

I, [REDACTED] of Westwood Cottage, Sheerlands Road, Finchampstead, RG40 4QX, DO SOLEMNLY AND SINCERELY DECLARE as follows:

- 1) I have lived at the dwelling of Westwood Cottage since 1972. I can confirm that I have owned Westwood Cottage and the associated land surrounding it since 1972 upon the death of my father.
- 2) I am the former co-director of S G Ray & Co Ltd and as part of a previously refused certificate application LPA application ref. 172689 I provided a previous statutory declaration which stated a number of buildings and uses at the site had then existed since 1994. The appendix to this previous declaration has been attached as Enclosure 1 to this declaration and I can again confirm that S G Ray & Co Ltd have operated from the site outlined in blue in Enclosure 1 since 1994. The previous statutory declaration was not specific about the commencement of the uses on site, this declaration seeks to clarify these matters.
- 3) The site is well known to the LPA owing to the past applications but also due to the adjacent land known as 'land adjoining Westwood Cottage' comprising a part lawful use as a builder's yard including storage and distribution of site containers and materials (approved as per certificate of lawfulness LPA ref. 192762). This builder's yard has been associated with S G Ray & Co Ltd since 1983 as I would order stock through Polyethylene Pipelines Company (also known as PPC Group) who operated on the site. PPC Group were contracted to deliver stock and items stored on their site directly to SG Ray and Co Ltd jobs/sites.
- 4) The adjacent land has also been subject to appeal decisions APP/X0360/C/20/3269351 and APP/X0360/C/20/3262643 (dated 26/07/2021) which appealed enforcement notices. Following the outcome of these appeal decisions the use of the adjoining land identified in the Notices were required to cease however, this did **not** apply to the land outlined in blue in Enclosure 1 below (hereafter referred to as the subject land) or the area of land granted a certificate of lawfulness in application ref. 192762. It should be noted that the adjoining land is and always has been a completely separate business operation to S G Ray & Co Ltd.
- 5) Building no.3 is known as 'Sheerlands House' and has been the head office for S G Ray & Co Ltd since 1994. This building is where all invoices and deliveries are addressed to and myself and/or my employees regularly attend to deal with administrative matters associated with the business. The building features computers, desks, toilets and a kitchen area for staff. I have employed between 4-5 employees who regularly attended the office prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. Since the pandemic attendance by employees has continued but has been intermittent owing to home working patterns. Regardless, I have been paying business rates to Wokingham Borough Council for this building.
- 6) The other uses on site have occurred as a result of S G Ray & Co Ltd operations being present on the site since 1994, as such it is not uncommon for invoices to often list 'Sheerlands House' as an invoice address whilst deliveries would often be delivered to and stored to the area of land numbered 5 in enclosure 1 (beyond Westwood Cottage itself).
- 7) For clarity, the use of the land numbered 5 (as per Enclosure 1) for storage of building materials has always been used in this way since the office (building 3) has existed. However, originally this was for a relatively small scale operation primarily storing vehicles and fabricating materials (pipes, valves, fittings, associated plants, etc) with the materials

generally being stored along the north-western boundary. As the business naturally grew and expanded, bigger contracts came in (notably one for Heathrow) which required more vehicles (including vans, tipper trucks and trailers for carrying diggers) and notably overall bigger building materials (in terms of the actual size of individual components and volume). This resulted in greater surplus material being brought back from site. Materials were not able to be kept on customer's sites and as such there was a greater need for more storage space. The increase in business operations and bigger contracts began around the year 2000, and whilst the need for work naturally fluctuates (dependent on specific jobs), this is the time I remember the significant upscaling for the storage need for the business, this has never been reduced since then.

- 8) Building no.1 was initially an open roofed structure used for storage. It was originally connected walls built around two portacabins, however, a roof was later constructed around 2013, and it was then used as both a workshop for welding and fabricating as well as closed storage. The need for metal welding and fabricating material on site arose from the needs of the business to pre-fabricate materials prior to distribution. This workshop is also used for vehicle and plant repair when necessary.
- 9) Building no.2 is a garage that has been used for the storage of vehicles associated with the commercial use and valuable plant machinery/equipment. The building features a small workshop which is used on an ad hoc basis, this is used for fusion welding (primarily plastic) which would not normally take place in Building 1. This building is attached to building 3 and was built at the same time Sheerlands House was erected.
- 10) As such, I can confirm that the buildings and uses have existed and continue to do so in excess of 10 years of the date of writing this declaration.

AND I MAKE this solemn declaration conscientiously believing it to be true and by virtue of the provisions of the statutory declarations act 1835.

DATE:

16 JULY 2024

NAME:

[REDACTED]

SIGNATURE:

[REDACTED]

SOLICITOR WITNESS NAME:

MICHELLE ANNE SCOTT

SOLICITOR WITNESS SIGNATURE:

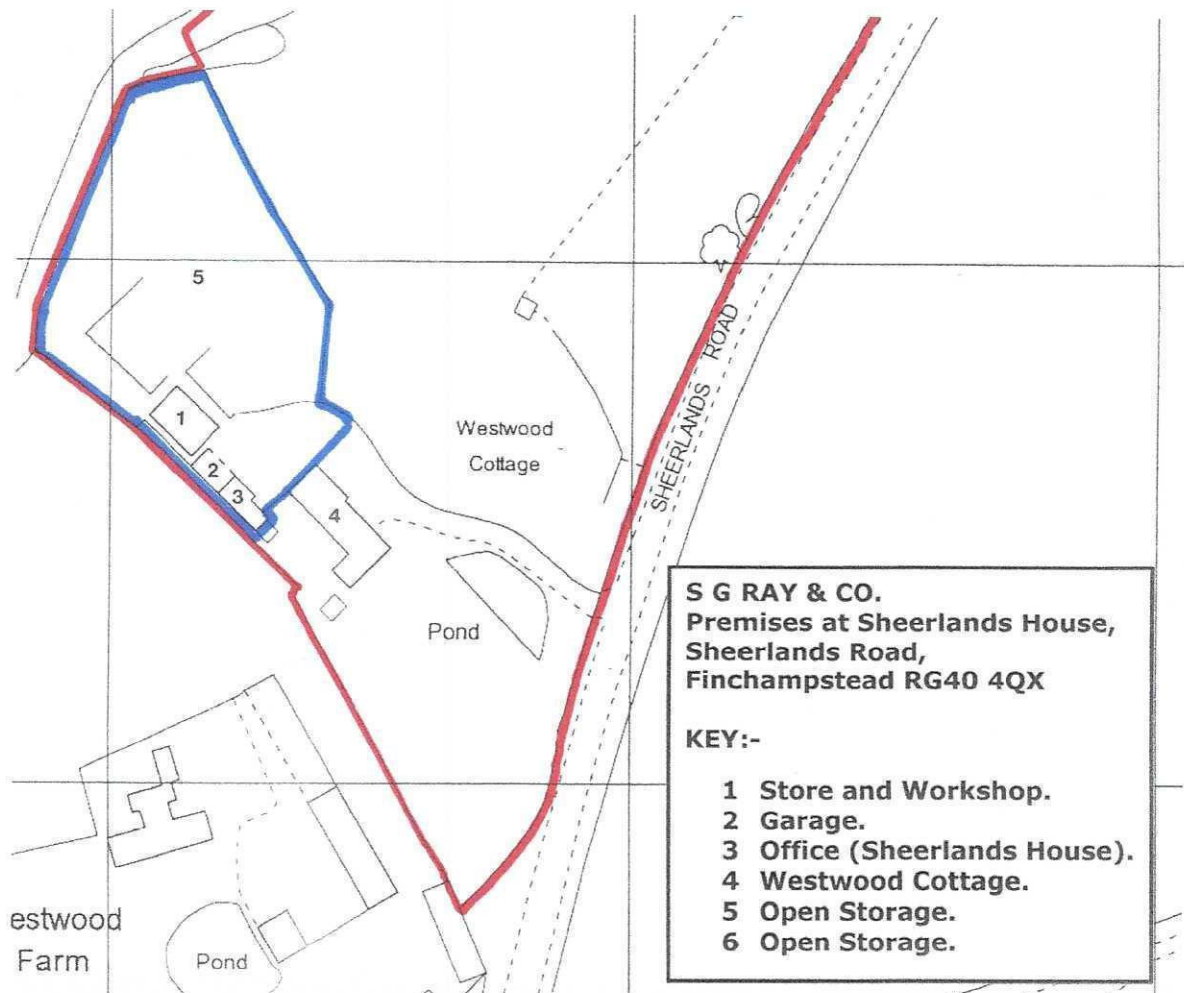
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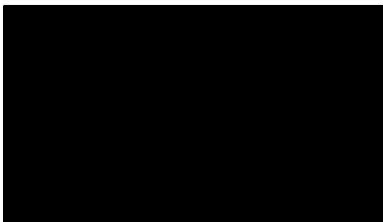
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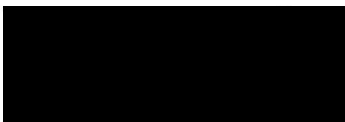
Enclosure 1.



16 JULY 2024



SOLICITOR: MICHELLE ANNE SCOTT



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