

Application S/HOU/19/1691 Erection of manege viewing platform, equipment shed, muck out bays and linking of approved entrance to existing track.

As the agent for the above application we have been asked to prepare comments for the Planning Committee to consider.

Background:

Consent was granted for an equestrian arena on land opposite Hannington Hall in 2018. This application was handled by another agent. We were appointed to apply for the ancillary structures in 2019.

The Parish Council submitted an objection that was highly speculative and inaccurate. We responded, providing evidence showing the claims to be false and the Parish Council were given the opportunity to withdraw their comments. The PC refused.

The Parish Council have submitted a further response (attached) repeating the comments which have already been disproven, and requesting the application be determined by the Planning Committee. We do not wish to take up too much of the committee's time by addressing every single false claim. Instead, we have briefly addressed the 6 items the PC believe demonstrates that the proposal should be refused, and then highlighted two of the most egregious claims made by the PC.

Parish Council Consultation Response 08.03.2020

The points below respond directly to the same numbered points on pages 1 and 2 of the PC's document:

1. Development within a conservation area is covered by policy EN10. The PC's summation of how applications within conservation areas should be determined is incorrect and not consistent with current policy. The conservation officer has found the proposal causes "neutral harm" which satisfies the need to conserve the character of the area in accordance with policy EN10.
2. The claim that small timber buildings will create noise, smells and attract vermin is unfounded. The horses will be stabled at Hannington Hall and only brought to the arena for training. Any manure will be moved to the muck-out bay and periodically removed from the site via the proposed track. The muck-out bay is required to satisfy Condition 6 of approval S/18/0312/SASM.
3. The PC claims that the initial submission did not include the proposed track between the access and arena, which is false. The application description clearly states "linking of approved entrance to existing track" the revised drawing submitted reduces the width of the track and confirms the surface material in response to concerns raised by the conservation officer. This point demonstrates that the PC has not understood the initial submission.

4. The PC claims that the revised drawings add features that were not present in the initial submission. This is entirely incorrect. No features were added to the revised drawings, only clarifications and small adjustments. This is essentially repetition of point 3 and both are incorrect.
5. At no point have we stated that “teams of people from an Olympic organisation” will visit the site. This is a false claim, accompanied by unfounded speculation on the array of vehicles that will need to park on the site. Condition 7 of approval S/18/0312/SASM prevents vehicles from parking on the site and the coach house courtyard can accommodate any visitor parking. Speculation and aspects controlled by other approvals and conditions are not valid objections. The PC also claim there are no stables in the coach house. This claim was proven to be false in February 2020 yet has been repeated in the PC’s March comments.
6. There is no argument put forth under this point. The PC attempts to claim that Hannington Hall is not an estate but merely a house with a garden, then fails to articulate what relevance this has to the proposal or their objection to it.

From the assessment above we note that the Parish Council’s best case for refusal consists of false claims, speculation, and the incorrect reading of current policy. As a result, the objection cannot be considered valid.

In addition to the above we would like to draw the committee’s attention to two very concerning claims made by the Parish Council:

Applicant Correspondence:

The Parish Council claims that when submitting an application for the arena itself, the applicant wrote to local residents (08.04.18) stating the following:

“Let me assure you that this country pursuit would not involve any new building.
(NB Bold print and underlining by the Parish Council, for emphasis and clarification).”

The actual email states:

“Let me reassure you that this country pursuit would involve one individual being sponsored and housed at Hannington Hall and that the riding arena would be impeccably maintained at all times. This would not involve any new building.”

The applicant was referring to there being no need for a stable building on the site as they had decided to keep the horses at the stables within the Coach House. We have highlighted the appropriate sections in the attached copy of the original email.

We would also note the positive responses to the arena proposal included in the attached email chain. The Parish Council claims the proposal is detrimental to “all the residents” which is clearly not the case if some of them support it.

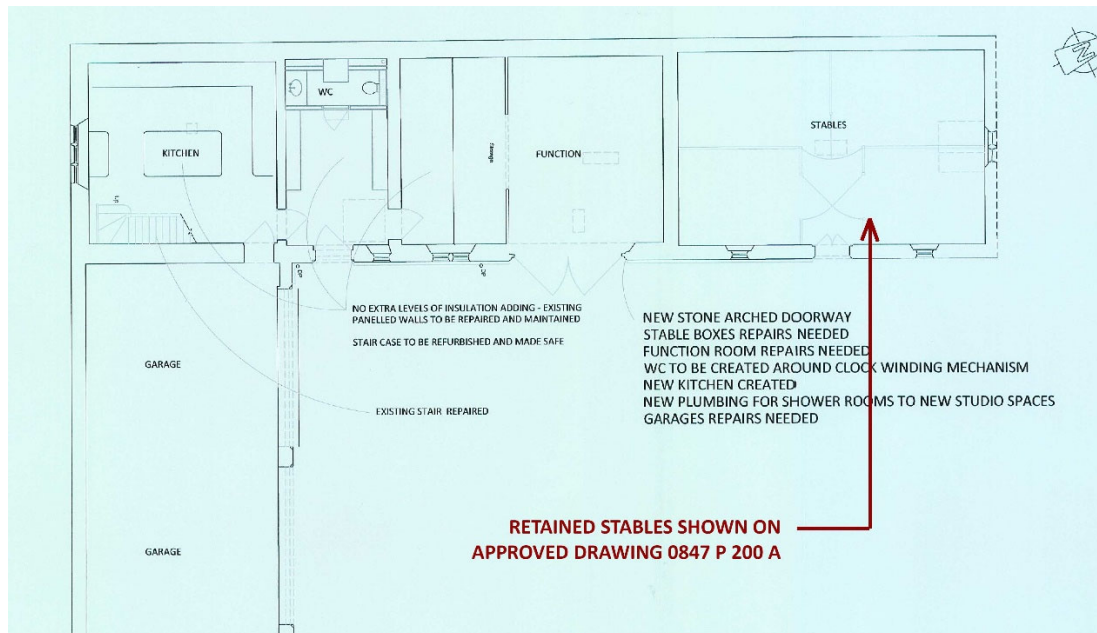
The Parish Council withheld the original email and deliberately mis-quoted the applicant to cast doubt over their intentions and integrity. This is unacceptable.

The Coach House Stables

Regarding stabling, the Parish Council claims:

“you are aware that some time ago the stabling provision within the precincts of Hannington Hall were turned into residential accommodation, so none is available.”

Please refer to the extract from approved drawing 0847 P 200 A below which shows the stables at the Coach House as retained. We have attached a copy of the full drawing to this letter.



Extract from the approved coach house conversion application showing the retained stables.

This was pointed out to the Parish Council in February 2020 and they were given the opportunity to retract their claim that this stable has been turned into residential accommodation. The PC ignored this evidence and repeated the same claim in their March 2020 comments requesting the application be determined by the Planning Committee. Therefore, the Parish Council has knowingly submitted false information to the LPA in an attempt to have this proposal refused.

This is unacceptable behaviour for a statutory consultee.

Summary:

The examples above, supported by the evidence attached demonstrates that the Parish Council's objection is not credible.

When there is a valid and genuine issue that needs to be resolved, it is not necessary to manufacture false evidence in support of your position. The methods employed to generate something approximating an objection demonstrate that the PC simply seeks to block anything related to the arena, irrespective of the facts.

We request that the Parish Council's objection be deemed invalid on the grounds that it is not just factually inaccurate, but deliberately inaccurate. On that basis we request that planning permission be granted in line with the officer's recommendation for approval.

Prepared by Eric Cole Limited.

Attached Supporting Evidence:

- Email chain showing the applicant's original email, and support from residents.
- Drawing 0847 P 200 A for the Coach House conversion, approved under application S/17/1062
- The Parish council's request for the application to be determined at committee, and the argument put forth to support this request.