

CB/21/01831/FULL

Clements End Farm, Clements End Road, Studham LU6 2NG

Ms Lauren Rance
Planning Officer
Central Bedfordshire Council
Priory House
Monks Walk
Chicksands
Shefford
Bedfordshire
SG17 5TQ

14 June 2021

By Email: planning@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Dear Lauren,

<u>Application No:</u>	CB/21/01831/FULL
<u>Location:</u>	Clements End Farm, Clements End Road, Studham, LU6 2NG.
<u>Proposal:</u>	Change of use of agricultural land to an equestrian development of 23 stables and ancillary facilities, outdoor arena, open sided hay barn and tied dwelling.

I write further to Central Bedfordshire Council's ("CBC") letter dated 10 May 2021 highlighting the above application.

Introduction

This reply has been subdivided into the following sections:-

- **Executive Summary**
- **Background Information & Consultation**
- **Planning Meeting Overview**
- **Planning Application Documents**
- **Conclusions**

(A) Executive Summary

Studham Parish Council ("SPC") has found it difficult to review this planning application due to the size/scale; the type of development involved and the relevant location.

It is clear that the developer (and his family) have a real passion for creating an equestrian development on this site but the site is accessed off a rural, narrow road and we are not convinced that there are any Very Special Circumstances ("VSC") which can justify such a large development in the Green Belt; Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty ("AONB") and Area of Great Landscape Value ("AGLV").

SPC does consider such a use (perhaps reduced in size) to be appropriate for a rural setting subject to various restrictions on use (such as trading hours, prohibition against competition events and the ancillary use of the remaining ownership area); removal of any future Permitted Development

rights and an absolute bar against future equestrian expansion and/or further residential development on the land held within this ownership.

In summary, the Parish Council cannot support the current application as we do not consider that the highway/road network is sufficient for such a development; there are no VSC arguments and the combined size and scale of the proposed development will significantly harm the surrounding rural landscape and setting.

(B) Background Information & Consultation

Following the first planning application at Clements End Farm (see CB/19/00144/FULL), the Parish Council were aware that the developer was looking to redevelop a second site along Clements End Road for an equestrian use.

The developer approached the Parish Council in September 2020 (following receipt of his pre-planning application) and a "virtual" meeting was eventually held on Wednesday 3 March 2021 when the developer outlined his current plans. This was a useful meeting.

We understand that the developer has sold off the residential development land to Troy Homes, and it was agreed that despite the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions, it would be sensible to organise a "virtual" consultation meeting so that the developer can highlight his proposal and seek feedback from local residents. This consultation took place on Thursday 15 April 2021 and was well attended.

It should be stated that at times the consultation meeting was unruly with certain attendees talking over each other and some not really listening to the opposing point of view.

I set out below some of the points made at the "virtual" consultation meeting (in no particular order), following a summary of the scheme from the developer:-

- There was concern that this would be the first part of an ongoing redevelopment on this site.
- It was noted that pre-planning application had been made by the developer.
- The proposed development is a change of agricultural land to an equestrian centre with the red line showing the development zone.
- Existing site (Six Tunnels) has a smaller number of stables, the subject planning application is a significant increase on this number.
- There are no events at the current site.
- Residents did not want to have "shows" or "competition events" on-site. Can a restriction or condition be attached to the planning consent if granted?
- Other existing "event" sites were highlighted – such as Bury Farm Equestrian Club (Leighton Buzzard).
- Would the site allow "training" or "riding" sessions to third parties? If yes, this would impact on activity to/from the centre if built.
- There was support from one resident about the proposal and the applicant (who will be running the site).
- There was commentary that if the site received planning consent, it would be built over time based on the success of the business.
- There was concern about the number of people/vehicles going to/from the site if the development is built.
- There is no public footpath along Clements End Road and therefore people have to walk along the road. More vehicles, more dangerous.

- Would horses exit the site and travel along Clements End Road or other roads in the area?
- There was a heated exchange about the transport/highways issue since the local residents already consider Clements End Road is relatively dangerous and that the further equestrian proposal will simply make the situation very difficult, particularly when cars or other vehicles are parked on Clements End Road.
- The local residents stated that they would object to the proposal.
- There was comment that the buildings that formed "Clements End Farm" was effectively a brownfield site (which now has planning for 8 dwellings) but the subject site is a "greenfield" site with a few dilapidated buildings thereon.
- Permitted development for an agricultural building was discussed i.e. 28 day notification. Is this possible if the developer is not farming the land in question?
- The impact on traffic movements will change due to the proposed development by Troy Homes. This will not be reflected in the current situation.
- The speed limit along Clements End Road was discussed.
- There was a question about how the remaining land would be used.
- There was a question about whether there would be light pollution from the development, on land which is currently dark.
- The required residential dwelling was discussed. The developer explained that the house was required for his daughter and that he was happy to have such occupation tied to the equestrian scheme.

It is clear from this meeting (and the subsequent planning review meeting), that there is a majority view that the proposed development was inappropriate due to the size; the unknown impact on the other land within the ownership and the potential disruption locally and in particular the poor/narrow road access to/from the site along Clements End Road.

In contrast, there was support from a number of people who have had or have a current interest in horses and equestrian activities, and such support needs to be acknowledged (albeit small in number).

(C) Planning Meeting Overview

The planning application was reviewed at SPC's Planning Meeting held on Thursday 27 May 2021.

I can also confirm that SPC have received several emails from local residents about this planning application both opposing and supporting it. The Parish Council appreciates the time/effort given by these interested parties.

I set out the key issues raised (in no particular order) as follows:-

- It was considered that this application was for a relatively large development within the Green Belt and AONB.
- It was highlighted that this would be a commercial business on agricultural/AONB land.
- The main focus of comments related to the restricted highways access route to/from the site, and in particular the narrow road layout with larger vehicles having difficulty in passing, plus the fact that the grass verges would be adversely affected or destroyed.
- Photographs were shown highlighting the issue (see below).
- It was stated that Clements End Road was 14ft wide in places and that traffic congestion would increase.
- There was concern for road safety as a result.

- Several residents had reviewed the Transport Statement and disagreed with the information therein.
- The planning application shows a car park providing at least 25 car spaces. By default, this implies that there will be a large number of vehicular movements to/from the development if built.
- It was stated that the majority of vehicles going to or leaving the site would have to use Pedley Hill as Clements End Road (heading south) would not be suitable.
- There was a suggestion that the site should be accessed directly from Pedley Hill rather than Clement End Road, with perhaps an ancillary entrance/exit onto Clements End Road. There was broad support for this idea to be considered although the development site is some distance from Pedley Hill.
- The existing building/structures are relatively modest in scale and the proposed development is significant larger in size/location on the land.
- It was mentioned that the developer was wanting a larger number of stables on-site but that this had been reduced to 23 in the relevant application.
- Operational hours would need to be restricted beyond 8pm.
- The actual use was discussed and there was some confusion between the proposed use and concerns relating to competition events.
- There was concern about increased "horses" using the local road network and/or bridleway/footpath routes (which is currently an issue elsewhere in Studham).
- There was commentary on the (potential) positive economic benefit to the village.
- There were questions to what will happen to the other land which falls outside of the "red line". Is this to be used by horses, would the landscape/visual view change?
- Need to protect the current footpaths on-site (see below).

I attach in **Appendix 1** photographs of Clements End Road provided by one local resident showing the narrow road layout and the difficulty of larger vehicles passing each other.

I attach in **Appendix 2** a map showing the footpath networks on or around Clement End Farm.

(D) Planning Application Documents

We have reviewed all submitted papers for CB/21/01831/FULL and some of the relevant paperwork was shared during the "virtual" Planning Meeting.

As expected, there is significant paperwork attached to this planning application.

The Parish Council have reviewed the paperwork and comment on the following:-

Site/Location Plans

These are noted and show the development zone outlined in red; the whole site outlined in blue and the "middle field" outlined in yellow.

It does not show the current footpath network marked but demonstrates that the development zone is set back from Clements End Road.

Planning Statement [April 2021 – Briggs & Stone]

This documents confirms that the site, subject to the planning application, sits within the Green Belt, AONB and is in an AGLV.

It provides a useful summary of the "Horse" industry, and that the applicant currently runs a rented and successful small livery and training yard locally. The applicant has a requirement for larger premises which are not rented.

The pre-planning application feedback has led to a smaller, more compact scheme, comprising some 5,482 sq m in total (including a dwelling for the owner).

It confirms that inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in VSC, and VSC will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness (or other harm) is clearly outweighed by other circumstances.

It is noted that there is no specific reference to equestrian uses within the National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF").

Equestrian Needs Appraisal [Briggs & Stone - April 2021]

The Parish Council consider that the applicant's background; interest in horses and their current business operation is not relevant when determining this planning application.

We note the suggested conditions (on page 11) relating to the use of the proposed residential dwelling.

It is clear that CBC will need to consider this document and the information therein as required in a planning context. All the Parish Council will comment on is that there is much land in Bedfordshire which could be suitable for equestrian use which does not fall within the Green Belt; AONB or an AGLV.

Transport Statement [March 2021 = Cotswold Transport Planning]

The pre-planning advice is highlighted (CB/20/02195/PAPC) and this report is submitted to CBC to support the planning application following comments received as part of the pre-planning advice.

The Parish Council disagree that *"there are no transport reasons why the proposed development should not be granted planning permission"*.

Equally SPC consider that such reports need to be reviewed in context. The planning system unfortunately does not allow CBC to seek independent transport or highways advice and in our opinion, it is required here.

It is clear that Clements End Road is not sufficient to allow two vehicles to pass each other (including a lorry).

It is noted that the speed survey (see Paragraph 3.9) took place in November 2020 during the second national Covid-19 lockdown.

In Paragraph 3.23, the reports states that only four vehicles will be on-site at any one time but why are 25 car spaces planned and additional parking for horse boxes?

It is noted that it is considered that the busiest period of operation will be over the weekend, and that the expected vehicular trips generated is immaterial. Whilst the Parish Council are not experts in this field, we believe that any additional vehicular movements will adversely affect the safety along Clements End Road.

(E) Conclusions

These are as follows:-

Green Belt/AONB

Studham Parish Council considers that the proposed development is an inappropriate development in the Green Belt; AONB and an AGLV. Studham and the subject site falls within the Chilterns AONB and should be treated accordingly.

Very Special Circumstances

In accordance with the guidance contained within the revised NPPF document, due to its location within the Green Belt and AONB, the only way that the proposed development can be given planning consent is if there are relevant and valid VSC to justify the end development, which outweigh the harm and openness to the Green Belt.

Are there any?

Previously Developed Land ("PDL")

The Parish Council does not consider the land subject to this planning application (as outlined in red) is PDL.

It is noted that there are no photographs of the existing site and buildings within the planning application. Why not?

Residential Dwelling

Whilst it is noted that there is an argument to justify a residential dwelling as part of the development, the Parish Council notes that the developer secured planning for eight homes on the Clements End Farm site and if a residential home is required, perhaps the applicant could live on that housing development once constructed.

Remaining Land

The Parish Council is unclear as to the impact on and the use of the remaining land within the ownership of the developer. There is significant concern that whilst the "development zone" is relatively small in context to the land outlined in blue, the layout/feel of the existing agricultural land will be changed with new fencing and other man-made items.

Conditions

Should CBC be minded to grant planning consent for the proposed (or negotiated) proposal, the Parish Council consider that planning should only be granted subject to extensive conditions. Some of these are outlined above (such as trading hours; removal of any future Permitted Development; no further residential dwellings on any of the land outlined in blue and so on) but the Parish Council is happy to provide additional commentary as appropriate.

Highways

This is a key issue.

This is a matter that CBC have to review very carefully. At both the consultation and planning meetings (as outlined above), the existing road network with its limited width and configuration are considered by many local residents to be insufficient to allow an additional development off Clements End Road. The health and safety of local residents, drivers, cyclists and pedestrians is very important particularly as there is no pavement (or footfall) along Clements End Road).

The information in Appendix 1 is self-explanatory.

Finally, if the site is ultimately accessed off Pedley Hill, the Parish Council consider that the equestrian development should be moved to the field adjacent to Pedley Hill with the existing structures/buildings demolished

Summary

Taking into account all of the relevant issues, the Parish Council cannot support the planning application as submitted.

Providing the highway issue can be resolved, the Parish Council would potentially consider a scaled back development without the large indoor arena building as being suitable and appropriate for this site.

I trust the above commentary and conclusions are self-explanatory but should you have any queries or questions, please let us know.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Mark Poyner

Studham Parish Council
Chair of the Planning Committee

cc.

Cllr Kevin Collins – CBC
Cllr Eddie Perry – CBC
Cllr Bob Wilkin – SPC
Cllr Geoff Shute – SPC
Cllr Chrys Smith – SPC
Cllr Alan Wright – SPC
Cllr Lynne Smith – SPC
Cllr Mo Rashid – SPC
Mrs Julie Cooper – Clerk of SPC

Appendix 1

Photographs – Clements End Road



7.5 tonne lorry, simply cannot get passed. Then a bin truck appeared. Congestion quickly appeared behind, 12 vehicles in total. The Lorry had to reverse back into the driveway of 9/9a/11 Clements End to solve the problem, 2 cars ser already behind the lorry, one turned around and 1 remained. A gang of 10 cyclists cycled passed the reversing lorry.

Photo taken with the lorry just past 9/9a/11 Clements End Road, heading towards Gaddesden Row.



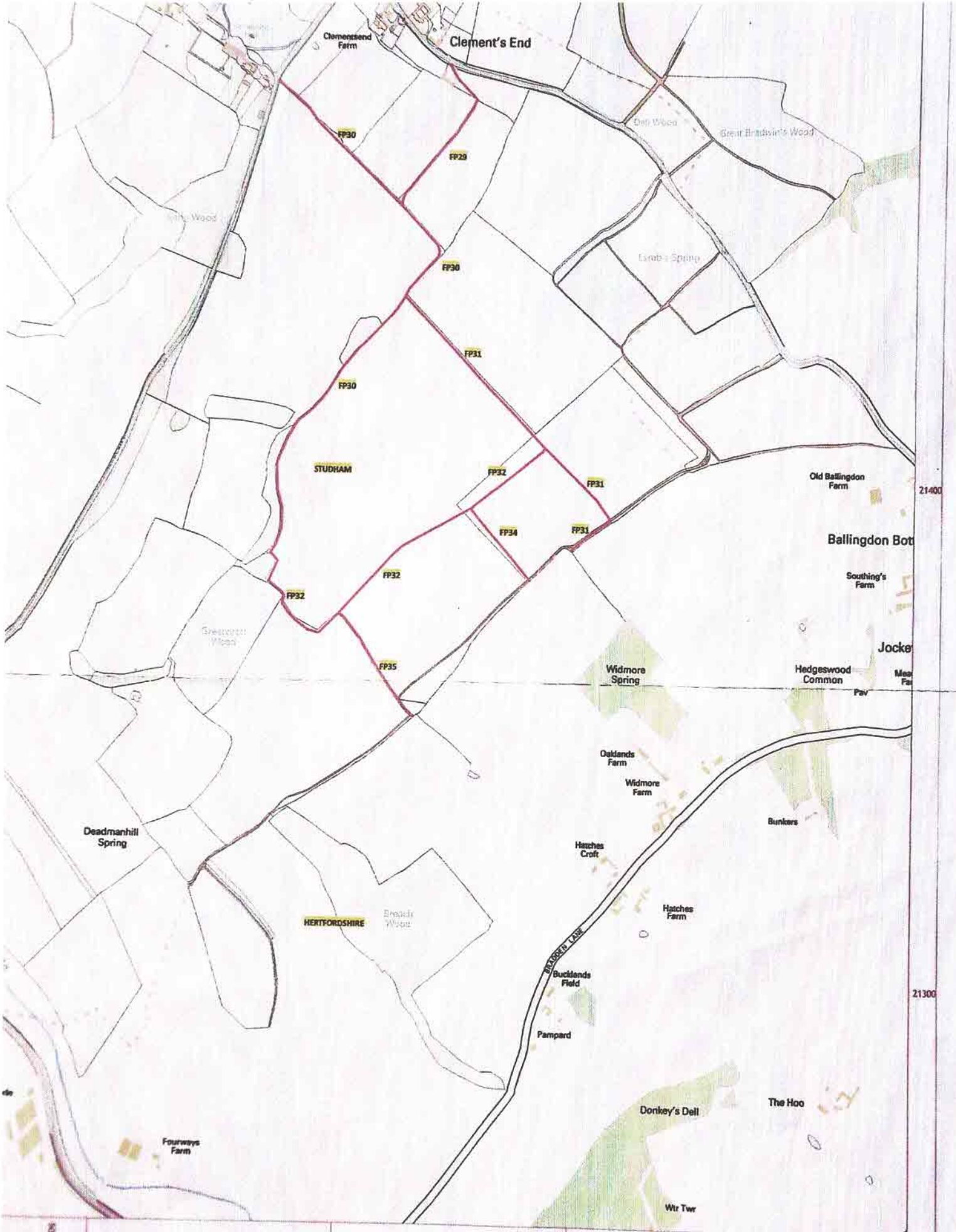
7.5 tonne lorry, again, a car and this lorry unable to pass. 4 separate cyclists swerved the congestion to pass the blockage.
Photo taken, lorry heading in Studham direction, outside 9/9a/11 Clements end Road



Bus service, the bus and vehicle unable to pass, the car reversed to a widening 50 yards behind, on the wrong side of the road.
Photo taken bus heading towards studham, 200 yards towards Gaddesden Road from 9/9a/11 Clements End Road.

Appendix 2

Footpath Map



Sites Common Land Showing Unique Common Land Reference Number commons@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk	Village Green Showing Unique Village Green Reference Number commons@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk	Permissive Path Parish Boundary
--	--	---

CB/21/01857/FULL

Sunny Ridge, Valley Road, Studham LU6 2NN

STUDHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council

Mrs Julie Cooper

28 Church Road

Studham

Bedfordshire

LU6 2QA

Tel: 01582 873453

email: clerk@studhamparish.co.uk

Eleanor Keep.
Planning Department.
Central Bedfordshire Council.
Priory House,
Monks Walk,
Chicksands,
Shefford,
Bedfordshire.

1st June 2021

E-mail to [planning @centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:planning@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Dear Eleanor,

Application No: **CB/21/01857/FULL**

Location: **Sunny Ridge, Valley Road, Studham. LU6 2NN**

Proposal: **Two storey side extension with additional dormer windows to front and rear, and single storey rear extension.**

Members of the Studham Parish Council have reviewed the above application documents online and duly considered the merits of this proposal.

The Councillors feel the proposal makes sensible alterations to the present structure improving on the layout and overall appearance of the property. There does not appear to be any impact on either of the neighbouring properties therefore the Parish Council have no material concerns.

In summary, the Councillors are happy that CBC Planning Team will determine as appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Cooper.
Clerk to Studham Parish Council.

Studhamparish.co.uk

CB/21/01941/FULL

28 Holywell Road, Studham LU6 2PA

STUDHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council

Mrs Julie Cooper

28 Church Road

Studham

Bedfordshire

LU6 2QA

Tel: 01582 873453

email: clerk@studhamparish.co.uk

Jade Moss
Planning Department.
Central Bedfordshire Council.
Priory House,
Monks Walk,
Chicksands,
Shefford,
Bedfordshire.

1st June 2021

E-mail to [planning @centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:planning@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Dear Jade,

<u>Application No:</u>	<u>CB/21/01941/FULL</u>
<u>Location:</u>	<u>28 Holywell Road, Studham. LU6 2PA</u>
<u>Proposal:</u>	<u>Single storey rear extension.</u>

Members of the Studham Parish Council have reviewed the above application documents online and duly considered the merits of this proposal.

It was noted that changes to the front dormer windows have already been undertaken, therefore the plans (current) as presented are in fact incorrect.

(Please see attached photograph of the front elevation showing the first-floor windows).

Following their considerations of the proposal, as presented the Councillors offered no material concerns but are uncertain whether the changes to the windows, as outlined above, ought to have planning consent.

In summary, the Councillors are happy that CBC Planning Team will determine as appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Cooper.
Clerk to Studham Parish Council.

Studhamparish.co.uk

CB/21/02169/FULL

34 Holywell Road, Studham LU6 2PA

STUDHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council

Mrs Julie Cooper

28 Church Road

Studham

Bedfordshire

LU6 2QA

Tel: 01582 873453

email: clerk@studhamparish.co.uk

Tomos Chenery
Planning Department.
Central Bedfordshire Council.
Priory House,
Monks Walk,
Chicksands,
Shefford,
Bedfordshire.

1st June 2021

E-mail to [planning @centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:planning@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Dear Tomos,

<u>Application No:</u>	<u>CB/21/02169/FULL</u>
<u>Location:</u>	<u>34 Holywell Road, Studham. LU6 2PA</u>
<u>Proposal:</u>	<u>Proposed single storey rear extension.</u>

Members of the Studham Parish Council have reviewed the above application documents online and duly considered the merits of this proposal.

The Parish Council has received written commentary from a neighbour with their concerns which were reviewed as part of the Councillors deliberations.

Following their considerations of the proposal, as presented, the Councillors were concerned that this application is for an extension to a new build which is as yet incomplete. The proposal lacks information regarding any dimensions for the extension which makes it difficult to put into perspective.

It was noted that whilst the proposed extension is at ground floor level, it is elevated and could potentially overlook both neighbours. These properties have rear gardens of a sloping nature and a raised terrace above the level of neighbours' gardens could give rise to privacy issues.

Studhamparish.co.uk

All of the above notwithstanding. the Parish Council offers no material concerns as such to the proposal but are anxious that CBC consider the size of the previous existing dwelling rather than the replacement when making calculations of percentage increase.

In summary, the Councillors are happy that CBC Planning Team will determine as appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Cooper.
Clerk to Studham Parish Council.