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Your Ref: DC/24/1787
Our Ref: 10631-kt2

13 May 2025

For the attention of Kate Turner
Horsham District Council
Parkside
Chart Way
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 1RL

Dear Ms Turner,

Site: **Winterfold Farm, Wimland Road, Rusper, West Sussex, RH12 4QU.**
Application: **DC/24/1787**
Proposal: **Erection of 1 No. self-build dwelling house for equestrian workers (to replace an existing mobile home granted planning permission under ref: DC/20/0937)**

Thank you for your letter dated 23 April 2025 requesting Reading Agricultural Consultants Ltd (RAC) additional comments on the above planning application.

In preparing this response I have had regard to the Equestrian Appraisal (dated February 2025) produced by Batcheller Monkhouse which comments on RAC's earlier appraisal of this application (RAC ref 10631-kt dated 13 February 2025).

I visited the site on 9 May 2025 and met with the applicants, Amy Stovold and Simon Staempfli, and David Campion of Batcheller Monkhouse and I view the application site, buildings and grazing land.

At the site visit we discussed the use of the term ***enterprise*** by Batcheller Monkhouse in the supporting equestrian appraisal and whether the applicants were operating a private or commercial equestrian facility. We also discussed the design of the proposed dwelling and inclusion of the laboratory and grooms' accommodation.

I viewed the 16 stables within the barn and six isolation stables and at the time of my site visit there were 14 horses on site (including one stallion). These comprised 5 horses owned by Amy Stovold, 6 horses part owned by Amy and 3 horses owned by staff which are stabled as part of their employment package and the horse and staff member trained by Amy Stovold.

There are currently two grooms who reside in the temporary dwelling on site. It was explained that when Amy Stovold is away competing, she will take a groom with her and the other groom will remain on site to care for the remaining horses. RAC considers this is acceptable and is typical of horse management on many competition yards.

The grooms are currently responsible for all overnight care, however it was explained that if an emergency occurs the grooms will contact the applicants who will then travel to site from their current home (approximately 15 minutes away). The applicants explained that they have a young daughter and as such it is currently not possible for them both to travel to site during the night to respond to an emergency situation and therefore depending on the type of emergency one of them will respond and assist the grooms.

It was explained that the grooms' accommodation within the proposed dwelling would provide accommodation for a groom who will reside on site full time and Amy will use additional grooms to assist her at competitions.

There is CCTV coverage across the site and I was able to view some of the camera displays in the barn which covered the entrance, indoor and outdoor school, grazing and turnout paddocks. We discussed that CCTV is an aid however it is not equivalent or a substitute for a rural worker living on site. In addition, Amy Stovold mentioned that the CCTV allows her to ensure the grooms are safe when working on the site or riding in the schools.

The dwelling is proposed to be sited on an area of existing hardstanding which provides a view over the main yard area (comprising the stable barn, indoor and outdoor school and lunge pen) as well as being closer to the isolation stables and grazing and turnout paddocks.

The inclusion of a laboratory within the proposed dwelling was also discussed in more detail and it is understood that this will in fact be used more as an office by the applicants for the management of the horses on site. Currently all paperwork, other than the horse passports, is kept in their own home and as viewed at my site visit there is no space within the existing stable barn to provide any office area. The provision of an office within the proposed dwelling is considered an appropriate management facility.

RAC had concerns previously regarding whether the site was being used for commercial equestrian purposes, which could be in breach of Condition 11 of DC/20/0937 and DC/22/1304, particularly as the Batcheller Monkhouse (October 2024) Equestrian Appraisal referred to the applicant's equestrian ***enterprise*** throughout. The use of the word enterprise was discussed on the site visit and David Campion explained that this word had been used as it was the phrase used within Annex A of PPS7. As such, RAC would conclude that the applicant is operating a private equestrian facility and not a commercial equestrian business from the application site and therefore no assessment of the financial accounts is required by national or local planning policy.

In conclusion, RAC considers that the applicants' proposal is compliant with national and local planning policy.

I trust these comments are helpful in your deliberations.

Yours sincerely,

Olivia Wojniak