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The Head of Development Control
Horsham District Council
Chart Way
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 1RL

8 March 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Statement.
Yards 15A & 15B, 'Ridge Farm', Horsham Road, Rowhook, Horsham, RH12 3QB.
Retention of open storage areas (Class B8).

We have been instructed by OGI Fuels Ltd to invite your Council to issue a Certificate of Lawful Use which recognises that, as the open storage use (Class B8) of Yards 15A & 15B at 'Ridge Farm' commenced over ten years ago and there is no pre-existing Enforcement Notice in place, it is now lawful.

This substantial irregular-shaped site lies **230 metres** to the southeast of Horsham Road in Rowhook, within Horsham District Council's administrative area.

Regardless of whether one approaches from the northwest or southeast along Horsham Road, public views of the site are blocked by substantial frontage vegetation and the properties that face north towards the access and private driveway. Public footpaths lie beside the north ('Sussex Border Path') and east (no.1408) boundaries of the site. Impressions gained from the north and east on those footpaths are blocked by boundary fencing. Tall trees along the west boundary block views into the site from that direction and form a dense sylvan backdrop to impressions from the east.

Vehicular and pedestrian access to the application site is afforded via an ungated private driveway in its Horsham Road frontage.

The subject site comprises a substantial (former farm) complex that is now used by several companies for commercial purposes. The application site comprises the hardstanding areas of Yards 15A and 15B that lie to the west and southwest respectively of Unit 7 'Ridge Farm' (edged red on drawing 400B). The yards were previously used for the open storage (Class B8) of caravans from **October 2004** to **May 2016** (ie Yard 15A) and **June 2020** (ie Yard 15B), then for the open storage (Class B8) of logs and wood processing equipment from **May 2016** (ie Yard 15A) and **June 2020** (ie Yard 15B) **to date** without any breaks – ie more than 10 years in total.

Andrew Fisher of OGI Fuels Ltd (the applicant company) was invited to compile a short-list of witnesses to the commencement and continuation of the storage uses - each witness was invited to draft a Declaration and complete it before a Solicitor of their choice. The completed Declarations are reproduced as attachments to this application. Andrew Fisher, has declared

that he has *'…been personally witness to the areas of 15A and 15B being used for caravan storage from when we moved our first business into the site from January 2013... These areas of 15A and 15B were used for Caravan storage before we took over the areas for our operations.'* and *'OGI Fuels Ltd…has been operating Yard 15A from May 2016 and Yard 15B from June 2018…The storage of wood and wood processing equipment in the yard areas has also been the case since May 2016 in 15A and June 2020 in 15B.'.* The landowner, Carl Wheeler, has declared that *'OGI Fuels Ltd…has been leasing the premises and operating from Yard 15A since May 2016 and Yard 15B since June 2020. These areas have both been used for wood storage and wood processing equipment since OGI Fuels Ltd took these areas.';* and *'The area was previously used for Caravan storage, which began in October 2004 and ceased when OGI Fuels took over.'.*

It is submitted that the Declarations of these witnesses comprises robust, reliable and consistent evidence that the open storage use of these yards commenced in **October 2004** and that, as over ten years have passed and there is no pre-existing Enforcement Notice in place, their lawfulness should now be recognised. Please do not hesitate to contact our office, however, if there are any matters of concern. Thank you.

Yours faithfully,



Niall Tutton
Director