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Chipperfield	Receipt 5.6.85 DATE OF EXPIRY OF STATUTORY PERIOD:
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Chioparfield .	DECISION:
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	I.DECISION:
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NAME AND ADDRESS OF APPLICANT:	011
Mr K D Howard	ROAD CLASS: NPII
Bucks Hill Stables	
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The Common	
Chipperfield	
NAME AND ADDRESS OF AGENT:	0013/85 0418/85
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11 MAR 86

Gentlemen

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1971, SECTIONS 88 AND 36 AND SCHEDULE 9 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PLANNING (AMENDMENT) ACT 1981 APPEALS BY MR K D HOWARD LAND AND BUILDINGS AT BUCKS HILL STABLES, THE COMMON, CHIPPERFIELD

1. I have been appointed by the Secretary of State for the Environment to determine the above appeals against 2 enforcement notices issued by the Dacorum Borough Council and against a refusal of planning permission by that Council concerning the above-mentioned land and buildings. I held an inquiry into the appeals on 3 December 1985.

FIRST NOTICE

- 2. a. The date of the notice is 14 March 1985.
 - b. The breach of planning control alleged in the notice is the erection of a diesel oil storage tank on that part of the land coloured green on Plan A.
 - c. The requirements of the notice are the demolition of the diesel oil storage tanks erected on that part of the land shown coloured green on Plan A.
 - d. The period for compliance with the notice is 6 months.
 - e. The appeal was made on the ground set out in Section 88(2)(a) of the 1971 Act but at the inquiry the ground in Section 88(2)(b) was added.

SECOND NOTICE

- 3. a. The date of the notice is 14 March 1985.
 - b. The breach of planning control alleged in the notice is the change of use of that part of the land shown hatched yellow on Plan A from use for agriculture to use for the parking and storage of goods vehicles.
 - c. The requirements of the notice are the discontinuance of the use of that part of the land shown hatched yellow on Plan A for the parking and storage of goods vehicles.
 - d. The period for compliance is 6 months.
 - e. The appeal was made on the ground set out in Section 88(2)(a) of the 1971 Act.

PLANNING APPLICATION

4. The development for which planning permission was sought was the provision of a hardstanding for 9 haulage lorries and erection of a storage tank for diesel. Permission was refused for change of use to storage of lorries and erection of diesel storage tank.

METRIC AND IMPERIAL UNITS

5. Your client gave his evidence in a confusing mixture of gallons and litres. I tried to assist him by stating that 4,000 gallons, the size of his tank, was equivalent to 15,142 litres. I find that I was mistaken in that I had calculated from US gallons instead of Imperial gallons. The correct figure for 4,000 Imperial gallons is 18,184 litres. The correction of this figure, if it affects the matter at all, strengthens the case for the local planning authority. Throughout this letter I have used litres, giving the equivalent in Imperial gallons in brackets.

WITHDRAWAL OF APPEALS

- 6. Your client's appeal against the second notice was withdrawn at the start of the inquiry.
- After a brief adjournment for discussion between the parties, it was agreed as regards the Section 36 appeal that the Council were not seeking to prevent the construction of the hardstanding since this might well be of value for agriculture. Your client no longer wished to pursue that part of this appeal dealing with the change of use but he wished to retain the appeal against refusal for the diesel storage tank. He appreciated that if his appeal against the first notice succeeded there would be no need to pursue this part of the Section 36 appeal. If, however, the appeal against the first notice failed on ground (b) and if it were considered on ground (a) that only a tank smaller than the present 18,184-litre (4,000-gallon) tank should be permitted, it appeared that it would not be possible to grant such permission on the deemed application. For this reason this part of the planning application and the appeal against refusal of it should be considered. The Council had no objection to the Section 36 appeal being considered on this basis. I said that, if the circumstances indicated should arise, I would consider whether it was legally possible to consider this part of the Section 36 appeal on its own. the evidence and arguments relating to the appeal against the first notice would embrace those concerned with this part of the Section 36 appeal there was no need to consider the latter separately at the inquiry.
- 8. The evidence was taken on oath.

SUMMARY OF DECISION

9. The formal decision is set out in paragraph 50 below. The appeal against the first notice fails, the notice is being upheld and planning permission on the deemed application is not being granted. The appeal against refusal of planning permission is being treated as withdrawn (paragraph 48 below).

SITE DESCRIPTION

10. The appeal site lies on the north-east side of a road called The Common. Chipperfield Common itself is on the south-west side. That part of the site within about 90 m of the road is a fairly narrow strip varying from about 40 m width near the road to about 20 m where it joins a rectangular field behind of about 120 m by

90 m (Plan A). This field runs along the rear boundary of the house next to the appeal site on its south-east side, Highwinds. Manor Farm is on the north-west side of the site.

11. The entrance to the site is at the south-east end of the frontage. Near the entrance on the north-west side is a group of stables and there are a few small farm buildings scattered elsewhere. There is a 4,546-litre (1,000 gallon) oil tank near to the north-west boundary and next to it the 18,184-litre (4,000-gallon) tank which is the subject of this inquiry. This tank is a horizontal cylinder of diameter about 2.4 m and length about 3.8 m standing on 2 brick walls and a brick bund, which raises it about 1.3 m from the ground. The overall height is therefore about 3.7 m. It is painted green.

THE CASE FOR YOUR CLIENT

- 12. The essence of your client's case was that he was engaged in agriculture and that the erection of the tank was permitted development under Class VI of the General Development Order. Failing acceptance of that there was a good case for replacing the old 4,550-litre with one considerably larger.
- 13. Your client stated that in addition to the appeal site which he owned, he rented further land:-

FLAUNDEN - 40 ha (100 acres) BEDMOND - 1.6 ha (4 acres)

BEDMOND - 1.2-1.6 ha (3 to 4 acres)

CHESHAM - 20 ha (50 acres)

LAYHILL - up to 60 ha (up to 150 acres).

He therefore had available, to use as required, up to a total of roughly 125 ha (310 acres). His main agricultural occupation was the breeding of farm horses, principally Friesians. He had at present 4 stallions for stud, 5 mares, 2 fillies and one colt. He also had a driving horse and 2 ponies. In addition he had at present 4 calves, 3 or 4 geese, 20 ducks, 24 chickens and 3 rabbits.

- 14. He had plans to extend his stock to a total of 20 calves, 10 cattle and 4 breeding sows. He was due to discuss this proposal with a representative of the Ministry of Agriculture.
- 15. There were employed on this smallholding: himself, his wife, the girl looking after horses and cattle and one girl (sometimes 2) on the YTS scheme. He also had 2 part-time men and a night watchman.
- 16. He had the following diesel-driven vehicles:-

A tractor unit for a semi-trailer taking a 20-ton load

Used to bring in bulk hay and straw.

A horse box for 4 animals in stalls or 10 loose-tethered.

A tipper, with 6-ton capacity

For carting manure.

A dumper

For mucking out and general work.

Two tractors with loaders

General farm duties.

A farm trailer

Can be towed by a tractor (or the Range-Rover, see below).

A 4-wheeled rigid vehicle with)
10-ton capacity)
A 7½-ton gross weight drop-side)

For storage of hay and straw.

A winch truck

For breakdowns.

- 17. The amount of fuel consumed by these vehicles varied with the time of year. It increased in the summer when he also did work for other farmers. The consumption in May 1985 had been 11,684 litres (2,570.2 gallons) as shown at Document 10. This included the pressure cleaner for washing down the yard. With his proposed calf and pig rearing he would in future also need diesel fuel for heating purposes.
- 18. It was necessary to have adequate fuel storage on the site. Without it vehicles would have to be filled up at garages which would be prohibitively expensive and wasteful in dead mileage. It was cheaper to buy fuel at the right time of year and there were considerable savings to be made by buying in large quantities. The discount for ordering over 10,000 litres was 1.35p per litre; for 15,000 litres a further 1.20p per litre plus 40p per gallon. The size of tank required must include the amount normally ordered plus a reserve to avoid running dry. Clearly the minimum size required was 11,365 litres (2,500 gallons) and ideally it should be 13,638 litres (3,000 gallons) or preferably 18,184 litres (4,000 gallons). He also submitted the figures of discounts granted by Conoco in late 1984: they had not changed materially since then.
- 19. Your client accepted that he would be justified in using pink-coloured fuel (tax-free) in some of his vehicles. He found, however, that the inconvenience of 2 different fuels, together with the need for 2 tanks, outweighed the saving in cost.
- 20. He had been running his haulage business from this site for about 10 years. He had installed the new diesel tank in late 1983 or early 1984 and had used it to serve both his haulage vehicles and his farm vehicles. As he was withdrawing his appeal against the notice dealing with the parking of goods vehicles, he had complied with that notice since 29 November 1985. It must, however, be accepted that, if he happened to require, for example, a load of hay delivering to his site and if one of his farm vehicles was not available, he would use a vehicle from his haulage fleet, now based a few miles away, to do the job.
- 21. Your client submitted Photograph 7 which showed a very large manure heap which had been on the land when he acquired it. He had removed it and had made a number of other improvements to the site. The present situation was indicated in Photographs 1-6. He was prepared to provide a fast-growing screen of trees and shrubs, a mixture of Leylandii and beech, to hide the tank should this be thought desirable.
- 22. He also submitted the following supporting documents:
 - a. Document 12 certifying a satisfactory blood test in August 1985.
 - b. Document 13 confirming the availability of grazing land belonging to Miss B Gates (Flaunden).
 - c. Document 14 confirming the use in 1985 of land near Chesham for grazing in return for seasonal work by your client.

- d. Document 15 confirming the availability of a diesel tank for installation at his new vehicle parking area.
- 23. Mr E J Foster, a Chartered Surveyor, who had long experience of construction on farms, including installation of fuel tanks, confirmed that, in his opinion, the tank installed was a reasonable size for its required function. He would not have been surprised to see a larger one: 18,184 litres (4,000 gallons) as installed or 27,276 (6,000 gallons) would be reasonable.
- 24. Although your client had expressed his willingness to lower the tank to ground level or even to sink it into the ground, if required, Mr Foster advised strongly against such action because an electric pump would introduce a fire risk and should be avoided.
- 25. Mr J Fenwick submitted that the various outlying grazing areas used by your client were all fairly close and that they were run as one agricultural unit. Because they were slightly separated, distances for farm vehicles were rather more than on a comparable farm with all land in one block and this added to the fuel bill. Nevertheless it remained that the whole was one agricultural unit centred on the appeal site. A fuel tank of the size installed was "requisite for the use of that land for the purposes of agriculture". It was permitted development under Class VI of the General Development Order.
- 26. The tank had been erected with 2 purposes in mind, the haulage vehicles and the agricultural vehicles, and it was now to be used for agriculture only and was therefore within Class VI. If a tank of this size were erected on the site now it would clearly be requisite for agriculture.
- 27. Document 10 showed that even if one counted the fuel for the horse box only, which was used for carrying the horses and other animals, the requirement was 3,755 litres (826 gallons) in one month. This alone would justify a tank of the size installed. If a tank of this size was needed for agriculture there was no objection to it being used for some other purpose too. In Trentham v Gloucestershire County Council (1966) 10 P&CR 225, Lord Denning had said that it was necessary to look at the primary purpose. This was agriculture.
- 28. Although non-farm horses were not regarded as agricultural animals, farm horses were. Their breeding was an agricultural purpose. Belmont Farm v Ministry of Housing and Local Government (1962) 13 P&CR 417 was the authority.
- 29. As regards the deemed application, the council's planning witness had accepted that, if the fuel tank was to serve the purpose indicated, a tank of the size installed was not unreasonable. The evidence that this size of tank would be economical had not been challenged. Mr L Brown, a neighbour, had been concerned that the tank would continue to be used for haulage vehicles but the size was not so large as to justify the supposition that that was likely to happen.
- 30. There were no proper grounds for reducing the size of the tank and certainly not to less than 13,638 litres (3,000 gallons). As regards conditions, your client intended to screen the tank and would accept a condition on the lines indicated by the Council (paragraph 35 below).

THE CASE FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY

31. The appeal site lay within the Metropolitan Green Belt and the erection of this tank was clearly not permitted by the relevant policies in the County Structure Plan (Document 16) and the Dacorum District Plan (Document 17) unless it were justified for agriculture. The site also lay within a Conservation Area.

- 32. A diesel storage tank of modest proportions might be appropriate for this very small agricultural holding (1.7 ha). An 18,184-litre (4,000-gallon) tank could not be justified on agricultural grounds. The storage of such a quantity suggested that vehicles or machinery other than for agricultural operations on this land was to be regretted here. Its retention would be likely to lead to such use.
- 33. The Council did not accept that land several miles from the appeal site, rented 2/3 with no long term security, should be taken into account in considering the needs of this smallholding. With only 1.7 ha, it was obvious that the list of vehicles run by your client was excessive.
- 34. It was not disputed that the existing 4,546-litre (1,000-gallon) tank could be replaced by one of similar size. This would be ample for vehicles used only on the site and it could then be filled with agricultural diesel, exempt from duty, which could not be used for vehicles using the public highway.
- 35. There could be no doubt that the tank was unsightly and should only be allowed if one of that size was essential. Even then it should be screened and, if permission were to be granted for it, it was suggested that a condition be imposed requiring a scheme of landscaping and planting to be agreed with the local planning authority.
- 36. It was considered that, apart from the question of size, the tank was not permitted under Class VI of the General Development Order because:
 - a. Horses were not agricultural animals and their breeding was not an agricultural use.
 - b. This section required the building to be "for the use of that land". "That land" referred to "agricultural land ... comprised in an agricultural unit".

The appeal should therefore fail on ground (b).

THE CASE FOR THE INTERESTED PERSONS

- 37. Mrs E H Pennington lived at Highwinds which was surrounded by the appeal site on 2 sides. From her house and garden she looked across the narrow strip of the appeal site directly at the fuel tank. She submitted Photographs 8-13. She found that lorries were parked within 8 ins of her fence. Engines were run for hours at a time. The smell was most objectionable. Mrs J Buchanan in Manor Farm on the other side of the appeal site used diesel oil for her machines and coped with 12 ha (30 acres) without any fuel tank at all. The tank was clearly there to serve a transport fleet.
- 38. Mr L Brown lived next to the south-east of Mrs Pennington and had 18 acres extending round the back of the appeal site. He managed to cut his hay and to get rid of his manure without having a diesel fuel tank.

CONCLUSIONS

- 39. Whether the erection of this tank is development permitted by Class VI of the General Development Order appears to depend on 4 questions:
 - a. Whether the breeding of farm horses is agriculture.

- b. Whether the carrying out of "building or engineering operations" was "requisite for ... the purposes of agriculture" at the time of that carrying out, ie when the tank was erected.
- c. Whether the "building or engineering operations" were "requisite ... for agriculture", ie whether or not the tank was larger than was requisite.
- d. Whether "that land" should be construed as referring to the appeal site or to the whole of land used from time to time by your client.
- 40. Section 290(1) of the 1971 Act states that "agriculture" includes the "breeding and keeping of livestock (including any creature kept ... for the purpose of its use in the farming of land)". This clearly covers the breeding and keeping of farm horses, whether those horses are to be used on this farm land or any other.
- 41. At the time of the erection of this tank your client agreed that it was for use partly for his haulage vehicles and partly for his farm vehicles. I note that his planning application was for 9 haulage lorries and erection of a storage tank for diesel. There was no suggestion that this 18,184-litre (4,000-gallon) tank was not the tank in question. There can be no doubt that 9 haulage lorries would consume far more fuel than would be required to meet your client's agricultural need (which I examine in more detail below). It follows that the primary purpose for which the tank was erected was for the haulage business. On this test, therefore, the appeal on ground (b) fails.
- 42. Before considering the deemed application, however, it is necessary to consider the question of whether the erection today of a tank of this size would be permitted for agricultural purposes on this site under Class VI. In this context I shall consider first the question of the size of the tank on the assumption that "that land" refers to the whole of the land used by your client.
- 43. I am here concerned with your client's farming operations as they are today and not with what they might be if, as he suggested, they were intensified. He is under no commitment to make such intensification and it cannot be taken into account. His only agricultural animals are 12 farm horses, 4 calves and a few geese, ducks, chickens and rabbits. These animals cannot require the grazing or the hay from anything like the 125 ha (310 acres) which your client can rent if he requires. I do not believe that more than a fraction of the fuel used, eg the 11,684 litres (2,570.2 gallons) used in May 1985, was required in order to breed and keep animals on this small scale. Your client indicated that he used his vehicles also to do farm work for other farmers. Whilst one would obviously regard the occasional use of a vehicle by one farmer to do work for another as de minimis, it seems to me that here it must be on such a scale as either to amount to a business of its own or at least to consume the greater part of the fuel used.
- 44. In this connection I should point out that I do not dispute the evidence given by Mr E J Foster. He said that in his opinion the size of the tank is reasonable for its required function. I agree but I take the view that its required function is not primarily the support of your client's own farming.
- 45. Your client gave figures to support the need for a tank of a size to accept deliveries of fuel with a substantial discount. He claimed, for example, that the discount on ordering over 15,000 litres was:-
 - 1.35p/litre for over 10,000 litres PLUS 1.20p/litre for over 15,000 litres PLUS 8.08p/litre (40p/gallon)
 - 11.35p/litre

He also submitted Conoco's wholesale price list (Document 11) which shows the normal price of Derv as 40.01p/litre. This would therefore mean a discount of 11.35 on 40.01 = 28.4%. Conoco's list, however, shows that, rather than give discounts on large deliveries, they make a surcharge for small deliveries above the 15,000 litre price. The largest such surcharge, for 1,000-2,199 litres, is 0.8p/litre which, on 40.01, is 2%. I am therefore not satisfied as to the accuracy of your client's evidence. It also seems to me that even if only a proportion of the fuel he uses were agricultural diesel for vehicles working off the roads, he would make a far larger saving in reduced tax by using such fuel than he would by arranging for large deliveries. In my opinion 2 small tanks each of 2,273 litres (500 gallons), one for each type of fuel, might be justified. He already has one tank of 4,564 litres (1,000 gallons) which can be replaced when worn out. This should be ample for, say, the road vehicle diesel. One might reasonably regard the erection of a second tank of up to 2,273 litres (500 gallons) for the tax-free fuel, if he should wish to store this, as "requisite for the purposes of agriculture". Nothing larger appears at present to be justified.

- 46. For reasons of policy, Green Belt and Conservation Area, and because of the actual visual effect from the point of view of neighbours and passers by, I am satisfied, as regards the deemed application, that no larger tank than is necessary should be permitted. The present tank is much larger than is necessary and so permission on the deemed application will not be granted.
- 47. For the reasons above I would regard a tank, additional to the present 4,546-litre (1,000-gallon) tank, of up to 2,273 litres (500 gallons) as requisite for agriculture. There remains the question of whether it is right to regard the land rented by your client as part of the "land ... comprised in an agricultural unit". It must be a matter of judgment to determine the extent to which detached pieces of land can be taken into account. Without detailed study of each piece of land in this case I would not wish to give a decision concerning all this land. I am, however, satisfied that enough of the rented land is near enough to the appeal site to cope with the requirements of the number of animals now kept on the site to justify regarding, as a matter of fact and degree, that part of the rented land as a part of the agricultural unit.
- 48. It follows that the addition of a 2,273-litre (500-gallon) tank, after the removal of the present 18,184-litre (4,000-gallon) tank, would, under Class VI of the General Development Order, not require planning permission. Your client wished to pursue his appeal under Section 36 if permission were not being granted for a tank of the present size. For the reasons in paragraph 46 above I am not prepared to grant planning permission for any tank larger than one for which no permission is necessary. The appeal under Section 36 will therefore be dismissed.
- 49. I have taken account of all the other matters raised at the inquiry but find that they do not outweigh the considerations that have led me to this decision.

FORMAL DECISION

50. In exercise of the powers transferred to me I hereby dismiss the appeal against the first enforcement notice, uphold the notice and refuse to grant planning permission on the application deemed to have been made under Section 88B(3) of the 1971 Act. I dismiss the appeal under Section 36.

RIGHT OF APPEAL AGAINST DECISION

51. This letter is issued as the determination of the appeals before me. Particulars of the rights of appeal against the decision to the High Court are enclosed for those concerned.

I am Gentlemen Your obedient Servant

Mythercox

M S HANCOCK CB MBE CEng FICE ACIArb Inspector

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APPEARANCES

FOR THE APPELLANT

Mr J Fenwick

 of Counsel, instructed by Messrs Wainwright and Stevens, 67 High Street, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HPl 3AF

He called:

Mr K D Howard

- Appellant.

Mr E J Foster FRICS FCIArb

Messrs Foster and Emery,
 29 High Street,
 Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire.

FOR THE PLANNING AUTHORITY

Mr J Vaughan

- Assistant Solicitor, Dacorum Borough Council.

He called:

Mr J Knapp DipTP MRTPI

- Principal Assistant Planner, Dacorum Borough Council.

INTERESTED PERSONS

Mr L Brown

Mrs E H Pennington

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Highwinds, The Common,
 Chipperfield, Hertfordshire.

 The Paddock, Top Common, Chipperfield, Hertfordshire.

DOCUMENTS

Document 1 - List of persons present at the inquiry.

- ' 2 August 1985: to local persons.
- " 3 5 September 1985: from Mr D J Gray and others.
- " 4 10 September 1985: from Mr D H Roper.
- " 5 26 October 1985: from Mr D A Read.
- " 6 9 November 1985: from Mr S H J Holland.
- ' 7 14 November 1985: from Mr I Munro.
- " 8 16 November 1985: from Chipperfield Parish Council.
 - 9 27 November 1985: from Messrs Turberville Woodbridge on behalf of Lord Dartmouth and others.

DOCUMENTS (Cont'd)

- Document 10 May 1985: Derv used for farm vehicles.
 - " 11 14 September 1984: from Conoco Limited.
 - " 12 29 August 1985: from Ministry of Agriculture.
 - " 13 2 December 1985: from Miss B Gates.
 - " 14 2 December 1985: from Mr J E Sunderland.
 - " 15 24 October: from Messrs Gregory and Davis.
 - " 16 Extract from County Structure Plan.
 - " 17 Extract from Dacorum District Plan.

PLANS

- Plan A No scale: plan with enforcement notices.
 - " B 1:500: plan with planning application.
 - " C 1:2,500: Council's plan of appeal site and neighbourhood.

PHOTOGRAPHS

- Photos 1-6 Recent photographs of appeal site taken by appellant.
- Photo 7 Manure heap when first purchased taken by appellant.
- Photos 8-13 Recent photographs of diesel tank taken by Mrs Pennington from Highwinds.