

HANNINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

clerk: Dr Alan Gorton

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8.3.2020

Dear Sarah,

Planning application: S/HOU/19/1691 (as revised)

Thank you for consulting the Parish Council on this revision of an earlier application.

The Parish Council has considered this revised application in the context of the Hannington Neighbourhood Plan 2018 and supporting documents, the Hannington Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan 2009 and the Swindon Local Plan 2026 and draft Local Plan 2036. The Parish Council is committed to maintaining the integrity of all these plans.

The Parish Council has already responded to the initial planning application (for your convenience I include a copy below) and made clear that it could not and did not support the application. The reasons for this were made explicit. **The Parish Council cannot support the current revisions for the same and for additional reasons.**

- 1 The Parish Council regards as one of its primary duties the maintenance of the Conservation Area and over a number of years has been at pains to ensure its continuation unblemished by development. The Parish Council was therefore very concerned with your earlier approval for creating a manege within and at a primary entrance to the Conservation Area. This application and its revision represents yet further encroachment into the Conservation Area, to the detriment of all the residents and the many hundreds of visitors who come from various parts of the Borough to the parish to enjoy the views and tranquillity. As you are fully aware, two tests are applied to any proposal to develop within the Conservation Area, viz, does it enhance the Area or does it protect the Area: this application does, in both cases, the exact opposite and **must be rejected**.
- 2 The Parish Council feels strongly that the effect this development will have on immediately surrounding properties will be detrimental, bringing with it smells, vermin and noise, disturbances which represent loss of amenity and will prevent the residents enjoying their own gardens and properties.
- 3 The Parish Council notes with concern that this revision applies for further encroachment into the Conservation Area than even the initial application, in seeking to extend the creation of access into an adjoining field: this is not a 'revision' but a major change to the initial application, ensuring yet

further damage to the Conservation Area, and destruction of land, and one which the Parish Council cannot support.

- 4 The Parish Council notes that the revised application adds extra requirements which did not appear in the initial application but which are now regarded as essential. If these were essential, why were they not included in the initial application? The Parish Council has asked previously for a comprehensive plan and set of proposals which would enable it to take an over-all view of what is being proposed and can be assessed, but this has not been forthcoming. The Parish Council cannot base its assessments on guess-work.
- 5 The Parish Council notes that teams of people from an Olympic organisation are expected to watch training sessions on this manege: but no provision has been made for the large amount of parking of cars, lorries, horse-boxes and so on which this will require. Are they expected to park on Queens Road, a major entrance to the parish, creating a serious situation and preventing other people driving in or out? There is then the matter of the person who will mend the fences, and/or rake the manege, a groom to look after the four horses to be kept at Hannington Hall, and indeed these horses to be stabled: 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.
- 6 The application is supported by a statement that large states have quad bikes and trailers. That may be so, but Hannington Hall is not a large estate: it is a house with a garden and a green field which was formerly horticultural/agricultural, and an asset to the parish.

The Parish Council is unable to support this planning application and its revision.

The Parish Council requests that this application and revision are put before the Planning Committee for determination.

Yours sincerely

Alan Gorton

19.12.2019

Dear Sir or Madam,

Planning application: S/HOU/19/1691

Hannington Parish Council has considered this application in the context of the Hannington Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents, the Hannington Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan 2009, and Swindon Borough Council Local Plan 2026. The Parish Council recognises its duty to maintain the integrity of these Plans.

Please note that two Parish Councillors have not taken part in this consideration: one is the applicant, for whom it would be quite inappropriate, and the other declined because of the close proximity of the proposed development to his own property.

The Parish Council wishes to emphasise that the proposal would result in further loss of significant green area at the core of the parish and the entrance to the Conservation Area. The Hannington Neighbourhood Plan Policy HPC A2, to which the applicant was a contributor, requires conservation and protection of all heritage assets in the Conservation Area and parish, which is in accordance with Local Plan 2026 Policy EN 10, to conserve elements which contribute to its special character and appearance.

In fact a previous planning application S/18/0312, dated 7.2.2018, discounts the need for outbuildings or waste collection/storage as ‘not applicable’, so it was reasonable to assume at that time that this was going to be held in the refurbished stables within the Hannington Hall complex for which there was – and is – a series of applications. As this application was designed with the assistance of a British equestrian society, again it was considered at that time that those ‘experts’ did not see the need for any outbuildings as all the equipment would be held and stored at Hannington Hall, in the converted stables. These ‘experts’ would have pointed out the necessity for a viewing platform and manure storage facility at the time of advising on the planning application.

On April 8, 2018, the applicant wrote to the Parish Councillors, and a number of residents, about that planning application, stating that

“Team GB sent to Hannington the head of the equestrian programme who assisted me in preparing the proposal to fit an outside riding arena on my land.

*The riding area would be fitted beside an existing tennis court which, although included in the conservation area, is **already a recreational area** situated*

The 50x30m dimensions are required to train an athlete to European championship level.

You will notice that the riding area would be situated behind a range of trees that completely conceal it to anyone entering the village.

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).

This is incompatible with the current proposal.

Clearly the applicant recognises that this is not an agricultural site but a domestic, recreational one. The Parish Council is concerned that this current proposal (S/HOU/19/1691) will turn it into a commercial or quasi-commercial location. The applicant emphasises also in his email above that the stabling and equipment will be at Hannington Hall and not at the manege site; that includes machinery to be stored at Hannington Hall and not at the manege site: the current application proposes otherwise.

The Parish Council's letter of July 12, 2018, to SBC referred to the Planning Committee meeting of July 10, 2018, when approval was given for construction of a manege on this site. There had been very strong objections from the Parish Council and a considerable number of residents. At that meeting the Planning Officer informed the Planning Committee that "*the horses will be stabled at Hannington Hall, where there is accommodation for 4 horses*". The Parish Council is concerned about just where this will be, as the former coach house and stables were given approval (S/LBC/17/1063) for conversion into a 'function room' and no longer exist in their original form. It will not therefore be possible to stable horses there.

In that letter the Parish Council made clear that

- 1 no stables or mobile field shelters of any sort or any other building should be erected on the manege site or adjacent field;
- 2 all horses must be stabled at Hannington Hall and not on the manege site or adjacent field (grazing or turning out excepted);
- 3 all manure or waste must be stored at Hannington Hall and not on or near the manege without written agreement with the owners of neighbouring properties, and any on the manege must be removed immediately; during transport from the manege to Hannington Hall, any manure which falls onto Queens Road must be removed immediately

Planning approval S/18/0312/SASM, dated July 12, 2018, draws attention to Condition 4, concerning vehicular access.

The Parish Council was assured by the applicant, in his email of April 8, 2018, that

"The vehicular access is needed so as to enable a little tractor to access the arena that requires to be raked every morning when training the horses. This would be the sole instance of vehicular access ..."

In response to the planning application S/18/0312, the Highways Dept remarked

"It is therefore considered that there is a significant lack of information regarding the purpose, design and transport profile of these proposals, particularly for the access and Queens Rd, and operational details for the manege itself. No details for the traffic on Queens Rd as existing have been provided, nor any form of detail regarding the anticipated use of the access or type of vehicles, or any review of movements related to the proposed access [both swept path analysis or quantities]. Without understanding the extended implications of this proposed access a worst case scenario could mean high intensity use of the field, whether for equestrian purposes or otherwise [eg subdivision for development] with frequent visits to the site by HGVs... which would be insufficient [and consequently hazardous to highway safety] for such a potential usage.

Such a formal access as has been proposed would not be required for walking horses to access the field ... so it is anticipated that vehicles shall be entering the site."

Despite being assured by the applicant that the only vehicular movement would be "a little tractor", this current proposal makes clear there would be 'vehicles' (NB plural) which will require to be washed, ie substantial vehicles.

As a viewing facility is proposed, this will involve more traffic into this area of the village, which the Parish Council has previously pointed out is a dangerous spot, with restricted sight for drivers.

Condition 6 refers to the storage of manure, requiring “*Any manure or similar material arising from the use of the development ... shall only be stored on the site in a location or locations that have first been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*” This is “***In the interests of residential amenity***”.

The Parish Council is concerned that even moving manure and waste from the manege across the road to Hannington Hall will contravene highway safety practices and be a marked hazard to residents and the many visitors to the parish – all car drivers, cyclists and walkers, in fact.

The Parish Council therefore objects to this proposal on the following grounds

- The proposal is for construction of a permanent building, a viewing platform and mucking-out bays within the Conservation Area. It is the duty of the Parish Council, and of the Borough Planning Authority to ensure, as PPG15 Planning & the Historic Environment insisted, that any proposal must “*preserve or enhance the character of the area*”. Clearly, the construction of a manege within the Conservation Area failed to meet that requirements and the current proposal only serves to exacerbate this, by affecting adversely the appearance and setting of the Conservation Area.
- The proposal will harm the character of surrounding countryside as well as the setting of Hannington Hall (a Grade II* listed building), and the approach to the Conservation Area, by detracting from the historic value and aesthetic of the entrance into the Conservation Area contrary to PPG 15.
- The proposal is contrary to both the Local Plan 2026 (and draft Local Plan 2036) and the Hannington Neighbourhood Plan which has been adopted by Swindon Borough Council
- The proposal would result in further loss of open space from the layout of the village to the detriment of the Conservation Area and to the village and parish as a whole
- There will be considerable impact on neighbouring residents in terms of noise, manure collection and storage, smells, attraction to rats and other vermin and flies, all resulting in a health hazard. This would be close to neighbouring properties. Regular raking of the manege, which is necessary each morning after it has been used, according to the applicant, will create a great deal of dust and pollution in neighbouring properties. Further, as proposed, the manege could potentially be used every day of the year, with the tractor raking and driving around the area all day.
- The viewing platform will result in loss of privacy in neighbouring properties as it looks directly into them.
- The proposal would cause problems of highway safety, with increased traffic on a hazardous bend, creating a danger to drivers and the many pedestrians who use the road. (one of only three into the village).
- The proposal would have an overbearing impact on neighbouring properties, the manure and waste pile is encroaching nearer to them, and while at the moment their gardens are peaceful locations with trees and wildlife which aid enjoyment and wellbeing, this will be impaired with a potential impact on health.
- There is no provision for horse-boxes or trailers which would be a further encroachment on the character of the area, but these are clearly envisaged (see below).
- There is no guarantee that once built, there will not be any change and further development in the future, as in the case of this application/proposal.
- The Parish Council pointed out in response to the previous application that no facilities for storage of equipment to maintain or roll the area was included; this, one must assume, was to ensure that the previous the application would be approved, but now such a building is seen as ‘necessary’.
- There will be major impact on the neighbourhood during the construction phase of the proposal, as there has been throughout the construction of the manege itself.

- There is a major safety risk caused by horses being brought backwards and forwards from Hannington Hall, so it is necessary to have stables at the site of the manege; the Parish Council is concerned that such an application will follow.
- Allowing such a development as is proposed sets a dangerous precedent as far as the Conservation Area, Local Plan 2023 – 2036 and Hannington Neighbourhood Plan are concerned, for further development in the Conservation Area or any green space.
- There are extensive, professional equestrian facilities within a few hundred yards of the site, yet this, for some reason, is not being used by the applicant.
- The Parish Council is concerned about the impact on local flora and fauna, for deer and other mammals, birds, butterflies and essential insects inhabit this field.
- There is no information about how many horses will be involved, no details of disposal of waste, manure, noise and disturbance which will be an inevitable consequence of the manege, whether the manege will be used 7 days a week or during what time-scales.
- It was requested that the previous application should have conditions restricting the type and size of vehicles using the access point, that no building other than those which form part of the manege should be permitted, and that no storage of feed or manure should be allowed on the site. These would not prevent the area being used as proposed but would ensure the impact on neighbouring properties is reduced. The Parish Council reinforces its opinion, and objects to this proposal on these grounds alone.
- The Parish Council is unable to reconcile the recommendations of the British Equestrian Team for sizes of maneges with what is being constructed here. The GBR Team recommendation for a show-jumping manege is a minimum of 80 x 50 metres, yet this is 50 x 30 metres. Clearly it does not conform to the required standard, yet the current proposal is supposedly being carried out under the umbrella of some unknown Olympic authority's recommendations and advice. The two are incompatible.

The Parish Council has already expressed concern (letter dated November 25, 2018) about the fact that there is a continuous trickle of planning applications relating to Hannington Hall. The Parish Council has undertaken its responsibility to consider each application separately and on its merits, as and when presented for consultation. However, the cumulative nature and effect of these applications and consequent development cannot be assessed in this way. The Parish Council has asked for details of the overall scheme into which these planning applications fit in order that Councillors may better evaluate each and every application when presented. This has not been forthcoming. The Parish Council would wish to see the full extent of the applicant's plans and ambitions before considering any further planning applications.

The Parish Council wishes to draw attention to the supporting statement to the application, and objects on a number of counts.

- 1 The statement says that the viewing platform is to provide shelter in poor weather or bright sunlight, and is a '*typical and necessary structure for this type of facility*'. It is definitely NOT a necessity. If it were so, it would have been part of the initial planning application for construction of a manege (see above), which was devised in conjunction with and advised by, we were told, the British Equestrian Society. It is simply to make an observer more comfortable while watching an OUTDOOR PURSUIT – the upper-case letters are to make the point that while watching an outdoor activity, the observer may get wet, or even hot on sunny days! Nor can the Parish Council support anything, such as this viewing platform, that affords the applicant or observer a better view of and into some-one else's property and house, which is the case with this application.
- 2 It is proposed to erect an equipment store. If that too is now necessary, it can be located quite easily and readily within the grounds of Hannington Hall. The Planning Committee and the Parish Council

have been assured previously that no horses will be kept or stabled on the manege site, so it is surely preferable for the equipment to be kept close to where the horses are to be stabled.

- 3 It is proposed now to make a *“strip of hard-standing linking the access to the manege, along with a wash-down area and drain to ensure that vehicles exiting the site are clean and there is no detrimental impact on the public highway.”* This is totally unacceptable and contrary to what has been agreed and approved previously. It is contrary to Neighbourhood Plan Policy HPRD 3 with serious concern over the vehicular access and quality of the track proposed, the effect this will have on nearby ditches and entrance to the main road. The Planning Committee and Parish Council have been assured in the past that the only ‘equipment’ using the site will be a “little tractor” to rake the manege after/before use. Now it is ‘vehicles’ (note the plural) which presumably refers to horse-boxes and trailers, again which the Planning Committee and Parish Council have been assured would not be entering the site. Indeed, it has been quoted in the past that only 4 horses would be stabled at Hannington Hall, and walked across to the manege – to which the Parish Council has drawn attention as a dangerous practice. Moreover, for over two years the applicant has given no concern to the appearance of the area, especially during construction of the manege, or to the appearance and amenity of the village, to the views of residents, the lives of those in neighbouring properties, or the detrimental impact on the public highway. On numerous occasions the Parish Council has had to draw the attention of the applicant to the mud and detritus left on the road which has been almost continuously been covered. The Parish Council is interested why this has suddenly become a concern. Moreover, The Planning Policy on Transport states unequivocally that

Policy TR2 (Transport and Development) is to be applied to this proposal, particularly with regards to any increased traffic movements. The policy states that development will be permitted where proposals provide access that is appropriate to the scale, type and location without detriment to highway safety and local amenity.

Clearly, this is detrimental to both safety and local amenity.

- 4 The applicant makes reference to the aesthetic value of the site, which is considered *“a simple open space with little or no true aesthetic value”*. The Parish Council considers this ironic and rather offensive to residents, and deplores the derogatory tone of the statement towards the Conservation Area and neighbouring properties. Such an approach adds nothing to the value of the application, is clearly subjective, invalid and detracts from the weight of the application. The site is the primary gateway to the Conservation Area in which residents take great pride, and any development of it is to the detriment of the area. Construction of the manege has created considerable loss of amenity already to neighbouring properties, without any regard by the applicant. Now the applicant wishes to destroy further the Conservation Area, a space which is now of *“little or no aesthetic value”*. It was indeed a vital part of the Conservation Area before the applicant set about destroying it. What was a very attractive orchard has been allowed by the applicant to go deteriorate to its present state.
- 5 The applicant states that the proposed structures are modest and provide necessary ancillary facilities in order for the manege to function. The former phrase is untrue, the latter phrase is without any validity. If they are now *‘necessary for the manege to function’*, why were they not part of the earlier planning application, which was approved contrary to the Parish Council’s recommendation? The viewing platform is completely unnecessary, and mucking-out facilities must be located at Hannington Hall where the horses are to be stabled in some (as yet unknown) place.
- 6 The applicant states that most of the proposal would be screened, or would not have *‘a significant impact on views along the road’*. The impact of *‘a modest timber structure’* and mucking-out facilities cannot be assessed and quantified in terms of visibility alone. Noise, smell, vermin and access for large vehicles have to be considered. The impact will undoubtedly be considerable.

The structures proposed are by no means 'modest'. There has been over-development of the site already to the detriment of the entire community (the applicant excepted). Erecting and placing further structures within the Conservation Area can only be seen as a retrograde step.

The Parish Council recommends that the planning application is refused. It is contrary to the Hannington Conservation Area Management Plan (2009), to the Local Plan 2026, to previous decisions by the Planning Committee, to the wishes of residents as expressed in a questionnaire supporting the Neighbourhood Plan (and supported by the applicant), and to the Hannington Preservation and Protection Committee established in 2017 and financed by the applicant himself to challenge development within the parish and particularly within the Conservation Area.

Should the Planning Officer be in disagreement with the Parish Council's recommendation, the Parish Council wishes the application and all relevant responses to it to be put before the Planning Committee for determination.

Yours faithfully

Alan Gorton

