

Planning Application 261338 Comments

This is a response to Planning Application 261338 for the erection of decking (retrospective) at Newlands, Mole Road, Sindlesham, RG2 9JQ (Retrospective). These comments are being submitted as an email attachment because the comments facility in the WBC Planning Portal appears not to accommodate graphics.

Newlands abuts land that is designated as a Local Wildlife Site, Ancient Woodland, and is itself part of the Barkham and Bearwood Valued Landscape.

I object to the proposal because it would legitimise an element of a wider range of developments that have taken place on the site prior to seeking planning approval. Such unofficial development has already reached a level and form that is inappropriate on the Newlands site.

Planning History

This is the Applicant's fifth Planning Application for the Newlands site.

The first was 201458, made in June 2020, for the erection of a major equestrian centre at the junction of byways AN6, Gravelpithill Lane, and AN9, Ellis's Hill, as depicted below. HGVs would have accessed the site from the south via Gravelpithill Lane. The application was rejected in October 2020.



The Applicant's second planning application was 250785 for the change of use of land and 3 buildings to equestrian, erection of a stable and creation of a riding arena, submitted retrospectively in March 2025. The Planning Statement to support it stated that 'the proposed use is for a riding arena for the applicant's own horses which currently reside in the stables on the land'. It was approved in October 2025 on condition that the stables and riding arena were not used for DIY or half livery, riding school lessons nor hosting any competitions or events unless approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The third planning application, 253039, was for the use of land for the stationing of a mobile home for residential use, submitted in December 2025, after the proposed mobile home was already in place. This was given temporary approval to remain, with occupancy restrictions, until March 2029.

The fourth planning application, 260963, was for the enlargement of the riding arena that had been approved conditionally as part of the retrospective application 250785. This was submitted in May 2026 but no longer appears to be accessible on the WBC planning portal.

Current Application

This fifth planning application, 261338, is for the erection of decking at the mobile home that was approved as part of the retrospective application 253039.

The Planning Statement for application 253039, section 4.3, described the proposal as seeking 'the stationing of a mobile home and associated decking and hardstanding [to be used] in conjunction with the approved equestrian use of the site'. Hence, the decking is already approved for the life of the mobile home it serves.

The drawings of the proposed accommodation, including the decking, are the same for both applications 253039 and 261338, so no physical changes to the structure are being sought.

The Planning Statement for the current application, 261338, section 4, covers the development proposals. Whilst 'erection of decking' is mentioned, this is described as a 'temporary feature'. It appears, therefore, that the application is less about the physical nature and presence of the decking and more about securing a wider use for it.

The Planning Statement for application 250785, section 4.2, said that the proposed facilities were for use with the applicant's own horses which reside on the land. It was argued that because they were not for clients' horses, traffic to and from the site would not increase.

More recent applications have been more open about intentions to grow commercial activities significantly on the site. In particular, a Business Plan was submitted alongside application 253039, which outlined how the applicant had been using the mobile home, and intended to use it going forward. It provides a vision for expanding the equine business already established at Newlands, providing services such as livery, equine transportation, coaching and equine sales. The business already had a staff of 8, with 11 Clients requiring professional livery and coaching for showjumping.

It tells how a decking area has been added on the side of the log cabin (presumably the mobile home in question) to provide refreshments and washroom facilities to clients between intense periods of training.

This revisiting of the proposals for the decking is presumably to satisfy the aspirations expressed in the Business Plan, and possibly shared with clients.

Sections 4.4 and 4.5 of the 261338 Planning Statement introduce proposed uses for the decking area that have not been granted through application 253039. Curiously, section 4.6 then claims that the decking does not facilitate an intensification or expansion of the approved equestrian use and does not alter the character of the authorised activities taking place on site.

Landscape Impact

Newlands remains entirely within what is now known as the Barkham and Bearwood Valued Landscape Area. It also abuts a Local Wildlife Site and Ancient Woodland.

The development that has taken place there, all before even seeking permission, is detracting from the landscape.



View from Public Byway

I urge the Planning Authority to refuse planning application 261338.

Paul Steel

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