

Memorandum

To: Paul Howson

CC.

From: Piran Cooper

Date: 28th December 2016

Re: **Y16/0623/SH Little Densole Farm, Canterbury Road**

The proposal is for a tourism site consisting of 12 lodges with associated facilities in Densole. It is located within the North Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is an area that is also designated as a Special Landscape Area within local planning policy.

The site, approximately 13.5 acres in size is currently agricultural land and forms part of a wider field system. Reinden Woods lies to the south east and is classified as ancient woodland.

The design for the facility has been carefully considered. In itself the low density of buildings, suggested landscaping and choice of native species would provide for a pleasant environment. However the location of the facility is an issue in terms of the impact the development would have on the existing character. The site is part of a strip of open land that acts as a band running between Densole and Reinden Woods, the value of which should not be underestimated. This is especially important in the context of the AONB.

If permission were granted this development would introduce a different element to the landscape, which would fragment the landscape through the introduction of solid form; mainly the landscaping. The scale of the site in the context of its surroundings in conjunction with the relatively geometric nature of the site boundary will make it stand out within the area despite the use of native species. This being the case the suggested location might not be the best in terms of protecting the character of the AONB. Another issue that is a product of the choice of the location is the relatively long entrance drive, which is shown as an avenue. The avenue would also fragment the open nature of the general area.

The construction and operation of the site is also something that needs to be considered. The construction period will be temporary and will cause disturbance but the operation of the site will be the most significant issue. The introduction of vehicular traffic will impact on the site, as there is currently no vehicular traffic any increase will be significant. The movement and noise generated by this traffic even

at low levels will have a detrimental impact on the area / AONB. The length of the drive that is proposed will exacerbate this. One of the intrinsic qualities of this landscape is its tranquillity which is compatible with its scenic qualities.

There benefits of this development need to be considered against its impact on the area / AONB.