might not be any energy use in construction relating to the barn this will be totally outweighed by the energy used already in the building of a wooden construct on-site without any evidence of permission to do so and also in the energy used in the operation of the business. This has been reported to Planning Enforcement for investigation.

Application Section 6.8.a. Point 2
The Applicants have not provided any detailed figures as to how they have arrived at the conclusion that the base is closer to their customers and in any event this is outweighed by the environmental impact of using a B road not designed for heavy lorries that runs through a number of rural residential communities.

6.8.a. Point 3 Refers to a gritting service, which isn't part of this Planning Application but heavily suggests that even more vehicle movements are likely to and from this site if that part of Sussex Manures' business is being relocated to this site too.

6.9.a. Where is the Energy Statement for this proposal and how are the Applicants going to substantiate that statement without providing any evidence in the Application?

HDC Policy No 37

Application Section 6.10.a. Point 1 There is no evidence being provided to substantiate that statement

6.10.a. Point 8 This statement is completely untrue, the biodiversity of a site that is barely used will be significantly diminished if this Application is approved.

HDC Policy No 39

Application Section 6.11.a. Point 1 This statement is untrue. Large vehicles turning in or out of the site via an inadequate access has potential to cause a serious

incident on a very fast section of road with a blind bend. West Sussex County Council should be asked to revisit their comments on this Application in light of the omissions by the Applicant concerning the size of vehicles and vehicle movements.

Application Section 6.11.a Point 2 It is clear in this Application that considerable extra capacity is required on the site. Mention of additional vehicle movements and use of larger lorries which the company currently uses have been left out of this Application together with the use of noisy plant machinery ensures that HDC Policy 39 Point 2 clearly stating: '…..in order to ensure that the environment and amenities of existing or new local residents is not adversely affected' cannot be complied with.

HDC Policy No 38

Application Section 6.14 In periods of heavy rain it is extremely likely that this operation will allow disruptive elements to make their way through and down the adjacent bank and into our stream which becomes a Statutory Water Course on leaving our boundary then feeds into the River Adur thus causing a potential environmental hazard. Environmental Health have already confirmed that this is a cause for concern and the Environment Agency should be alerted too as it's likely that permits would be required should they operate from that site.

In Summary/Conclusion

Chapter 5 of the Horsham District Plan covers the importance and need for bringing tourism into the District and also the particular need for more accommodation to house incoming tourists. If this Application is approved with its inherent disruption to the locality, it will be introducing a business that will have no positive impact on the local rural economy but at the same time destroying a thriving hospitality and tourism business, that brings much needed income into local communities and businesses and brings much pleasure to both local residents and visitors from both UK and further abroad and has real value to the local rural economy and community.

The proposed site is wholly unsuitable for a business of the nature of Sussex Manures and Puckamuck due to: a significant loss of amenity to residents and our hospitality business, job losses and employment opportunities, pollution of the environment, the use of an unsuitable B road for access, the poor access to the site, malodours, the attraction of vermin to two registered food businesses and that the Applicant has failed to satisfy many of Horsham District Council's Planning Policy requirements and objectives as set out above.