

Committee and date

South Planning Committee

9 December 2014

Development Management Report

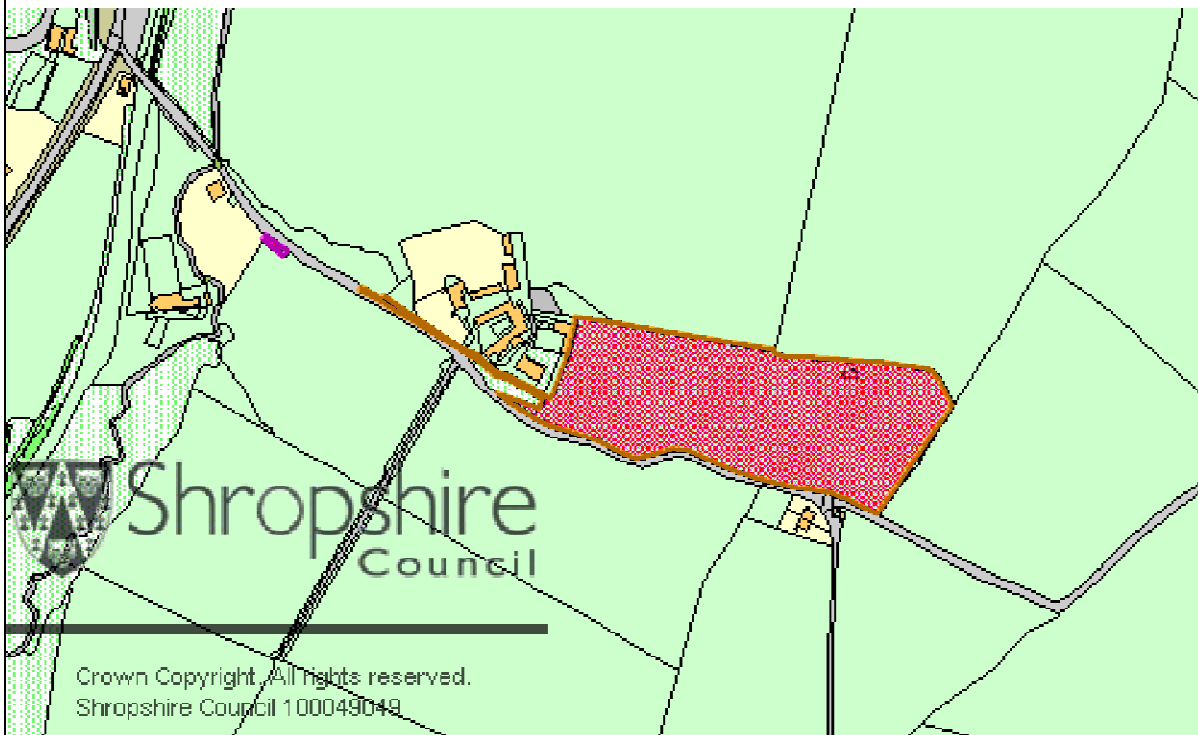
Responsible Officer: Tim Rogers

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Summary of Application

Application Number: 14/02127/FUL	Parish:	Much Wenlock
Proposal: Construction of an equestrian centre to include: main facilities building incorporating reception, offices, changing rooms, therapy room, toilets, boiler room, viewing area, stables, stores and indoor arena; outdoor manege; carriage track; paddocks; two field shelters; vehicle parking, package treatment plant; surface water attenuation pool and associated drainage; formation of access and highway improvements; and landscaping.		
Site Address: Bradley Farm Farley Much Wenlock TF13 6PE		
Applicant: Perry Riding, Driving & Vaulting Group		
Case Officer: Lynn Parker	email: planningdmse@shropshire.gov.uk	

Grid Ref: 363365 - 301381



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Contact: Tim Rogers (01743) 258773

Recommendation:- Grant Permission subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1.

REPORT

This application was deferred at the South Planning Committee of 14th October 2014 solely to enable further consideration to be given to highway issues in relation to access to and from the development site. Additional information in respect of these issues is now presented within this revised report from paragraphs 6.4.5 to 6.4.7.

THE PROPOSAL

- 1.1 This application seeks Full Planning Permission for the construction of an equestrian centre offering therapeutic riding, carriage driving and vaulting for disabled people, with the aim of also creating learning, training and volunteering opportunities in the community. It will include: a main facilities building incorporating a reception, offices, changing rooms, therapy room, toilets, boiler room, viewing area, stables, stores and indoor arena; outdoor manege; carriage track; paddocks; two field shelters; vehicle parking, package treatment plant; surface water attenuation pool and associated drainage; formation of access and highway improvements; and landscaping. There will be 22 car parking spaces, 21 disability parking spaces, 6 cycle spaces and an informal overspill area for up to 35 cars or 15 horse boxes.
- 1.2 The 73m in length x 30m wide x 8.85m high indoor riding school and standard dressage arena would take the form of a typical portal framed agricultural building with a lean-to. On the ground floor there would be: a log/wood pellet store, biomass boiler room, therapy room, mechanical horse room, changing places toilet, male and female toilets, changing and locker room, waiting area, lift, entrance lobby, office/reception, ground floor viewing area, dropping off area with canopy, canopy waiting area/tie up for ponies, mounting platform, pedestrian and vehicular access to the arena, 5 American barn style stables in the lean-to, tack/feed room and carriage store. On the first floor there would be a lift, stairs, viewing area, lobby and store.
- 1.3 The manege would be located to the east of the indoor school and arena and would measure 40 x 20 m². The carriage driving track would be located to the east of the manege and would measure 4m wide x 352m in length. Two field shelters would be located within the track, each measuring 6.5m wide x 14.2m in length, with a ridge height of 3.6m. The field shelters would be open fronted and would be used for the outdoor loose accommodation of horses within the paddock area.
- 1.4 A new 6m wide access would be formed off the public highway, along with two passing places between the site entrance and the A4169 Much Wenlock Road. A surface water attenuation pool would also be created to the east of the proposed new access, adjacent to the car park. Re-grading of levels within the site and landscaping are also proposed.
- 1.5 Proposed construction materials for the following buildings are:
 - Main building: red/orange brickwork, stained softwood (British Larch or similar) feather edged boarding, anthracite coloured profiled fibre cement sheeting and GRP roof lights, with two colour coated steel sliding doors

providing vehicular access to the indoor arena. All other doors would be painted hardwood window frames.

- Field shelters: steel portal framed construction, stained softwood vertical boarding walls and anthracite coloured profiled fibre cement sheeting roof with GRP roof lights and painted hardwood window frames.

- 1.6 In terms of boundary treatments, existing hedgerows would be retained, with small sections removed to allow access, visibility splays and passing places. It is proposed that existing hedgerows would be supplemented with native broadleaved hedging and trees along the north-western boundary between the main building and the manege and between the formal and overspill parking areas. Timber post and rail fencing is proposed around the paddocks/carriage track.
- 1.7 Site access would be tarmac/SMA bound surfacing for a minimum distance of 15m from the carriageway. Parking areas would be formed with a gap graded stone reservoir overlain by a geotextile membrane and Bodpave or similar, with an upper stone layer wearing surface.
- 1.8 Lighting would be bulkhead lanterns with less than 2% upward light output ratio and high pressure sodium fittings to the west and south elevations of the main building at a height of 2.6m and 3m.
- 1.9 Other sporting and recreational activities proposed would include disabled cricket and hawk flying. There would also be a mechanical horse and personnel lift within the main building. 5 full time and 1 part time employees are envisaged as a result of this application.
- 1.10 In addition to the Design and Access Statement, the following documents have been submitted in support of the proposal and are summarised below:

Heritage Statement and Heritage Impact Assessment by Richard K Morriss dated December 2013

Bradley Farm has four Listed Buildings though in two of these cases the listing extends to more than one structure. Their Grade II Listed status is a designation that reflects their architectural and historical significance on a national level. The other buildings within the farmstead are thus listed by curtilage and most of these also have sufficient intrinsic architectural and historical merit to warrant being considered 'non-designated heritage assets' under the auspices of the – the obvious exceptions being the derelict Dutch Barn (Building M) and several collapsing or collapsed ephemeral structures mainly dating to the later-19th or 20th centuries.

The individual buildings and the layout of the farmstead represent a continuous evolution of the farm over the past four hundred years or so – and also demonstrate the difficulties in upland areas of categorising either building materials, types or farm layouts. Excepting the timber-famed core of the farmhouse, the two main building materials are rubblestone and brick but there is no clear correlation between these two materials and the dates of the buildings built of them. The overall historic character of the farmstead is

thus one of organic change over several centuries, fossilised in the surviving buildings and the layout.

The purpose of a heritage impact assessment (HIA) as initially outlined in government guidance is to inform the planning decisions that need to be made when considering a proposal that could have some impact on the character or setting of a heritage asset. Because of their proximity to the farmstead, these proposals could impact on the setting of the Listed Buildings of the farmstead, those Listed by curtilage, and their general layout and setting. The degree of impact and potential harm needs then to be assessed under the guidelines of the NPPF.

The proposals do not involve changes to the fabric of the farmyards buildings or to the spaces between them, and so cannot be seen to have any harm on these aspects of the heritage values of the site. Instead, the main potential heritage impact will be only be on the setting of the farmstead.

The proposed new indoor school is necessarily fairly large in footprint to suit its purpose, though it is not particularly tall. It will be little different to other large contemporary farm buildings deemed necessary for modern agriculture, and is of a type that could well have been needed at Bradley Farm were it to remain a farm. If that were the case, such a building would probably have been required to ensure that its agricultural facilities and accommodation could be modernised sufficiently to meet modern standards of efficiency and animal welfare. Such an extension and modernisation of the farmstead would have fitted into the historic and organic character of the farmstead.

The main visual difference between a standard agricultural development and the proposed riding school will be the necessary parking areas next to the lane – though this is balanced by the fact that there is no need for hardstanding for large agricultural machinery, new silos, storage yards etc. that would have arisen had the new facility been agricultural.

Because of its positioning, the new facility will be partially screened by other buildings from the main Listed and non-designated heritage assets within the farmstead. There will, of course, be no impact on their historic fabric or the layout of the farmstead itself.

The key elements of the setting of the historic buildings are their relationships with the other historic buildings in the farmstead and the development of those relationships. Because the new development is sited to the south-east of the historic farmstead, those key elements will not be altered.

The broader setting of the farmstead within the landscape will inevitably be altered by the creation of the new riding school, but the degree of any perceived harm is, on balance, considered to be fairly minimal – especially as this will be, in effect, a building of agricultural character.

In this case, the benefits of the scheme are quite obvious. The provision of a modern and much needed riding for the disabled facility in a rural but not

remote setting is to be welcomed on two counts.

First and foremost is the benefit it will bring to all those who use it – both the riders and their families and friends. The school will provide such riders with an equality of opportunity with their able-bodied peers, from those who will simply benefit from the unique relationship between horse and rider to those who are, or could become, elite equestrians.

Secondly, it will ensure the continuation of a rural and animal based activity at Bradley Farm and hopefully be the springboard for a gradual and related regeneration of the older farm buildings. The full range of benefits, and the weight to be attached to them in the overall planning balance, is addressed in more detail within the Haston Reynolds Planning Statement accompanying this application.

The impact of the proposed development is, for the reasons outlined above, is not considered significant given the character of the site and its setting. It is a working agricultural landscape with industrial intrusions – mainly in the form of the limestone quarries – and deliberately excluded from the Shropshire Hills AONB.

The proposals will not significantly detract from those characteristics and, to reiterate, the limited visual impact of the development on the farmstead would not '*significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits*' of the proposed scheme. In conclusion, it is clear that the proposals would not cause *substantial* harm to the heritage assets or their setting, as defined in the 1990 Planning Act and subsequent related judgements.

Landscape Appraisal by Allan Moss Associates Ltd dated April 2014

Summarises the effects on Landscape Character as follows:

1. The proposed development would result in the net loss of approximately 2.2ha (5.4 acres) currently in agricultural use. Approximately 1.1ha of this would be occupied by buildings, hardstandings, access, parking and soft landscaping. However, 1.0ha would be retained in open use as horse paddocks and a carriage track.
2. The proposed development will involve the introduction of a new equestrian building into the landscape. Whilst this will be relatively large in scale compared with the existing farm buildings, it will be comparable in scale to many modern farm buildings.
3. The new building and associated facilities would be grouped with the existing farm buildings and the overall appearance would be similar to many other farm complexes with modern farm buildings. As such, it would not be out of place in this rural setting.
4. Whilst some existing sections of hedgerow will be affected by the new access and passing places there will be a net gain in traditional native hedgerows as a result of the new planting along the northern boundary.

5. External lighting would be kept to a minimum. This would consist primarily of amenity lighting at the entrances and exits to the building and would be comparable to the level of lighting around a conventional farm complex.

6. Overall, the proposed development would be comparable in scale and appearance to a modern farm complex and it is the sort of use that one might expect to find in the countryside. The site sits relatively low in the landscape and it is reasonably well contained visually by the topography and woodland cover in this part of the Estate Farmlands. It would therefore be capable of accommodating the proposed development without causing an unacceptable effect on the character of the wider landscape.

Full recommendations for landscape mitigation and enhancements are also set out.

Phase 1 Environmental Survey by Greenscape Environmental Ltd dated May 2014

This report determines that the site has low potential/foraging site for bats and the potential for the disturbance of nesting birds in hedgerows is also low provided that foliage removal is appropriately timed. The site is not a suitable habitat for water vole, dormouse, and Great Crested Newts. There was no evidence on site of badgers, barn owls or amphibians and as the on site pastures are all grazed there is limited habitat for reptiles.

Recommendations are made relating to enhancements for bats, the created of an attenuation pond and tree/hedge planting.

Transport Statement by The Hurlstone Partnership dated May 2014

In order to assist the transport review, traffic surveys were undertaken on the lane to establish baseline traffic flows and speeds. Analysis of the traffic movements associated with the proposed development revealed that up to 194 vehicle movements (in and out combined) per day and in the order of 30 movements per hour could arise as a result of the proposed development.

When added to the observed traffic flows using the lane, it was established that the cumulative total remained approximately two thirds below the level at which designation as a Quiet Lane, where shared use between vehicles and other users is acceptable. It is therefore concluded that whilst the development would result in increased traffic using the lane, it would not result in unacceptable conflict between motorised traffic and other users when compared with national guidance. This is an important consideration as the lane forms part of the long distance bridleway Jack Mytton Way, along which pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians could be expected to be encountered.

The hourly capacity of the lane under peak conditions was also assessed and it was found that significant delays should not be experienced even if no additional passing places were provided. However, in recognition of the fact that the development will statistically increase the likelihood of vehicles travelling in opposite directions meeting along the lane, and in accordance with the recommendation of the pre-application advice from the Highway Authority, it is proposed to provide two additional passing places in order to ensure the potential

for delay is minimised.

The effects of the proposed development on the local highway network have been assessed and the residual cumulative impact was not found to be severe. As a result, in accordance with national planning policy, the proposed development should not be refused on highway grounds.

Flood Risk Assessment by aba consulting dated March 2014 Amended (May 2014)

Concludes that:

The proposed development is within flood zone 1 and at a significant height above the brook and connecting ditch, and hence the risk of flooding from watercourse are not considered significant.

The surface water runoff from the site will be controlled and discharged at a rate of 5l/s to the existing ditch which feeds the brook. The surface water run-off from the existing site currently is routed to the brook, and the development will not result in increased discharges to the brook in storm event.

Any discharges to the existing ditch will be at a connection point below the existing farm buildings and hence pose no risk to the properties. The system will give a flood route for extreme events, beyond the 1 in 100 year event to bypass the properties.

The drainage system utilises SUDs principles with balancing ponds and permeable parking areas to encourage natural infiltration and evaporation.

The proposed buildings are not at risk from flooding and the development will not generate run offs which increase flood risk below the site.

Lighting Statement by Abacus Lighting Ltd dated 20th February 2014

This document outlines the proposed external lighting, its type and positioning.

- 1.11 During the course of the application and mainly in response to public concerns, additional plans have been provided relating to improvements to the junction of the lane with the A4169, and clarifications to the many questions raised have been offered in letters submitted both from the agent and the Perry Riding Group as the applicants.
- 2.0 SITE LOCATION/DESCRIPTION
- 2.1 The application site occupies an area of 2.2 hectares and is located immediately to the east of Bradley Farm in the settlement of Farley, approximately 1.4 miles north-east of Much Wenlock, just off the A4169 Much Wenlock Road. The farmhouse and barns are all separately Grade II listed.
- 2.2 The farmhouse is thought to date back to the mid 17th Century, however it may have earlier elements. The buildings have group and individual interest, illustrating changing agricultural practices up until the mid 20th Century. The buildings are situated in a slight depression below the main Much Wenlock to Buildwas Road.

2.3 The site is surrounded by Grade 3 agricultural land currently being used for sheep grazing. The disused Bradley Quarry and a wooded area lie to the north of the site, Downs Cottage one and two are located to the south of the site, with a pond to the north-west. The site is bounded by mature hedgerows to the south, east and north-east, with timber post and wire fences to the north-western boundary. The Shropshire Way runs through the farm to the north of the site and the Jack Mytton Way runs along the adjacent public highway; neither cross through the application site itself.

3.0 REASON FOR COMMITTEE DETERMINATION OF APPLICATION

3.1 Applications where the Parish Council submit a view contrary to officers based on material planning reasons the following tests need to be met:

- (i) These contrary views cannot reasonably be overcome by negotiation or the imposition of planning conditions: and
- (ii) The Area Manager of Principal Planning Officer in consultation with the Committee Chairman or Vice Chairman and the Local Member agrees that the Parish Council has raised material planning issues and that the application should be determined by Committee.

4.0 COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIONS

4.1 - Consultee Comments

4.1.1 Much Wenlock Town Council (04-06-14) – Object on the following grounds:

- The site is within close proximity of a 21 acre chemical factory complex producing fertiliser products. The owner of the factory has previously been prosecuted for polluting the atmosphere with toxic chemicals and is currently in dispute with the Environment Agency.
- There are highways issues in relation to access to and from the development site.
- The site is on a known and designated Rapid Response Catchment Area, and the development proposals will increase the risk in relation to flooding both fluvial-pluvial and groundwater at the site and surrounding area.
- The Council has severe reservations about the size of the development

4.1.2 SC Drainage (02-06-14) - The drainage details, plan and calculations could be conditioned if planning permission were to be granted in relation to surface water drainage, package treatment plant, management of surface water run-off and finished ground levels. Standard advice supplied in relation to the encouragement of measures listed to minimise the risk of surface water flooding.

SC Drainage (18-06-14) - Further to our previous comments on the above development proposal it has been brought to my attention that we have not taken into account the requirements of the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan. In particular, policy RF.2, the requirement for new development to reduce flood risk within flood sensitive areas. We can deem this development to be within a flood sensitive area which means in practice that, from a flood risk perspective, the development must discharge surface water at lower rate than that which currently discharges from the undeveloped site. This can, if appropriate, be dealt with via a condition.

4.1.3 SC Highways (05-06-14) - No objections. The highways issues pertaining to this scheme have been examined in the Transport Statement included in the application and SC Highways concur with the conclusions drawn from it that the local highway network can accommodate the vehicle movements likely to be generated by the scheme. The unclassified road leading from the A4169 to the site is of sub-standard width for two way traffic but with the proposed passing places it will be satisfactory to allow safe traffic movements along it. The existing site access is sub-standard in terms of layout and visibility but these matters have been address in the design submitted for its improvement. Conditions recommended in relation to the new access point and the provision of passing places.

SC Highways (26-09-14) - Further to Highway Comments previously submitted it is requested that the following additional comments are taken into consideration when determining the above mentioned application;

Junction improvements with the A4169

The existing junction with the A4169 is located on a steep gradient and does not provide sufficient width to accommodate 2 vehicles to pass. Concerns have been raised with regard to vehicles turning into the access road to Bradley Farm conflicting with emerging vehicles, and the potential conflict that may occur if vehicles with restricted rear visibility are forced to reverse back on to the A4169. In response to concerns raised with regard to the junction of A4169. The applicant has now submitted plan PB2897-SK001 outlining proposed junction improvements. Shropshire Council as Highway Authority would welcome the proposed junction improvements which should reduce any potential conflict at the junction.

It is recommended that prior to commencement of works full engineering details are submitted and approved; and any proposed junction improvements should be constructed prior to occupation.

Event Traffic Management Plan

The submitted Transport Statement indicates that potentially the proposed equestrian centre will generate a number of vehicle movements on occasions when events are held, such as Modern Pentathlon, Dressage Competition, Mounted Games and Carriage Driving Training. Whilst it is acknowledged that the majority of vehicles will be entering the centre prior to an event and will only be exiting once the event has finished, it is recommended that an 'Events Traffic Management Plan' is submitted and approved prior to occupation of the development. The Traffic Management plan should include reference to any proposed restriction of vehicle movements and any additional event signing that may be required and advanced visitor information.

Conditions recommended in relation to these points and to on site construction.

4.1.4 SC Conservation - Overall it is considered that the benefits of the proposed development would outweigh any harm to the heritage assets.

The main arena building will have an eaves height of 4.55m and a ridge height of 8.85m. The site is currently uneven and slopes up towards the East, it is proposed

that the building will be cut into the slope and the ground to the East re-profiled. This will help to minimise the height difference between the new building and adjacent existing farm buildings.

It is considered in the Heritage Impact Assessment that the proposed development could be seen as a further evolution of the farmstead. The proposed indoor arena, while of a large scale continues the development of the farmstead whilst being in a position that is not highly visible from the farmhouse.

The Heritage Impact Assessment that accompanies the application concludes that 'the limited visual impact of the development on the farmstead would not 'significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits' of the proposed scheme. In conclusion, it is clear that the proposals would not cause substantial harm to the heritage assets or their setting, as defined in the 1990 Planning Act and subsequent related judgements.' This assessment is concurred with.

- 4.1.5 SC Ecology – Conditions recommended in relation to bats and landscaping (replacement hedging), informatives in relation to bats, Great Crested Newts and nesting wild birds.
- 4.1.6 SC Rights Of Way - Footpath 57 Much Wenlock, part of the Shropshire Way, runs close to the development site but does not appear to be affected by the proposal. However the Jack Mytton Way, a promoted long distance bridleway, runs along the County Road past the site which is likely to subject to an increase in traffic. Action should be taken to reduce any conflict there may be between horse riders, cyclists and walkers using the long distance routes and vehicular traffic.
- 4.1.7 SC Public Protection (15-07-14) – It has been noticed that several objections in relation to proximity to an area where chemicals are stored. This is the case in an area to the north west of the proposed site about 250m away. However, due to the location of stored chemicals (underground), and the relief of the land should there be any pollution incident in future it is not expected to affect the land proposed by the current location.

Also noted are comments referring to serious ongoing air pollution problem. We have no issues in the area with regards to air quality in relation to national pollutant threshold limits defined in legislation. Those referring to air pollution could be alluding to a potential odour from a businesses close by. However, this tends to be seasonal and no nuisance has ever been proved. Since the issue being brought up in 2009 there has only been one instance where an officer smelt a faint odour at a residents property. Recently our case on this issue has been closed and the business involved has cooperated fully with our investigation and we expect this to continue in future if necessary. It is not expected that the odour will affect the development in any way and therefore do not consider it necessary to make comment on this formally as no justified nuisance has ever been witnessed.

SC Public Protection (26-09-14) – it has been brought to my attention the fact that when I last responded to you in relation to this application I had noted that in the area to the north west of the site tanks were located underground and that this is not in fact the case. There are in fact a significant amount of above ground storage

tanks on site as well as the underground tanks.

With regard to this it is still the opinion of SC Public Protection that the development site is not likely to be affected by any pollution event that may occur on site due to the distance separating the site and the existing operations to the north west. As the storage and use of chemicals on site is controlled by other existing legislation the National Planning Policy Framework states that the planning process must assume that these control regimes will operate effectively. As a result the planning process must assume that operations to the north west will be effectively controlled as not to cause pollution to the surrounding area and therefore the proposed development area will not be affected by operations outside of its control.

In conclusion it is the opinion that this development will not be affected by nearby operations and therefore there is no SC Public Protection objection in principal to the development.

4.1.8 Shropshire Fire And Rescue – No comment

4.1.9 SC Archaeology - submitted comments as the October Committee Agenda was going to publication, have subsequently carried out a site visit and submitted revised comments as follows:

Background to Recommendation

The development proposal involves land adjacent to the existing farm complex at Bradley Farm, Much Wenlock on which there are no recorded heritage assets. However, LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) data and vertical aerial photography indicate the presence of a complex of earthwork features within the development boundary that includes enclosures, platforms, possible holloways, field boundaries and complex ridge and furrow relationships indicative of a possible shrunken medieval settlement.

A Heritage Statement submitted in support of the application (Mercian Heritage Series No. 684) provides a detailed analysis of the listed and other buildings within the complex at Bradley Farm and assesses the impact of the proposed development on those heritage assets. It makes no reference to any earthwork remains located within the wider development boundary. Additionally a Landscape Appraisal (Allan Moss Associates April 2014) makes no reference to any complex historic landscape features within the development boundary.

A site visit was undertaken on Wednesday 8th October 2014 which confirmed the presence of a number of surviving earthwork remains (positive and negative) that may relate an earlier phase of occupation/utilisation of the site.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 141 states: “Local planning authorities should make information about the significance of the historic environment gathered as part of plan-making or development management publicly accessible. They should also require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to

record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.”

Recommendation

In view of the above and in line with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 141, I recommend that a programme of archaeological work be made a condition of any planning permission for the proposed development.

An appropriate condition is specified.

4.2 - Public Comments

4.2.1 A total of 133 public representations have submitted in relation to this proposal, 116 of which are in support including comment from the British Equestrian Federation, and 17 objections including Much Wenlock Civic Society, Much Wenlock Flood Action Group and CPRE South Shropshire. The representations are available to view in full online, however are summarised as follows:

4.2.2 Support:

- o There is no other facility like it in the West Midlands and it will enable so many more disabled individuals to access the kind of activities that are proven to promote good health and well being.
- o This would result in reduced waiting lists for RDA activities and the provision of four new jobs, which could increase over time.
- o Excellent opportunities to learn new skills volunteering, work experience placements and learning pathways for aspiring coaches.
- o The centre will initially operate with eight ponies and horses belonging to the Perry RDA Group currently operating from outdoor premises to the North of Shrewsbury. This Group has a waiting list of participants, currently has to cancel one third of sessions per annum due to bad weather, is unable to carriage drive from home premises due to the very busy roads and is facing an end of lease situation by mid 2015.
- o Enormous positive effect on the lives of children and adults, improving their confidence, social skills, ability and physical well-being.
- o Opportunity to expand activities on offer.
- o Enable the group to continue its work in the long term which would not be possible without this facility.
- o Perfect location for county-wide, Midlands and Wales access, with good road links to Telford and Shrewsbury.
- o Positive impact on Much Wenlock, bringing much needed people to shops.
- o Would build on the outstanding Olympic Heritage of Much Wenlock. The Wenlock Olympian Games promotes participation by all and this facility will develop and enhance this by offering sporting activities for a range of people and would enable organisers to introduce para-dressage to the games.
- o Scope for therapeutic work with disabled members of the armed forces.

- o Much Wenlock Town Council have ignored their own pre-planning protocols they did not engage when approached to discuss the project before the application was submitted.

- o The Town Clerk confirmed that the application arrived on the day of the scheduled Council Meeting, at which it was discussed. This implies that they had not fully looked at all the documents on this detailed application.
- o I was told by the Clerk that I could not speak at the next meeting as the matter was closed and would not be further discussed.
- o As a resident of Much Wenlock I have not received 'the right to discuss an application to seek an informal opinion with a view to gain support from elected council'

British Equestrian Federation

Horse riding is the 8th biggest sport in the country (Sport England Active People) offering a physical activity outlet that is extremely attractive to women and girls; one of the most difficult sectors of the community to engage in sport and physical activity. Equestrian also offers a great outlet for people with a disability and Perry Riding, Driving and Vaulting Group has an established Riding for Disabled Group.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs through the Strategy for the Horse Industry for England and Wales estimates the industries economic force a £3.4billion, employing 250,000, with 2.4million riders and 11 million with interest in the sport. It states The industry makes a hugely important contribution to the economy and social fabric of many communities.

Perry Riding, Driving and Vaulting Group offers a sporting environment that provide equestrian activity to a diverse proportion of local community with a large focus on the disabled community across Shropshire and surrounding counties. It draws riders and volunteers from the across a large area who are fully engaged in the Equestrian Group. There are not many other community sporting outlets of this type across Shropshire (and surrounding counties) and Cavalier project has the potential to vastly expand the limited offer that the Perry Riding, Driving and Vaulting Group currently is able to offer.

This Project has the potential to provide sports participation for hundreds of regular riders. It is in a prime location to maximise participation and can have an impact on physical and mental wellbeing of many residents both from immediate and wider Much Wenlock location.

We respectfully request that you take the above information into consideration in your decisions and we urge you strongly to consider all that could be gained by supporting this development.

4.2.3 Objection

Planning Policy and Guidance

- o The Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan states that the nationally recognised rural landscape around the area should be protected.
- o Policy RF2 of the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan states that the overall level of flood risk must be reduced not only on the site but elsewhere – in this case Farley.

Traffic and Road Safety

- o Concerns regarding dangerous access to the site from the A4169 and Farley

- Road junction, particularly given the large operation proposed.
- o Existing road safety issues with the narrowness of the lane would be exacerbated and it would be unable to cope with an increased volume of traffic, especially large vehicles. There has already been at least one fatality on this stretch of road.
 - o Conflict with local residents' cars and agricultural machinery and heavy vehicles.
 - o Conflict with the Jack Mytton Way
 - o Bridge in the lane is inadequate for repeated use by large vehicles.
 - o The provision of 'passing places' is not an adequate solution as would be readily determined by inspection.
 - o Issues with speeding motorists on surrounding roads.
 - o Concerns regarding the lack of space allocated for car, bus and lorry parking.
 - o Bridge in lane inadequate for use by large vehicles

Design, Appearance and Materials

- o This new industrial scale building does not appear to be disguised in any way and will be totally out of keeping, much larger than an agricultural shed or barn.
- o Inappropriate scale of the building proposed for an the open countryside with unrestricted views, its impact on the local environment and the inevitable expansion of activities which will cause noise, light and traffic pollution are of concern.
- o If such a development is to take place, surely it is an opportunity to create an architecturally significant structure which is in keeping with the beautiful locality into which it will be built.
- o Descending the Farley Road from Wenlock, the building will be a blot on the landscape.
- o Materials used should be in keeping with the natural environment.

Nature Conservation

- o Concerned about the impact on the landscape of such a large development. This is an AONB which attracts many visitors throughout the year. The proposed development will be in full view of the Shropshire Way, This is national heritage and a public amenity and is walked throughout the seasons by many people.
- o To be financially viable it is obvious that beyond its charity use it will have to become a commercial enterprise. This will increase the impact on the locality and inevitably result in the inclusion of a wider range of outdoor pursuits and activities in an AONB and an important habitat for plants, insects and animals.
- o Concerns regarding disturbance to wildlife, biodiversity, trees, hedges and geological conservation.
- o This site is a Surface Water Nitrate Vulnerable Zone as designated by the Environment Agency. Horse manure will have to be carefully removed and stored as if it is not managed properly it can cause pollution and harmful build up in the soil. Poorly located or managed heaps of manure can also look unsightly in the landscape and create a nuisance for neighbouring land

owners and people using adjoining paths.

Pollution

- o Proximity of the site within 250m of the Landowner LLQ Fertiliser Factory/Chemical Works, where dangerous chemicals and toxic waste materials are stored
- o There have been at least two breaches of the Environment Agency's guidance relating to the processing and safe storage of chemicals in recent years
- o Serious ongoing air pollution issue that HSE and SC have been unable to solve for more than 5 years. Encouraging activities involving vulnerable people next to such a dangerous site is recklessly irresponsible.
- o Noise pollution with tannoys etc. and noise will be carried with the prevailing winds, disturbing the peace and tranquillity.
- o Light pollution in open countryside.
- o Danger because of incidents in the history of this former WW2 aviation fuel depot which has many large underground tanks – e.g. explosion and pollution.

Flooding

- o There are drainage issues and the Flood Risk Assessment does not consider the wider catchment that the buildings sit within.
- o Concerns regarding nearby springs and times of heavy rainfall, when the lane becomes a torrent forming a second flow into the brook parallel to the ditch. The development is bound to result in additional water runoff. Nearby properties situated below the site and lower down the valley, e.g. Farley Mill, Rowan Cottage, The Cottage all suffer from flooding and the increased hard surfaces would only exacerbate these issues.
- o Proximity of site to Farley Brook and unsuitability of land for grazing and riding as it is basically an upland bog for most of the year.

General

- o If and when consent is granted, there will presumably be nothing to stop able-bodied riding sessions which may be far more intensive and for longer periods than those quoted in the planning application. Once established, there are no reassurances that there won't be an expansion and extension.
- o Riding for the disabled will depend to an extent upon public funding and volunteers. In both of these it will be in competition with other nearby riding-for-the-disabled establishments, for instance The Wyke, and Berriewood. If this is successful it will be probably be at the cost of other centres' failure.
- o I wish there had been local consultation and discussion about the proposed development which is going to impact on the lives of local people profoundly.
- o We understood, when the project was first mentioned, that the aim was to provide a modest 'RDA centre' comprising mainly an indoor school; the proposed development appears to be much in excess of this intention.
- o Given the national shortage of housing, an alternative use of the site for housing.
- o Planning Creep and impact on activities beyond the site boundary, e.g. the enjoyment of the people who use the local lanes, e.g. Shropshire Way and Jack Mytton Way.

- o The 'Heritage Statement' describes the Bradley Farm buildings, but does not make any reference to the archaeology lying across the field.
- o There are enormous aviation fuel tanks in the Old Bradley Quarry formed in the Second World War which were covered with topsoil to conceal them from Luftwaffe bombers.

Much Wenlock Civic Society, 11/06/14 – The Much Wenlock Civic Society is concerned to ensure that the full impact of this large complex development should be evaluated prior to approval either being recommended or approved. This is important because of the scale of the proposed development, its sensitive location and its potential impact on drainage of the site into the Fraley Brook. We therefore urge that a prior and detailed environmental impact evaluation should be required of the developer to aid well informed decision making.

South Shropshire Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), 17/07/14 – Object on the following grounds:

- o There are sufficient concerns regarding access, drainage difficulties, landscape, heritage and protected areas and noise to endanger the laudable aims and threaten the success of such an ambitious project.
- o This is a major development of some 3000m² of floor space on an area of 2.2 hectares, with the proposal that the centre be sited in open greenfield countryside close to the Shropshire Hills AONB. The NPPF aims to conserve and enhance biodiversity, whilst Policy CS6 requires all developments to "protect and enhance the natural environment and open countryside", so, whilst we recognise and applaud the desire to create such a RDA project, we feel that this is the wrong site for such a large and challenging application.

Access and transport:

- o A new vehicular access to Bradley Farm is proposed from the adjacent country lane. It should be noted that access from the A4169 into the lane is tight and potentially dangerous for heavy and slow moving disability vehicles, minibuses and horse boxes. Once onto the narrow lane there is a steep drop, a bend and currently only room for single vehicles.
- o As a 'major development' the plans for greatly increased future use of lorries, horse boxes, minibuses and cars to and from Bradley Farm require a full Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan – rather than the present assessment that fails to assess the impact of such an increase in traffic on challenging junctions and narrow lanes. The proposed visibility splays and two passing places barely seem adequate for large, heavy vehicles – Policy CS 8 of the Core Strategy and Paragraph 32 of the NPPF.

Drainage:

- o The submitted Flood Risk Assessment suggests that drainage and flooding in this area pose no threat or problem. This contrasts starkly with statements given by objectors living as near neighbours who cite that natural springs exist, waters drain into Farley Brook, and that the area has a history of recent flooding – twice in seven years. Also, nearby Rowan Cottage has been flooded many times in the last twenty years – as known by Shropshire

Council.

- o It also begs the question as to why the submitted FRA fails to include mention of the Much Wenlock IUDMP findings or any detailed assessment of the current baseline flood risk position. The proposed attenuation pond also lacks detail as to depth and size to manage the increased surface water runoff this development would create...Policy CS 18.
- o Finally, one local objector whose house has been flooded twice in seven years band who has kept horses for many years states that the proposed paddock land is 'certainly not suitable for grazing, let alone riding horses or carriage driving as it is basically an upland bog for most of the year'.

Landscape:

- o The area is sandwiched (and overlooked) between two ridges. Our understanding is that the initial RDA planning proposal was a more modest scheme that may have blended better into the rural landscape but this now major development threatens to scar this tranquil rural landscape by the construction of a 'supermarket-type' structure measuring 80 metres in length, over 31 metres wide and almost 9 metres high; two field shelters, car, lorry and horse box parking; a new vehicular access and the construction of passing places along the lane approach.
- o The applicant makes claim about the suitability of this site but CPRE suggests that greater sensitivity to the local environmental impact is needed. When viewed from publicly accessible vantage points such as the A4169, the local ridgelines, the Jack Mytton Way, Footpath 57 (part of the Shropshire Way, which cuts through the site) it is important to remember that the application should avoid harm to landscape character and quality, and to views from public rights of way and the surroundings of settlements, and not change the experience of users of locally popular rights of way – let alone encourage a risk of conflict between horses, cyclists, walkers and vehicles.

Noise:

- o The protection of the existing quality of life and amenity of an area is reinforced through CS policy 8 and by paragraph 123 of the NPPF which requires that planning decisions should try to 'protect areas of tranquillity which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise – and are prized for their recreational and amenity value.
- o The proposals to introduce such business/ancillary activities as dressage competitions, modern pentathlons, disabled cricket, archery, mounted games and carriage driving will introduce transport, competitors and spectators... and much increased noise.

Conclusions:

CPRE South Shropshire is supportive of the aims of this application but concludes that this is a commercial application whose visual impact and land suitability will be the key factors in assessing the level of acceptability of the proposal. We feel that this is a laudable application but object to it as being in the wrong place... as far as access and transport, drainage, landscape and noise are concerned.

Much Wenlock Flood Action Group– Object to the application as it stands because there are flood issues for the properties downstream that need to be more fully

addressed.

Alliance Planning – Objecting on behalf of local residents (unspecified number) on matters relating to ecology, transport, lighting, noise, drainage and the construction related impacts that they feel have not been satisfactorily dealt with in the application submission. This 5 page letter is available to view in full online.

5.0 THE MAIN ISSUES

- o Principle of development
- o Design, scale and character
- o Visual impact and landscaping
- o Access/highway safety
- o Drainage/flooding
- o Impact on neighbours/residential amenity
- o Pollution

6.0 OFFICER APPRAISAL

6.1 Principle of development

6.1.1 LDF Core Strategy Policy CS5 states that development proposals on appropriate sites which maintain and enhance countryside vitality and character will be permitted where they improve the sustainability of rural communities by bringing local economic and community benefit, particularly where they relate to, amongst other criteria, sustainable rural tourism and leisure and recreation proposals which require a countryside location. LDF Policy CS16 reinforces this with a requirement to deliver high quality, sustainable tourism, cultural and leisure development, which enhances the vital role that these sectors play for the local economy, benefits local communities and visitors, and is sensitive to Shropshire's intrinsic natural and built environment qualities.

6.1.2 The proposed equestrian centre offering therapeutic riding, carriage driving and vaulting for disabled people, with the aim of also creating learning, training and volunteering opportunities in the community is considered to fulfil the above criteria within Policies CS5 and CS16 in that it:

- o Is a new leisure facility that is appropriate to its location, and enhances and protects the existing offer in Shropshire.
- o Will promote connections between visitors and Shropshire's natural and historic environment through active recreation
- o Will allow engagement with Shropshire's landscape
- o Is appropriate in terms of its location, scale and nature and will retain the existing natural features.
- o Is an accessible location, close to the Key Settlement of Much Wenlock, and will be an added asset to it.

6.1.3 Under paragraph 28 of the NPPF economic growth in rural areas is supported in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. It indicates that a strong rural economy can be promoted by

supporting the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas by well designed new buildings. Sustainable leisure developments in rural areas that benefit communities, visitors and businesses are also supported.

6.1.4 In accordance with national and local policy, the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan Policy EJ7 states that, 'Proposals for recreational and tourism activities and facilities will be supported providing that the siting, design and scale of the development conserves the quality of the parish's built and natural environments including its townscape and surrounding countryside'. It is also noted that noisy activities and sports which will impact on the peace and tranquillity of the parish are considered inappropriate for its rural setting, however, it is not felt that this proposal falls into that category as discussed below along with the appropriateness of the site.

6.1.5 Therefore, for the reasons given above, the principle of the development is acceptable.

6.2 Design, scale and character

6.2.1 Policy CS6 of the Shropshire Council LDF Core Strategy states that development should conserve and enhance the built, historic and natural environment and be appropriate in its scale and design taking account of local character and context. LDF Core Strategy Policy CS17 is also concerned with design in relation to its environment, but places the context of the site at the forefront of consideration i.e. that any development should protect and enhance the diversity, high quality and local character of Shropshire's built, historic and natural environment and does not adversely affect the visual, ecological, geological, heritage or recreational values and functions of these assets, their immediate surroundings or their connecting corridors.

6.2.2 Good quality design is also an aspiration of the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan. Policy GQD2 requires that all development is designed to a high quality and to reinforce local distinctiveness. Additionally it should:

- o Have regard to the principles set out in the Much Wenlock Design Statement.
- o Make efficient use of land while respecting the density, character, landscape and biodiversity of the surrounding area.
- o Be suitably designed for the context within which they are set.
- o Retain existing important landscape and natural features.
- o Ensure that the scale and massing of buildings relate sympathetically to the surrounding area.
- o Create safe environments addressing crime prevention and community safety.
- o Use traditional and vernacular building materials where such treatment is necessary to respect the context of the development concerned.

6.2.3 The NPPF summarises the requirement for good design as being 'a key aspect of

sustainable development, indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people'. However, it is also noted that although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people, places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

- 6.2.4 The scale of the development is considered to be acceptable in line with the above policies. The proposal incorporates all the elements required for the use of the site up front rather than obtaining planning permission for each of the main sections separately, therefore the complete site can be assessed as a whole. Proposed new buildings are located adjacent to the existing built environment, the indoor school building having been scaled back from the original aspirations in response to site specific characteristics, including its location within a Rapid Response Catchment Area. The footprint of this building at approximately 2,800m² is comparable to a building designed to accommodate around 200 cows, and a sixth of the footprint of a typical modern chicken rearing unit. It is recognised that modern farm buildings tend to be larger and are now designed to serve and accommodate larger scale farming practices with increased mechanisation and the advancement in understanding of the agricultural sciences. This size of the indoor school building is therefore commonplace within the rural environment in Shropshire and the UK. The land level development such as the manege and carriage track, which project further into the fields to the east of the built environment, are also not overly large for purpose, are low level/low visual impact features and are widely found within the countryside landscape. They are well placed on the site's periphery to allow the mass of the equestrian centre to be visually associated with the existing agricultural buildings. Therefore, the relative positioning of the proposed elements and their varying scales is felt to be well conceived to fit into the topography of the site, have reference to the usual pattern of farmstead expansion, and to be logical for their intended uses.
- 6.2.5 Whilst the site does not fall within the AONB, the applicant has been keen to adopt recommendations on design and materials for large buildings contained within the Shropshire Hills AONB Agricultural Building Design Guide. The existing buildings are largely traditional in appearance, however their character represents one of organic change over several centuries which is not an uncommon feature of farmsteads as many have continually evolved up to the present day. Working farmsteads consequently often comprise an eclectic mix of buildings around a central yard constructed in a variety of materials. Some of the existing traditional materials and styles at Bradley Farm, have been utilised in the external design of the proposed indoor school building such as low brickwork walling with feather-edged larch cladding above where it is adjacent to the existing building, along with typical modern agricultural features such as projecting eaves, fibre cement roof sheeting and glass reinforced plastic rooflights to minimise reflection. Field shelters will also be clad with larch and have Anthracite coloured fibre cement roofs to match the main building.

Prior to submission, a modern curved roof structure was considered for the indoor school building, but rejected as the orientation of the building provided an ideal

south facing surface for the future mounting of photovoltaic panels. Therefore a typical portal framed shape became the more obvious solution and one which represents the modern proportions of many dairy units with cubicle or loose yard buildings.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development appropriately continues the evolution of the farmstead through its design, scale and appearance and efficient use of land which is suited to the rural context in which it is set.

6.3 Visual impact and landscaping

6.3.1 The proposed development is presented as a further evolution of the farmstead, with its minimal visual impact on the surrounding landscape justified through the submission of comprehensive details within the submitted Design and Access Statement, Heritage Statement and Landscape Appraisal. It is felt that the development would be comparable in scale and appearance to a modern farm complex of the sort expected in the open countryside. It sits relatively low in the landscape, is reasonably well contained by the topography of the site and screened by existing woodland cover which will be enhanced by the net gain in traditional native hedgerows as a result of new planting along the northern boundary. This site is therefore capable of accommodating the proposed development without causing an unacceptable effect on the character of the wider landscape.

6.3.2 Shropshire Council Conservation concur with the information provided in the submitted Heritage Statement that the farmstead would not 'significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposed scheme' as the proposals do not involve changes to the fabric of the Listed farmyard buildings or to the spaces between them. The main potential heritage impact will be only on the setting of the farmstead, however because the new development is sited to the south east of the historic farmstead, the relationship between the key historic elements within the setting and the layout of the farmstead itself will be unaltered. The broader setting of the farmstead within the landscape will inevitably be altered by the creation of the new riding school, but the degree of any perceived harm is, on balance, considered to be fairly minimal – especially as this will be, in effect, a building of agricultural character.

6.4 Access/highway safety

6.4.1 Following the submission of details outlining works to the junction of the lane with the A4169, it is considered that approval of the proposed development will now secure highway improvements beyond the standard required.

6.4.2 Highways issues pertaining to this scheme have been examined in the Transport Statement included with the application and SC Highways agree with the conclusion drawn from it that the highway network can accommodate the vehicle movements likely to be generated by the scheme. Proposed passing places to be constructed in the lane between the junction and the site were indicated as part of the submitted application following prior advice from SC Highways and these are felt satisfactory to allow safe traffic movements up to the site.

6.4.3 In response to public concerns raised regarding vehicles turning into the access road to Bradley Farm conflicting with emerging vehicles turning, and the potential

conflict that may occur if vehicles with restricted rear visibility are forced to reverse back on to the A4169, new plans have been submitted outlining proposed junction improvements which are welcomed as they should reduce any potential conflict at this junction.

6.4.4 The existing site access is sub-standard in terms of layout and visibility but these matters have been address in the design submitted for its improvement. It is therefore felt that conditions can be applied requiring full engineering details in relation to the proposed junction improvement and the submission of an Event's Traffic Management Plan prior to the commencement of development, and the provision of passing places and the new access as proposed prior to occupation of the site in order to successfully manage highway safety.

6.4.5 Following the deferral of this application by the South Planning Committee on 14th October 2014, the SC Highways Officer took part in an on site meeting in which it was agreed that the applicant's planning consultant provide additional information in support of the proposal as follows:

1. Junction with A4169

- Details of advance warning signs.
- Proposed improvements to junction and extent of highway boundary defined.
- Junction gradient drawing.
- Consultation with the owner of no.19 adjacent.

2. Road widening

- Consideration given to scope for road widening.
- Potential for additional passing places.

3. Additional Information

- In relation to eventing and types of vehicles and movements
- Any details of existing arrangements when events occur
- An Event Management Plan

6.4.6 Revisions and additional information have therefore been submitted in response, which includes:

1. Junction with A4169

Drawing no. H0184-03-A3-PL-17 showing the proposed positions of advance warning signs. One is proposed on each approach mounted below the existing triangular warning sign and flag signs mounted back to back opposite the junction. Subject to signage size the preferred wording will be 'Cavalier Equestrian Centre', however a condition requiring submission and approval of signage and wording is expected.

Proposed improvements to the junction of the access road with the A4169 on drawing no. H0184-03-A1-PL-14 A, showing the existing carriageway area and a proposed new access splay and retaining wall. Additionally, the area of Highway Authority ownership and title boundaries are clarified.

Junction gradient drawing no. H0184-03-A3-PL-16 showing the proposed reduction to the existing gradient.

Copy of an email sent to the adjacent neighbours (Mr Sandhu and Ms Coates) attaching the revised/new drawings and informing them of the outcome of the site meetings.

The applicant's have voluntarily offered to finance these improvements to the junction to make the development acceptable in terms of traffic impact. These improvements will:

- Further improve visibility to the north and south.
- Greatly improve both the existing layout and the vehicular capacity of the junction.
- Significantly reduce the potential likelihood of vehicles having to wait on the A4169 before turning.
- Provide space for larger vehicles waiting to pull out of the lane onto the A4169.
- Significantly improve the radii of the junction to the south.
- Be undertaken within the existing adopted highway boundary.
- Significantly reduce the potential for delay and conflict at the junction when compared with the existing situation.
- Provide directional signage within the highway boundary

SC Highways have suggested a condition to agree the exact details of the proposed signage (now inserted as condition no.11)

2. Road Widening

Drawing nos. H0184-03-A3-PL-10 B and H0184-03-A3-PL-13 have been submitted indicating an extra passing place closer to the junction with the A4169 in addition to the two already proposed closer to the site entrance.

Whilst SC Highways had only requested two passing places initially, the applicant's have offered to finance a third which would:

- Reduce the distance between the A4169 junction and the first passing place on the lane.
- Reduce the distance between locations where vehicles may pass along the western part of the lane.
- Improve inter visibility between available passing places.
- Further increase the capacity of the lane itself.
- Provide an additional passing place between vehicles and other road users.

3. Additional Information

Horses and ponies kept at the Centre will be used for the vast majority of riding and driving lessons/sessions. As a consequence the majority of vehicular movements will not involve horse trailers or horse boxes. However it is intended to prepare and agree a Management Plan with SC Highways for those occasions when events are to be held that warrant formal traffic management. Meetings and discussions are imminent in this respect, the outcome of which will be reported at Committee, and a

suitable condition formulated if required.

6.4.7 It is therefore considered that the proposal now offers betterment to the wider highway network over and above that normally required. Highway safety will be significantly improved and benefit the wider use of the road system for both visitors and the local community.

6.5 Drainage/flooding

6.5.1 Policy RF2 of the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan states that, 'All development in flood sensitive areas will be designed and constructed to reduce the overall level of flood risk both to the use of the site and elsewhere when compared to current use'. Therefore in order to comply with this policy in addition to the NPPF and LDF Core Strategy, this development must discharge surface water at a lower rate than that which currently discharges from the undeveloped site to reduce the flood risk.

6.5.2 The following drainage details have been confirmed as part of this application:

- o Surface water run-off from the site is currently un-attenuated and given the soil type and topography, this may be contributing to the risk of flooding of properties located downstream.
- o The submitted scheme would provide on-site storage and attenuation for a 1 in 100 year storm event plus 30% for climate change (i.e. to cater for climate change over the next 100 years). This level of attenuation is greater than that specified by national requirements and would serve to reduce the risk of flooding downstream when compared with the current un-attenuated situation.
- o The outflow of water from the attenuation pond will be restricted to just 5 litres/second and this will be routed to the brook via an existing drainage ditch so as to further reduce the risk of flooding to properties elsewhere.

6.5.3 Therefore given that this proposal actually seeks to reduce flood risk through new development both on site and elsewhere specifically in accordance with Policy RF2 of the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan, the existing flood risk will be lessened and the overall situation improved. It is felt that the methods of drainage and attenuation proposed can be satisfactorily managed be conditions.

6.6 Impact on neighbours/residential amenity

6.6.1 Any impact on neighbouring properties or residential amenity is not in the case of this proposal brought about by the usual overbearing or overlooking concerns, but from environmental concerns such as flooding, traffic, and visual appearance of the development within the landscape. These issues have been discussed in this report under separate headings.

6.6.2 It is considered that both the application itself and its supporting documents offer a honest and comprehensive picture of the proposed development which have clearly worked through and found solutions to the issues raised, and betterment in the case of flood risk and highway concerns. Additionally, it is confirmed that the Perry Group has no intention of using the proposed centre for noisy activities such as clay pigeon shooting, quad biking or hen and stag weekends, and there are no proposals to affix tannoys to the exterior of any building. Common sense dictates

that such activities would not be compatible with an equestrian centre, let alone one that provides for disabled service users that require placid horses and ponies. It is not felt that resulting noise levels from the proposed use will be unusual enough within this countryside site to cause disturbance alien to the rural landscape.

6.7 Pollution

6.7.1 Shropshire Council Public Protection via two emailed comments have confirmed that the area of concern in relation to potential soil and air pollution which is approximately 250m to the north west of the proposed development site and contains both underground and above ground chemical storage, is not considered to be a risk. Should there be any pollution incident in the future it is not expected to affect the land proposed for the current development due to the distance involved and other legislation controls which are in place.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 It is considered that this proposal is not contrary to adopted policies as it will provide for the successful functioning of leisure/disabled activities which require a countryside location. The Perry Group are a well established body who have been searching for such an appropriate site to provide for the increasing demand for their equestrian work with the disabled for some time. Due to its location close to the town of Much Wenlock (to which it could be an asset), and to an 'A' road, but within a rural site more advantageous to its use, and that it encompasses an area of existing unused built environment, this location is felt to be wholly sustainable. The proposed structures are of a scale and design which are appropriate to their rural environment and will not adversely affect the existing site or the surrounding countryside. Betterment will be achieved to the drainage and risk of flooding at the site and to adjacent highway safety.

8.0 Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

8.1 Risk Management

There are two principal risks associated with this recommendation as follows:

- o As with any planning decision the applicant has a right of appeal if they disagree with the decision and/or the imposition of conditions. Costs can be awarded irrespective of the mechanism for hearing the appeal, i.e. written representations, hearing or inquiry.
- o The decision may be challenged by way of a Judicial Review by a third party. The courts become involved when there is a misinterpretation or misapplication of policy or some breach of the rules of procedure or the principles of natural justice. However their role is to review the way the authorities reach decisions, rather than to make a decision on the planning issues themselves, although they will interfere where the decision is so unreasonable as to be irrational or perverse. Therefore they are concerned with the legality of the decision, not its planning merits. A challenge by way of Judicial Review must be made a) promptly and b) in any event not later than three months after the grounds to make the claim first arose.

Both of these risks need to be balanced against the risk of not proceeding to

determine the application. In this scenario there is also a right of appeal against non-determination for application for which costs can also be awarded.

8.2 Human Rights

Article 8 gives the right to respect for private and family life and First Protocol Article 1 allows for the peaceful enjoyment of possessions. These have to be balanced against the rights and freedoms of others and the orderly development of the County in the interests of the Community.

First Protocol Article 1 requires that the desires of landowners must be balanced against the impact on residents.

This legislation has been taken into account in arriving at the above recommendation.

8.3 Equalities

The concern of planning law is to regulate the use of land in the interests of the public at large, rather than those of any particular group. Equality will be one of a number of 'relevant considerations' that need to be weighed in Planning Committee members' minds under section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are likely financial implications if the decision and / or imposition of conditions is challenged by a planning appeal or judicial review. The costs of defending any decision will be met by the authority and will vary dependent on the scale and nature of the proposal. Local financial considerations are capable of being taken into account when determining this planning application – insofar as they are material to the application. The weight given to this issue is a matter for the decision maker.

10. Background

Relevant Planning Policies

Central Government Guidance:
National Planning Policy Framework

Core Strategy and Saved Policies:
CS5 Countryside And Green Belt
CS6 Sustainable Design And Development Principles
CS8 Facilities, Services And Infrastructure Provision
CS13 Economic Development, Enterprise And Employment
CS16 Tourism Culture And Leisure
CS17 Environmental Networks
CS18 Sustainable Water Management
D6 Access And Car Parking

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RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

None relevant

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

- Design And Access Statement dated May 2014
- Heritage Statement and Heritage Impact Assessment by Richard K Morriss dated December 2013
- Landscape Appraisal by Allan Moss Associates Ltd dated April 2014
- Phase 1 Environmental Survey by Greenscape Environmental Ltd dated May 2014
- Transport Statement by The Hurlstone Partnership dated May 2014
- Flood Risk Assessment by aba consulting dated March 2014 Amended (May 2014)
- Lighting Statement by Abacus Lighting Ltd dated 20th February 2014
- Agent Response Letter To Issues/Objections dated 24th September 2014.
- Perry Group Response To Issues Raised Within The Letter Of Shropshire Council dated 12th August 2014, received 24th September 2014.
- Agent Email dated 24th November 2014

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Cllr M. Price

Local Member

Cllr David Turner

Appendices

APPENDIX 1 - Conditions

APPENDIX 1

Conditions

STANDARD CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 (As amended).

2. The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved plans and drawings.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and details.

CONDITIONS THAT REQUIRE APPROVAL BEFORE THE DEVELOPMENT COMMENCES

3. No built development shall commence until samples of all external materials including hard surfacing, have been first submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approval details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the development is satisfactory.

4. No development approved by this permission shall commence until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping and these works shall be carried out as approved. The submitted scheme shall include:

- Planting plans, including wildlife habitat and features (e.g. Pond)
- Written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment)
- Schedules of plants, noting species (including scientific names), planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate. Native species used to be of local provenance (Shropshire or surrounding counties)
- Details of trees and hedgerows to be retained and measures to protect these from damage during and after construction works
- Means of enclosure
- Hard surfacing materials
- Minor artefacts and structures (e.g. furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signs, lighting)

Reason: To ensure the provision of amenity and biodiversity afforded by appropriate landscape design.

5. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and to a reasonable standard in accordance with the relevant recommendations of appropriate British Standard 4428:1989. The works shall be carried out prior to the

occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the timetable agreed with the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants that, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced with others of species, size and number as originally approved, by the end of the first available planting season.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a reasonable standard of landscape in accordance with the approved designs.

6. No development shall take place until a scheme of foul drainage, and surface water drainage has been submitted to, and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be completed before the development is occupied.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory drainage of the site and to avoid flooding.

7. Prior to commencement of the development, details of how the proposed surface water drainage system accords with Policy RF2 of the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan must be submitted for approval.

Reason: To ensure that the development will reduce the overall level of flood risk both to the use of the site and elsewhere when compared to current use.

8. No development approved by this permission shall commence until a contoured plan of the proposed finished ground levels have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that any surface water flows are managed on site. The discharge of any such flows across the adjacent land would not be permitted and would mean that the surface water drainage system is not being used.

9. Prior to the commencement of the development, full engineering details of the proposed junction improvements as detailed on drawing nos. H0184-03-A1-PL-14 A and H0184-03-A3-PL-16 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to the development hereby approved being brought into use.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory means of access to the highway.

10. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:

- the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors
- loading and unloading of plant and materials
- storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development
- the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate
- wheel washing facilities
- measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction

- a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works

Reason: To avoid congestion in the surrounding area and to protect the amenities of the area.

11. Prior to the commencement of the development full details of the proposed advanced warning and directional signage as detailed on drawing HO184-03-A3-PL-17 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to the development hereby approved being brought into use.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory means of access to the highway.

12. No development approved by this permission shall commence until the applicant, or their agent or successors in title, have secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI). This written scheme should provide for a pre-construction recording comprising archaeological topographic survey of the earthwork complex and evaluation comprising targeted trial trenching based on the findings from the topographic survey with sufficient documentary research to inform those processes and provision for further mitigation should proved necessary. The written scheme shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works.

The initial recording and evaluation may conclude that further archaeological work may be necessary to ensure appropriate preservation by record is achieved consistent with the significance of the remains and the content of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason: The area is of archaeological potential and it is important that any archaeological features and finds are properly recorded.

CONDITIONS THAT REQUIRE APPROVAL DURING THE CONSTRUCTION/PRIOR TO THE OCCUPATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT

13. Prior to the erection of any external lighting on the site a lighting plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained for the lifetime of the development. The submitted scheme shall be designed to take into account the advice on lighting set out in the Bat Conservation Trust booklet Bats and Lighting in the UK.

Reason: To minimise disturbance to bats, a European Protected Species.

14. The development hereby approved should not be brought into use, until an Event Traffic Management Plan has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the duration of the development, unless any variations are agreed in writing by the Local Highway Authority.

Reason: To avoid congestion in the surrounding area and to protect the amenities of the area.

15. The access shall be constructed in accordance with the approved drawing number H0184-03-A1-PL-09 prior to the development hereby approved being first brought into use.

Reason: To ensure the formation and construction of a satisfactory access in the interests of highway safety.

16. The three passing places along the unclassified highway between the site entrance and the A4169 shall be constructed in accordance with the approved drawing numbers H0184-03-A3-PL-10 B, H0184-03-A3-PL-11 and H0184-03-A3-PL-13 prior to the development hereby approved being first brought into use.

Reason: To ensure the formation and construction of satisfactory passing facilities for traffic travelling in opposite directions on the approach road to the site in the interests of highway safety.

CONDITIONS THAT ARE RELEVANT FOR THE LIFETIME OF THE DEVELOPMENT

17. No sound amplifying equipment or speaker system which would produce noise outside any of the buildings shall be used in association with the development hereby approved without the consent in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the amenities of properties in the locality

18. Notwithstanding the provisions of Town and County Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking or re-enacting that order with or without modification) no floodlighting shall be installed at the site without the express planning permission first being obtained from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the locality.

Informatives

1. Where there are pre commencement conditions that require the submission of information for approval prior to development commencing at least 21 days notice is required to enable proper consideration to be given.
2. Your attention is specifically drawn to the conditions above that require the Local Planning Authority's approval of materials, details, information, drawings etc. In accordance with Article 21 of the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010 a fee is required to be paid to the Local Planning Authority for requests to discharge conditions. Requests are to be made on forms available from www.planningportal.gov.uk or from the Local Planning Authority. The fee required is £97 per request, and £28 for existing residential properties.

Failure to discharge pre-start conditions will result in a contravention of the terms of this permission; any commencement may be unlawful and the Local Planning Authority may consequently take enforcement action.

3. If your application has been submitted electronically to the Council you can view the relevant plans online at www.shropshire.gov.uk. Paper copies can be provided, subject to copying charges, from Planning Services on 01743 252621.
4. The advice of Shropshire Council Drainage is attached for your information
5. All species of bats found in the UK are European Protected Species under the Habitats Directive 1992, the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2010 and the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

If a live bat should be discovered on site at any point during the development then work must halt and Natural England should be contacted for advice.

6. Great Crested Newts are protected under the European Council Directive of 12 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (known as the Habitats Directive 1992), the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

If a Great Crested Newt is discovered on the site at any time then all work must halt and Natural England should be contacted for advice.

7. Where possible, trenches should be excavated and closed in the same day to prevent any wildlife becoming trapped. If it is necessary to leave a trench open overnight then it should be sealed with a closefitting plywood cover or a means of escape should be provided in the form of a shallow sloping earth ramp, sloped board or plank. Any open pipework should be capped overnight. All open trenches and pipework should be inspected at the start of each working day to ensure no animal is trapped.
8. On the site to which this consent applies the storage of all building materials, rubble, bricks and soil must either be on pallets or in skips or other suitable containers to prevent their use as refuges by wildlife.
9. The active nests of all wild birds are protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (As amended). An active nest is one being built, containing eggs or chicks, or on which fledged chicks are still dependent.

All clearance, conversion and demolition work in association with the approved scheme shall be carried out outside of the bird nesting season which runs from March to September inclusive

Note: If it is necessary for work to commence in the nesting season then a pre-commencement inspection of the vegetation and buildings for active bird nests should be carried out. If vegetation cannot be clearly seen to be clear of bird's nests then an experienced ecologist should be called in to carry out the check. Only if there are no active nests present should work be allowed to commence.

10. In determining the application the Local Planning Authority gave consideration to the following policies:

Central Government Guidance:
National Planning Policy Framework

LDF Core Strategy Policies:
CS5 Countryside And Green Belt
CS6 Sustainable Design And Development Principles
CS8 Facilities, Services And Infrastructure Provision
CS13 Economic Development, Enterprise And Employment
CS16 Tourism Culture And Leisure
CS17 Environmental Networks
CS18 Sustainable Water Management

Bridgnorth District Local Plan 'Saved' Policies:
D6 Access And Car Parking

The Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan 2013 - 26

11. In arriving at this decision the Council has used its best endeavours to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner to secure an appropriate outcome as required in the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 187.