SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Prior Notification application for a proposed change of use of agricultural buildings to B8 commercial storage use within the provisions of Class R of Schedule 2, Part 3 of the GPDO 2015 (as amended 2021)

at

Jessups Farm
Honeybridge Lane
Ashurst
West Sussex
BN44 3AW

ON BEHALF OF

Mr John Eager

PREPARED BY

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September 2024

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Statement has been prepared in support of a Prior Notification application which proposes the following:

Change of use of agricultural barns for use as commercial storage (Use Class B8)

1.2 The change of use is proposed under Part R of Schedule 2, Part 3 of the GPDO 2015 (as amended).

1.3 This Statement includes a discussion of the following matters:-

- Site Description
- Details of the proposed change of use
- Compliance with Part R criteria

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 The application site forms part of Jessups Farm which is some 52 acres. Jessups Farm historically operated with a free-range rare breed pig unit (300+per year 30 sow unit), Sussex beef herd (75 head), an Aberdeen Angus beef herd (45 head), meat poultry (250) and laying poultry (150). The site had a market garden of 5 acres and was historically a family run business employing 1 x full time stockman, 1 x assistant stockman and 2 x butchers. Jessups Farm partnership was previously Jessups Farm, Field Farm and Sands Farm and previously ran the Brighton Farmers Market. Jessups Farm had a large farm sale in 2011 and most of the herds and stock were sold off in 2011/2012. Field farm was sold off in 2017/18, Sands Farm was sold in 2020/21. The farmers market was then closed before the farm sales as the local food supply from farmers had diminished and the market changed.

2.2 The owner, Mr. John Eager, is now retired. The land has been left fallow and the owner maintains the grassland, ditches, boundaries, and hedges. The surrounding area is characterized by open fields, areas of woodland and sporadic residential development with the nearest residential properties on the farmstead (known as the Cabin, Flower Studio, the Hovel and the Farm Lodge) and 'Jessops' some 100m to the north.

2.3 The site is accessed off Honeybridge Lane, along a private track which gives access to the farm and Jessops, which is a residential property in separate ownership to the farm. Figure 2.1 shows the location of the site.

Figure 2.1 – Location Plan



2.4 The site is comprised of a number of buildings that form part of the farmstead. The buildings that this application refers to are identified as 'North Barn' and 'South Barn'. An aerial map shows the north and south barns in figure 2.2 outlined in black. Both the North and South Barns are of utilitarian rectangular shape and are single storey buildings that are located to the west of the farmstead, within an area of hardstanding.

Figure 2.2 – Aerial Map



2.5 Recent photos of the site (figures 2.3 and 2.4) show the buildings as existing.

Figure 2.3 - South barn looking south west



Figure 2.4 - North barn looking north west



2.6 The dimensions of the buildings are as follows:

North Barn		South Barn + Wash room
Gross External Area (GEA)	360m²	435m² + 13.1m²
Footprint	78m	88m + 14.6m
Height to eaves	4.6m	4.6m +2.7m
Height to ridge	6.4m	6.4m + 3.0m

2.7 The buildings together comprise 881m² total GEA.

2.8 The buildings are sited on a large area of hardstanding which surrounds the barns on all sides and is accessed via an access track to the north-east leading directly onto Honeybridge Lane. Toilet facilities are located in the ancillary building to the north of the southern barn.

2.9 The buildings have been historically used for agricultural purposes relating to Jessups Farm but have more recently been used just for the storage of the owners' belongings following the sale of Sands Farm and Field Farm.

2.10 The proposed development seeks to revitalize the barns providing the site with a sustainable new future through a sensitive and high-quality conversion.

3 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The wider site has been the subject of a number of planning applications within the District of Horsham and the full site history is attached in appendix B.

3.2 Those relevant to the north and south barns are identified below:

Reference	Description	Decision
DC/23/1516	Application to confirm the north and south barns have existed and have been built and used continuously for agricultural purposes for a period in excess of four (4) years. (Lawful Development Certificate - Existing)	Refused 14/03/2024
DC/06/1153	Erection of livestock building, and storage shed	Full Permission 17/08/2006

3.3 DC/06/1153 relates to a full application for the erection of a barn for machinery storage and occasional livestock accommodation (referred to as the north barn) and for the erection of a storage shed. Full Permission was granted for DC/06/1153 on 17th August 2006.

3.4 Whilst approval was granted for a building in a similar location to the existing north barn, the north barn was not built in accordance with plans submitted under DC/06/1153.

3.5 No planning history relates to the south barn. As such a Certificate of Lawfulness was sought for the existence and use of the barns for agricultural purposes was submitted to HDC under planning reference DC/23/1516. The Council considered that it could not be demonstrated that the north and south barns have been used for agricultural purposes for a continuous period in excess of 4 years immediately prior to the date of this application.

3.6 The Council Officer Steve Astles acknowledged the presence of the buildings within the Officer Report to DC/23/1516, stating

''it is noted that the Council's aerial photography illustrates the 'South Barn' in situ from circa 2001, and the 'North Barn' in situ circa 2012''.

3.7 We contend that the north barn was substantially completed and in use in 2009. The north barn was used for livestock and winter stores up until 2011 when cattle were sold off the farm. It was then used for storage of haulage and hay bales which were sold as fodder to other farms and general material storage and agricultural machinery after that date. The south barn was originally constructed in 1982 and the only large barn on the site which was previously used as the cattle building. It is only in recent years following the sale of part of the farm with the cattle that they have been used for the storage of the applicants' non-farming paraphernalia.

3.8 The photo montage below (figure 3.1) shows the sequence of events leading to the construction and use of the north and south barns.

3.9 **Figure 3.1 -** Google earth imagery of the North and South Barns within Jessups Farm.



3.10 Reviewing the photographic evidence, the physical structure of the North Barn has existed since at least 2009. The physical structure of the South Barn has existed since at least 2001. We contend that the original south barn was constructed in 1982. Both buildings have been used for agricultural purposes. No further permission has been granted for a use outside of agriculture.

4 DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE

4.1 Email confirmation from HDC Senior Planning Compliance Officer Jennifer Baxter on 22/05/2024 confirmed that owing to the barns' existence for over ten years the north and south barns as structures would be exempt from enforcement. Jennifer Baxter confirmed that the Certificate of Lawfulness was refused on the basis of insufficient information being provided to show a continued agricultural use.

4.2 The buildings were however built for agricultural purposes. It is only in recent years following the sale of part of the farm with the cattle that they have been used for the storage of non-farming paraphernalia. As such HDC confirmed that an application for a change of use of the buildings under Class R (class B8 storage) would be appropriate.

4.3 The applicant wishes to find a use for the buildings now that the agricultural use on the site has reduced. The applicant would like to be able to rent them for commercial storage to provide useful rental income to the family business.

4.4 A tenant for the building has not yet been identified as the applicant wishes to secure consent first, however a storage use is considered a good use for the building for a number of reasons;

4.5 Firstly there is known demand for storage facilities in the area. An email dated 23rd August 2023 between Batcheller Monkhouse and Crickmay's Chartered Surveyor's (attached in appendix C) confirms that demand for commercial storage within Horsham to be for a range of different sized units. Reference is made to Horsham planning reference DC/23/1385 (approved 13/09/23) where the Commercial Planning Report submitted in support of an application for a storage barn (West Wantley Farm, Fryern Road, RY20 4BJ) highlights the market demand.

4.6 The document, also compiled by Crickmay Chartered Surveyors and dated 22/11/2022 confirms that Crickmay are experiencing demand from both individuals and businesses spread across the district and would typically find premises such as these would attract interest not only from those located within nearby urban areas not able to find the right accommodation within that area, but also from local individuals and businesses who are currently based or live nearby where rural storage is often preferred and more convenient over travelling to a more urban area where rents and occupational costs may be greater.

4.7 Secondly, storage is a relatively inert use that does not generate significant associated activity and can therefore operate comfortably alongside neighbouring agricultural uses.

4.8 The buildings are of modern construction with good head height and a large internal open space that is suitable for storing a wide range of items. The North barn will be two units. The South Barn will be one unit. No alterations are currently envisaged as being required to accommodate the storage use

4.9 Access to the buildings is from a track off Honeybridge Lane through the made yard which has a historical agricultural use. Large agricultural vehicles have been using this track for many years.

4.10 The existing area of hardstanding within the yard provides a suitable area for parking which would not interfere with ongoing agricultural uses and traffic.

5. APPRAISAL AGAINST CLASS R CRITERIA

5.1 The change of use is proposed under Class R of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) which provides for the following as a form of permitted development:

Development consisting of a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from a use as an agricultural building to a flexible use —

a) falling within one of the following provisions of the Use Classes Order—

i. (Class B2 (general industrial) of Schedule 1;

ii. Class B8 (storage or distribution) of Schedule1;

iii. Class C1 (hotels) of Schedule 1;

iv. Class E (commercial, business or service) of Schedule 2; or

v. Class F.2(c) (outdoor sport or recreation) of Schedule 2; or

b) for the provision of agricultural training

5.2 R.1 of the Order sets out the criteria that the site must meet to benefit from the rights. Compliance with the criteria is summarised below.

a) the building was not used solely for an agricultural use as part of an established agricultural unit: (i) on 3rd July 2012 ii) in the case of a building which was in use before that date but was not in use on that date, when it was last in use, or iii) in the case of a building which was brought into use after 3rd July 2012,	The buildings formed part of an agricultural unit on 3rd July 2012, that agricultural unit being Jessups Farm which is an established agricultural holding. The farm buildings subject of this application were historically an integral part of a wider farm.

for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class R begins.	
b) the cumulative floor space of buildings which have changed use under Class R within an established agricultural unit exceeds 1000sqm.	The north barn has a GEA space of 360sqm. The south barn has a GEA of 435sqm plus washroom building of 13.1sqm The cumulative GEA is 880.1sqm, within the 1000sqm limit.
c) the site is, or forms part of, a military explosives storage area.	The site is not and does not form part of a military explosives storage area.
d) the site is, or forms part of, a safety hazard area.	The site is not and does not form part of a safety hazard area.
e) The building is a listed building or a scheduled monument.	The building is not a listed building or a scheduled monument.

5.3 Where the cumulative floorspace of the building exceeds 150sqm, paragraph R.3 (1) (b) requires an application to be submitted to the planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the following matters:

i) Transport and highways impacts of the development

5.4 The access has historically served cars, tractors with trailers and lorries in association with farming operations. The existing access allows for vehicles to enter and exit in forward facing gear. The proposed storage use will be a fairly inactive use with a likely decrease in the number of vehicle movements in comparison with the full agricultural use that has historically been made of the buildings.

5.5 It is suggested that the proposed light industrial use will mean that the traffic levels are unlikely to be frequent or to any great level when compared to the activities associated with the historical farming use.

5.6 There is an area to the west of the buildings which can be used for parking. The West Sussex parking standards require for B8 storage 1 space per 100m² for vehicular parking and 1 space per 500sqm for staff and 1 space per 1000sqm for visitors for cycle parking. The use will be served by the hardstanding to the west of the plot and the other existing parking areas at the site, where vehicle spaces can be comfortably accommodated. This is shown in the supporting plans.

5.7 In terms of the existing access arrangements, these are regarded as being safe with good visibility of at least 140m in both directions onto Honeybridge Lane. Honeybridge Lane is a relatively quiet road with infrequent traffic movements which will also ensure that the existing access is capable of handling associated traffic.

5.8 No incidents from this junction at Honeybridge Lane have been recorded within the last 24 years, according to www.crashmap.co.uk. The only two incidents that did occur did not relate to the use of the site access. A screenshot of the data is provided within appendix A.

5.9 Given the type of use proposed and the location, travel to the site via bicycle is unlikely. Therefore, cycle parking is not proposed, in line with the WSCC comments on the previous application. In the event cycles did arrive at the site, a bicycle could be stored temporarily within the storage unit during a visit.

5.10 All deliveries and servicing associated with the proposed use will be undertaken on site. Given the historic use of the site as a farm, there is more than sufficient space in the existing yard to accommodate the manoeuvring of the type of vehicles expected.

5.11 The traffic movement from the site will reduce dramatically because there is no need for the agricultural traffic will be minimised. The nature of the storage and use will expect a maximum of up to 15 movements a week as users will not be visiting the site on a daily basis and in some instances could possibly be just one per month. We do not anticipate that such a change of use would result in a material intensification of movements to or from the site.

ii) Noise impacts of the development

5.12 The storage use will not generate significant noise being a relatively inactive use. The nearest neighbours to the site reside at on the farmstead itself. These are owned by the applicant. It is likely that the storage use will generate less noise than the historical agricultural uses.

5.13 Any noisy industrial uses would constitute a general industrial use which falls outside of the scope of Class R. It is clear that this case will not require any further assessment over the impacts of noise. The proposed use is likely to generate less noise than the agricultural use so less disturbance is likely to result.

iii) Contamination risks on the site

5.14 The buildings are constructed on a concrete base which is to be retained. As such there is unlikely to be any contamination risks to the future re-use of the building when used for storage. The internal layout would be kept open plan to allow goods and equipment to be easily moved around with the building and no disturbance of the ground would be required.

iv) Flooding risks on the site

5.15 The site does not lie in an area at risk of flooding. The application buildings are located within Flood Zone 1 meaning that there is a low probability of flooding at the site, with people within the building will not being at risk. The immediate impacts in

relation to the proposed change of use are fundamentally low. This is shown in the Environment Agency Map below.

5.16 In terms of flooding from surface water, figure 5.2 confirms the area lies within a low risk of flooding from surface water.

Figure 5.1 – Flood Map for Planning

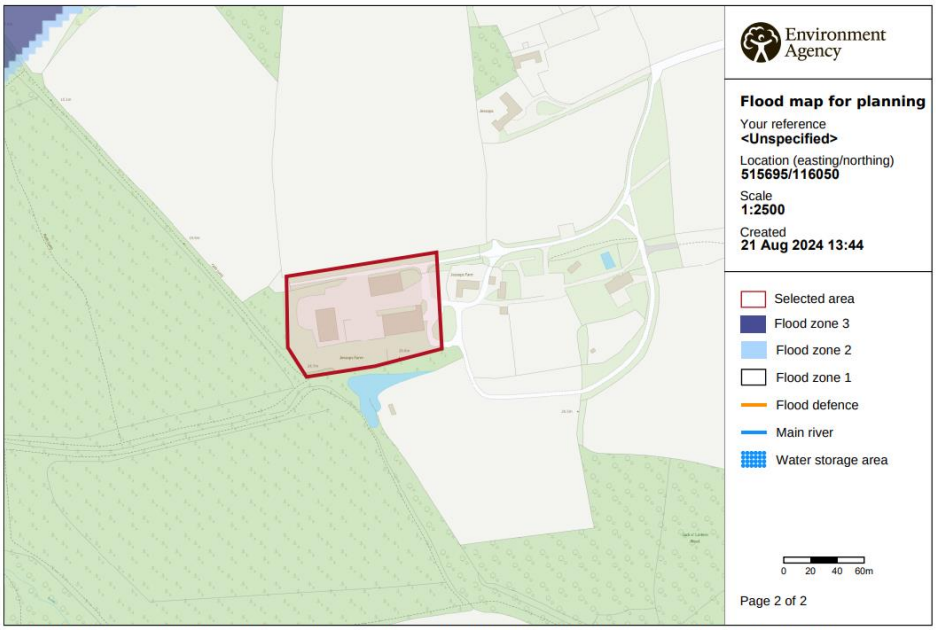

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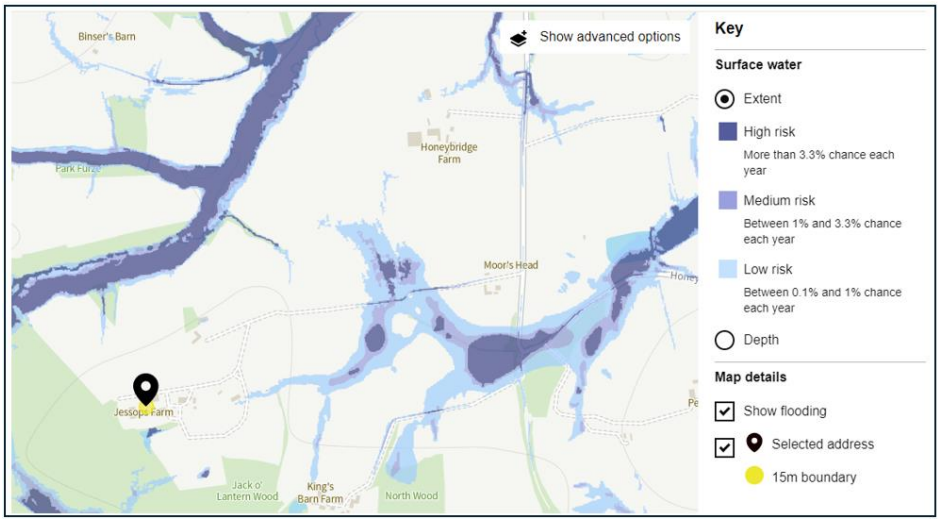
Figure 4.2 – Extent of Flooding from Surface Water (Source UK Government maps for flood risk)



5.17 In respect of the remaining criteria, the building's location complies with the conditions set out by Class R and it is accepted that whilst the use shall be Class B8 the site is to be treated as having a sui generis use as stipulated in the legislation. There are no reasons why the location of the building should prevent prior approval being given under Class R. Whilst physical alterations are not currently envisaged as necessary, it is accepted that any such alterations will require planning permission.

5.18 It can be concluded that the use would meet all of the applicable criteria within Class R and makes good use of the agricultural building. There have been no other changes of use at the site under class R and permitted development rights have not been removed by condition.

6 SUMMARY

6.1 Class R of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) provides for the change of use of agricultural buildings to flexible commercial use, including Class B8 (storage).

6.2 The application buildings known as the north barn and south barn have been in agricultural use since the south barn was erected in 1982 and the north barn was erected in 2009.

6.3 The buildings complies with all criteria set down within paragraph R.1, namely:

- The building was in agricultural use on 3rd July 2012
- The floorspace of the building is within the 1000sqm limit.
- The site does not lie within a military explosives storage area, or safety hazard zone.
- The building is not a listed building or scheduled monument.

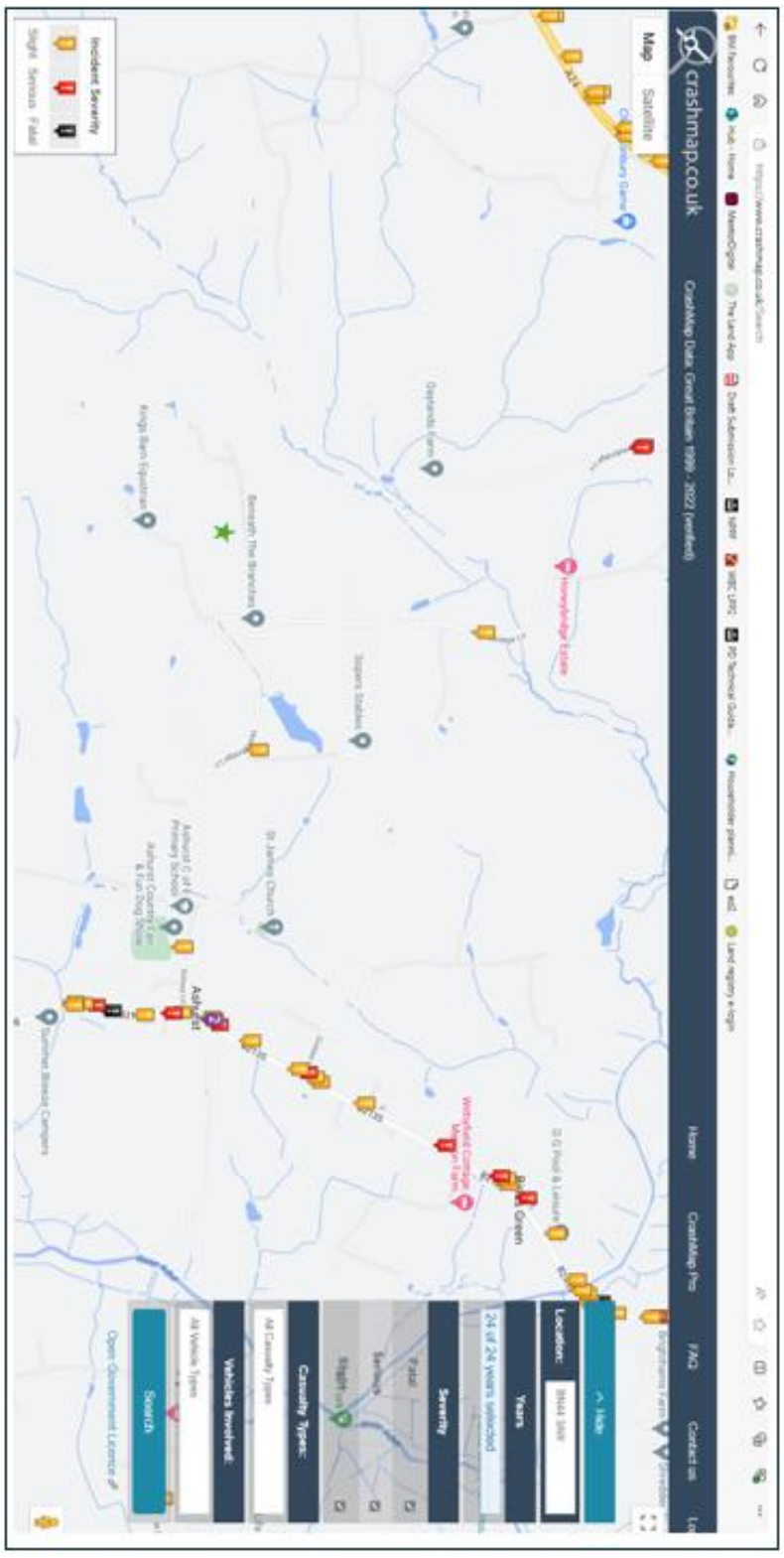
6.4 The proposed storage use would not have unacceptable impacts on transport and highways, or noise.

6.5 The building does not lie within a flood risk area.

6.6 It is demonstrated that the building falls below the threshold of 1000sqm and must be considered under Class R, paragraph R.3 (1)(b). The building is in agricultural use and there have been no other changes of use under Class R. It can be concluded from the information given in this statement, that the proposed change of use to a storage use is fully compliant with the conditions of Class R. As such it is requested that the Council confirm that prior approval is either not required or, that prior approval is given for the change of use.

Appendix

Appendix A – Crash map data incident search



Appendix B - Full Planning history

Reference	Description	Decision
DISC/24/0076	Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 2,3,4,5,6 and 7 to approved application DC/23/2042	All conditions discharged 06/06/24
DC/23/1772	Erection of an agricultural building (Retrospective)	Refused 15/03/2024
DC/23/1707	Application to confirm the completion of the ground floor infill extension on the dwelling known as Farm Lodge in February 2012 (Lawful Development Certificate - Existing)	Full Permission 14/03/2024
DC/23/1679	Application to confirm the continued use of mobile home as residential dwelling for over 10 years (Certificate Existing Lawful Development)	Full Permission 14/03/2024
DC/23/1662	Application to confirm the use of a former farm building as a self-contained residential dwelling began more than four years before the date of this application (Lawful Development Certificate - Existing)	Full Permission 14/03/2024
DC/23/1516	**Application to confirm the north and south barns have existed and have been built and used continuously for agricultural purposes for a period in excess of four (4) years. (Lawful Development Certificate - Existing)**	**Refused** **14/03/2024**

Reference	Description	Decision
DC/23/2042	Retention of the buildings identified as the Flower Studio and Potting Shed and outbuilding for use as a single residential dwelling. Erection of an infill link extension between the flower studio and potting shed (Retrospective).	Full Permission 03/01/2024
DC/11/1602	Retention of dwelling for agricultural worker	Full Permission Wed 28 Sep 2011
DC/08/1771	Prior notification to erect 2 buildings, one for hay/straw and the other for machinery storage to serve the holding	Full Permission Mon 08 Sep 2008
DC/08/0775	Erection of temporary 3-bed residential accommodation for farm worker	Full Permission Thu 15 May 2008
DC/07/2600	Erection of 1 agricultural dwelling and diversion of Public Footpath 2511 (Outline)	Refused Fri 29 Feb 2008
DC/06/1153	**Erection of livestock building, and storage shed**	**Full Permission** **Thu 17 Aug 2006**
DC/04/1772	Prior Notification to extend existing livestock yard area forming market garden sheds and barns including erection of barn, re-forming 4-bay barn, market garden shelter, store, and glasshouse	Refused Mon 06 Sep 2004

Reference	Description	Decision
AH/4/92	Renewal of temporary permission for twin mobile home	Refused Wed 22 Apr 1992
AH/25/90	Retention of twin mobile home for agricultural related occupation	Full Permission Tue 12 Mar 1991
AH/7/85	Erection of sheep/cattle yard (and hay barn)	17/7/1985

Appendix C - Crickmay surveyors email exchange



Crickmay Chartered Surveyors
22 London Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1AY
Tel: 01403 264259 | Fax: 01403 270222 | crickmay.co.uk

Crickmay Chartered Surveyors and Meyrick are trading names of Crickmay Limited. Registered office as above. Registered in England number 04258882.

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From: Alexander Wilks <A.Wilks@batchellermonkhouse.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 23, 2023 2:31 PM
To: Jonathan Mack <jm@crickmay.co.uk>
Subject: RE: barns to let

Hi Jonathan
Have you had the chance to consider further the barns at Warnham?

Batcheller Monkhouse

Alexander Wilks MRICS FAAV
Partner | Professional
Mobile: 07947 360021
Phone: 01798 877555
Email: A.Wilks@batchellermonkhouse.com
Address: New Bartram House, 3-5 Swan Court, Station Road, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 1RL

batchellermonkhouse.com

From: Jonathan Mack <jm@crickmay.co.uk>
Sent: Wednesday, July 19, 2023 10:02 PM
To: Alexander Wilks <A.Wilks@batchellermonkhouse.com>
Subject: RE: barns to let

Dear Alex,

Thank you for your e-mail. We'd be delighted to assist. I would definitely say to keep a selection of different size units (you certainly don't want them all the same) and demand is coming from a real range of different sizes at present.

Do let me know if you'd like me to take a look at the buildings or any plans or anything in order to further advise.

J.

4

From: Alexander Wilks <A.Wilks@batchellermonkhouse.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 19, 2023 9:19 AM
To: Jonathan Mack <jm@crickmay.co.uk>
Subject: barns to let

Dear Jonathan

We are planning to convert some portal frame barns close to Horsham (west of A24) to commercial units. We will need your help letting them once done. They are large barns up to 6,000 sqft. Is the demand presently for larger units or would we be better off dividing into 1-2000 ft units or have a selection of different sizes?

Batcheller Monkhouse

Alexander Wilks MRICS FAAV
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Mobile: 07947 360021
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Read Outlook 2023