



31st October 2023

E-Mail to; development.control@wokingham.gov.uk

For the attention of the Case Officer(s)

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re; Poppies Farm, Pound Lane, Hurst RG10 ORS

Planning Applications; Ref No;232527 Prior Approval submission for the proposed erection of a modular agricultural building; Ref No;232525 Full application for the erection of 2 No. modular agricultural buildings with associated hard standing (Retrospective); Ref No;232526 Application to vary condition2 of planning consent F/2013/0395 in so far as it relates to the livestock stable building.

Hurst Village Society (HVS) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the above planning applications and wishes to fully support the proposals identified in each of these applications. However, The Society believes that whilst it is appropriate to deal with the merits of each application it is essential that each application must be considered together to fully understand the overall benefits each brings in ensuring the future viability of this existing and developing agricultural and NEET (Not in employment, education or training) facility.

As the Planning Authority you may recall our support of a number of simultaneous applications in relation to this facility (Ref Nos; 221597,221593 and 221594,221598 and 221567) that were submitted in June 2022 (our letters dated 29th June 2022 refer).

HVS believes that these further applications clearly support the determination of the applicant to bring to fruition her long held aspirations and proposals for the

future of this facility and it's role within, and the benefits it will bring to the local community. The Society hopes that in this instance, whilst ensuring the relevant Local and National Planning Policies and Guidelines are applied, the Planning Authority endeavour to base their decisions in relation to these proposals "in a positive and creative way" thereby helping to create "the conditions in which this business can invest, expand and adapt", so supporting a prosperous local rural economy by allowing "the development and diversification of this agricultural business". In this respect it is believed the information included in the two supporting documents which form part of these applications, and both produced by Reading Agricultural Consultants Ltd. (RAC) establishes the business case for the proposed developments and also the long term viability of this business, and therefore supports a creative and pragmatic approach to the granting of planning permission. The alteration to the Applicants Business Plan, also identified in the above document fully shows the need for such a business within the community and surrounding areas.

Referring to those Local and National Policies that seek to control development in the countryside HVS believes the supporting documentation makes it clear as to how and why these relevant planning policies have been complied with. The Society has always looked to support the concept of "Planning Balance" where appropriate. That said, given where the development site is situated, HVS in supporting these applications, has needed to convince itself that these proposals don't conflict with Wokingham Borough Council's Core Strategy Policy CP11 – Proposals outside Development Limits (including countryside), whereby development won't normally be permitted. One of the exceptions to CP11 is where the proposed development "contributes to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises within the Borough, or in the case of other countryside based enterprises and activities, it contributes and or promotes recreation in, and enjoyment of the countryside" This is clearly the case here, so providing further evidence as to why the applications should be approved.

There are two other highly relevant points raised in the application. Firstly that planning officers are quoted as saying that the developments at Poppies Farm "contribute to the rural character " and the Poly Tunnels/Agri Span structures are "of appropriate visual character in terms of rural agricultural use of the site and surrounding". Secondly it has been stated that the Manure Management Plan

submitted to the Planning Authority by the Applicant meets all requirements in relation to Nitrate Vulnerable Zone requirements. If indeed these are accurate interpretations of The Planning Authority's position this would provide further evidence in support of the applications.

Clearly following the delays in the consideration of the 2022 applications, it is essential that the future use of this site needs to be established. HVS in fully supporting these proposals believes there is now an ideal opportunity for this to take place and would hope therefore that the necessary approvals can be granted in a timely manner.

Yours faithfully,

John Osborne, on behalf of Hurst Village Society