AZ URBAN STUDIO

Ivy Farm,
West Yatton, Yatton Keynell, Chippenham
SN14 7EW

Formation of new vehicle access drive for Ivy Farm from the A420 and associated landscape works

Design and Access / Planning Statement

AZ Urban Studio Limited
2 John Street
London
WC1N 2ES

T +44 (0)20 7234 0234
www.azurbanstudio.co.uk

AZ URBAN STUDIO

Formation of new vehicle access drive for Ivy Farm from the A420 and associated landscape works

Ivy Farm,
West Yatton, Yatton Keynell,
SN14 7EW

Client:

Mr. Christian Gläsel

	Author:	Reference:	AZ2229
		Status:	Submission
Name:	Martin Harradine BA MA MSc MRTPI	Date:	14.06.23
Position:	Director		

martin@azurbanstudio.co.uk
www.azurbanstudio.co.uk

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This combined Design & Access / Planning Statement has been prepared by AZ Urban Studio on behalf of our client, Mr. Christian Gläsel ('the Applicant'), in support of an application for full planning permission for a new vehicle access at Ivy Farm, West Yatton, Yatton Keynell, Chippenham SN14 7EW ('the Site'), with the following description of development ('the Development'):

"Formation of new vehicle access drive for Ivy Farm from the A420 and associated landscape works"

1.2. The Development is proposed to address existing problems for large vehicles accessing Ivy Farm, as explained further in this statement, and follows pre-application discussions with officers of Wiltshire Council as Highway Authority.

1.3. The purpose of this statement is to set out the need for the Development and the considerations that have shaped the proposals submitted, and to assess the proposed development in the context of planning policy, as well as other relevant and best practice guidance and any other material considerations.

1.4. The application for full planning permission has been prepared having regard to the Wiltshire Council planning application validation requirements list and comprises the following:

- Application Form and Ownership Certificates
- CIL Form 1
- Site location plan, existing and proposed site plans (prepared by Paul Halford)
- Highways drawings (prepared by Badingham)
- Design and Access / Planning Statement (this document) (prepared by AZ Urban Studio)
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (prepared by Stark Ecology)
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (prepared by Bosky Trees)

2. THE SITE / SURROUNDINGS AND THE NEED FOR A NEW ACCESS

2.1. Ivy Farm falls within the Wiltshire Council area. Previously, the area was part of North Wiltshire District Council before that authority became part of the amalgamated Wiltshire Council. It is located within the civil parish of Yatton Keynell, and just within the eastern extent of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

2.2. Ivy Farm extends to 45ha in total land area and provides extensive equestrian facilities for the owners who compete in a range of equestrian events both within the UK and abroad. The farmhouse (Grade II listed) is located at the western part of the site, and to the east of the house is extensive stabling, yards and a manege. The land at Ivy Farm is generally flat and is well enclosed by mature boundary planting and small areas of woodland.



Image: Aerial photograph showing the Ivy Farm land (part of, extends further to north)

2.3. The entirety of the Site is located within Flood Zone 1 according to the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning, meaning that there is a low / very low probability of flooding for the site. The land forming the Site is generally level paddock land, subdivided by a series of timber fenced enclosures.

2.4. The Applicant uses a 26 tonne horse lorry to transport horses to and from Ivy Farm, and it is this large vehicle, together with other typical large agricultural vehicles associated with land management and hay / feed delivery etc. that prove problematic accessing the premises via the existing public highway.

Access difficulties

2.5. Ivy Farm is currently accessed from Yatton Keynell Road, via Upper Castle Coombe Road which runs north/south, connecting to the A420 approximately 300 metres to the south of the Ivy Farm entrance. Upper Castle Coombe Road is subject to a 7.5t weight restriction (except for access), which highlights the unsuitability for large vehicles such as those required. There are no footways or street lighting. There are two key issues associated with larger vehicles accessing Ivy Farm.

2.6. Firstly, upon leaving the A420 and turning right / north into Upper Castle Coombe Road there is a relatively steep and sharp incline in the carriageway, which causes the horse lorry used by Applicant (or vehicles towing trailers) to 'bottom out' at the rear, damaging the vehicle and the carriageway surface. Great care needs to be taken to avoid serious damage to the vehicle, which requires the junction to be negotiated at very low speeds. This type of slow movement of a large vehicle turning across a major road subject to national speed limit also raises highway safety concerns. There are clear signs of damage to the surface of the carriageway from this type of grounding.



Image: Entry to Upper Castle Coombe Road from A420 – note weight restriction and 'Unsuitable for Large Vehicles' warning sign, narrow width and no footway

2.7. Upon leaving the A420, the highway condition is narrow single-vehicle-width lanes with steep hedged banks and / or dry stone walls. The 'triangle' where Upper Castle Coombe Road meets Yatton Keynell Road is also characterised

by historic dry stone walling and narrow carriageway. Finally, the narrow (listed) gate piers to Ivy Farm provide a further final challenge upon entry and require a straight approach / exit for larger vehicles. These highway conditions make vehicle access conditions for anything other than cars and small vans difficult, and to access Ivy Farm with a horse lorry requires a complex series of turns and reversing within the carriageway to be able negotiate the 'triangle' and then enter Ivy Farm at a straight angle to avoid the historic gate piers. This situation again results in unsafe movements in the highway and regular damage to the verges and drystone walling of the triangle.



Image: Upper Castle Coombe Road at the triangle – example of large vehicle having difficulties with the road width, witnessed during site visit

2.8. In summary the concerns regarding the existing access to Ivy Farm for the existing equestrian uses are:

- Vehicle and carriageway surface damage at the A420 junction
- Highway safety associated with the necessary caution at this junction for large vehicles
- Highway safety and inconvenience associated with the multiple turns and movements required to negotiate 'the triangle' and the narrow historic gated entrance to Ivy Farm for large vehicles, or when vehicles meet (see image)
- Risk of damage to the verges / walls / gate piers that comprise the historic environment at Ivy Farm entrance

2.9. The Development proposed has been formulated to directly remedy these ongoing concerns.



Image: Approach to Ivy Farm, with the triangle on the left, Ivy Farm entrance gates on the right



Image: Entrance gates to Ivy Farm – note narrow width and historic gate piers

3. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT – DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

3.1. A series of options to achieve improved large vehicle access to Ivy Farm were considered by the project team, as summarised below:

a) Modify carriageway gradient at junction with A420 – this is a major engineering undertaking and would require extensive remodelling of a significant length of Upper Castle Combe Road to achieve the required gradient. The second area of concern further north at the entrance would remain. *DISCOUNTED.*

b) Modify 'the triangle' and gates to Ivy Farm to facilitate large vehicle movements. Whilst the land is within the Applicant's ownership, removing large sections of dry stone wall and demolishing / relocating the historic (and listed) entrance gate piers to Ivy Farm House would cause unacceptable harm to the heritage assets engaged. *DISCOUNTED.*

c) Create new access from Upper Castle Combe Road into Ivy Farm. This would not address the issue of the junction with the A420, and would require extensive removal of well established hedgerow to achieve visibility splays. *DISCOUNTED*.

d) Create new access direct from A420. This option has the benefit of avoiding all areas of existing movement difficulties. An area was identified east of the Upper Castle Combe Road junction where the gradient into the Site is minimal, no significant trees or vegetation are present, and sufficient visibility splays can be achieved. *PURSUED.*

3.2. Pre-application engagement was carried out with officers of Wiltshire Council Highways team to further test the principle of establishing a new access for Ivy Farm from the A420.

3.3. A site meeting was held in October 2022 with the project highways consultant Anthony Setter (Badingham Ltd) and Nicola Tilley (Highway Development Control Officer, Wiltshire Council) present. The feedback received by email from Nicola Tilley on 14th October 2022 set out the following:

Thank you for providing me with further detail in regard to the access proposals on site this week. I have discussed this further and would be happy to accept a new access onto the A420 in the location we discussed provided it would achieve

the required visibility splay at the access and a forward visibility for the right turning vehicles from the A420. If it can be shown that this would be a betterment in terms of the existing junction, alongside the removal of the grounding issue and access through a weight restricted lane, then that would work in your clients favour. This would be an acceptable location for access from a highways perspective and I cannot comment further with regard to the opinions of other officers within the planning consultation process.

3.4. Following the positive response above from Wiltshire Council highways officer, further assessment of other relevant considerations including ecology, trees, drainage were carried out to inform design development.

3.5. The following points summarise the key design attributes of the proposals:

- Location selected as lowest impact in terms of trees / vegetation removal, combined with workable gradient into the Site;
- Junction designed by Badingham to achieve all necessary highways requirements to achieve a safe and convenient junction for the intended vehicle size;
- Proposed access designed to DMRB standards. Unobstructed visibility provided to 2.4m x 215m suitable for a 60mph speed limit;
- Proposed access will be low-trafficked, low speed, occasional movements;
- Advance signing of the new access can be provided on the A420 if the Local Highway Authority wish;
- Drainage strategy formulated to ensure no additional surface water enters the public highway;
- The initial section of the new access will be in a hard surfaced bound material to prevent the migration of loose material onto the adjacent highway – future design to meet Local Highway Authority Section 278 requirements.
- Internal gate to open into the site and at a distance from the highway to enable a long vehicle/HGV to store (if gate is closed) without overhanging the adjacent highway.
- Access drive route internally within the Site follows existing field boundary to minimise landscape impact and interruption to existing field use;
- New native tree planting proposed to provide replacement for trees to be removed to form entrance, with additional trees proposed to achieve landscape and habitat enhancement;

3.6. The proposals are shown in full on the submitted plans, with key drainage features highlighted together with tree removal and replacement planting, additional planting. The detailed junction drawings by Badingham provide confirmation of the visibility splays achieved at the proposed junction.



Image: View west along A420 from proposed new access point



Image: View east along A420 from proposed new access point

4. ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

4.1. The Development is assessed below against the following relevant planning policy considerations set under the following themes:

- Principle of development
- Highways
- Design and Landscape
- Heritage
- Drainage
- Ecology
- Arboriculture

Principle of development

4.2. As set out in Section 2 above, there is a need for the Development proposed to address access problems associated with the existing established use of Ivy Farm.

4.3. The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) ('the NPPF') sets out at para 110 how applications for development should achieve safe and suitable access for all users and para 111 goes on to confirm that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

4.4. Wiltshire Core Strategy Policy CP62 (Development Impacts on the Transport Network) states that developments should provide appropriate mitigating measures to offset any adverse impacts on the transport network at both the construction and operational stages.

4.5. In this case, there are no new uses or floorspace proposed, but rather the Development seeks to remedy existing access problems associated with an existing use. In doing so, the objectives of the NPPF set out above are met as safe and suitable access for all users would be achieved where it doesn't

currently exist, and the proposals will remove unsafe vehicle movements resulting in highway safety enhancement.

4.6. As confirmed in the pre-application response from Wiltshire Council Highways, the principle of establishing a new access for Ivy Farm to achieve these objectives is acceptable. The additional benefits as explored below in terms of avoiding harm to the historic environment associated with the existing access add further weight to the case.

Highways

4.7. As set out above, pre-application discussions with officers of Wiltshire Council highways team confirmed that the proposed new access was acceptable in principle, subject to confirmation of visibility splays and achieving betterment when compared to the existing access route.

4.8. The drawings prepared by Badingham (see General Arrangement and Swept Path Analysis) confirm the design data and parameters of project, and demonstrate that the required 215m visibility splays can be achieved.

4.9. Adequate width is provided at the entrance to ensure that two vehicles can pass ensuring that no vehicles entering the site would be caused to wait on the public highway.

4.10. As the proposals will remove large vehicles associated with an existing use at Ivy Farm from using the existing constrained and weight-restricted lane where grounding occurs the benefits of the proposals in terms of highway operation and safety in the immediate vicinity of the A420 are clear. There are further highways benefits associated with avoiding the complex vehicle movements necessary further north at the ‘the triangle’ to enter Ivy Farm. There will be no intensification of use over existing traffic levels as a result of the new access.

4.11. Overall, we consider the highways benefits of the proposals to be clear and convincing and the benefits to be gained weigh heavily in favour of the Development. The proposals will improve highway safety and meet the objectives of the NPPF in that it successfully demonstrates no negative cumulative impact upon highway safety or its operation.

Design and landscape

4.12. Core Strategy Policy CP51 (Landscape) states that development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures. It also states that great weight will be afforded to conserving and enhancing the special qualities of AONBs, including their landscapes and scenic beauty.

4.13. Core Strategy Policy CP57 (Ensuring High Quality Design and Space Shaping) states that proposals should make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire by "enhancing local distinctiveness by responding to the value of the natural and historic environment".

4.14. In terms of landscape, the site falls within Landscape Character Area (LCA) 14A 'Biddestone Lowland Farmland', of Landscape Character Type (LCT) 14 'Cornbrash Pastoral Lowlands', as defined by the Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy. The proposal does not conflict with any of the key characteristics of both the Cornbrash Pastoral Lowlands LCT and the Biddestone Lowland Farmland LCA.

4.15. In terms of landscape sensitivity, the Character Area Appraisal states the following:

> *"The quiet, rural and sparsely settled landscapes of the Cornbrash Pastoral Lowlands are highly sensitive to change particularly predominantly agricultural areas not currently associated with any form of development. Despite this, where present, woodland cover, copses and landform can reduce sensitivity and provide localised screening thus may provide opportunities for the landscape to accommodate small scale development"*

4.16. The new junction with the A420 is located at the edge of a localised built-up area, with The Crown Inn and associated car park / entrances on the south side of the A420 being the dominant built feature. The proposed new junction will not appear out of character with this part of the A420 corridor, as multiple small entrances and junctions are existing, together with long slip-lanes for exit / entrance from the A420. New tree planting within the site will contribute to the existing field

boundary condition and aid visual integration of the junction. The planting will effectively extend the existing deeper boundary condition found immediately to the east.



Image: General site character – enclosed paddocks subdivided by timber fencing with isolated individual trees and woodland clumps

4.17. The route through the existing paddocks field has been chosen to follow the existing field boundary, well contained by hedgerow to the north, minimising visual impact and avoiding bisecting the field. The route then joins the existing internal track within the Ivy Farm complex.



Image: View north into the site at the proposed entrance – new access drive will head directly forwards and then turn left to follow the existing hedgerow in the mid-distance

4.18. The new access route has been designed to have a simple and utilitarian 'farm' appearance, using exposed aggregate concrete finish. It is intended to serve a basic purpose of allowing larger vehicles to access Ivy Farm, and is designed simply as such, reflecting the overarching agricultural character of the landscape in this area.

4.19. As noted above, the tree planting proposed near to the junction with the A420 will extend an existing landscape feature found to the east. The seasonal drainage attenuation pond is located within the new planting.

4.20. The Development is considered to meet the requirements of policies CP51 and CP57 set out above.

Heritage

4.21. The Development proposed does not directly engage any designated or non-designated heritage assets.



Image: View of the Crown Inn (roof ridge and car park entrance visible) from the proposed new entrance location

4.22. The Crown Inn (Grade II listed) is located some 80 metres to the west and across the A420 of the proposed new access point. A large car parking area with a broad tarmac entrance serves the Crown Inn and is located to the east of the building. Given the distance, the presence of the A420 and pub car park, and the small scale and nature of the access junction proposed, we do not consider there to

be any impacts associated with the Development on the setting of the Grade II listed The Crown Inn.

4.23. Ivy Farm House and the barn to the east of Ivy Farm House are both listed at Grade II. Whilst these buildings are remote from Development and will not be impacted adversely in terms of setting, it must be noted that the Development will aid significantly preserving the setting of those buildings and associated structures (gates / piers / dry stone walling) by removing the need for large vehicles to access the farm via the existing constrained access, where in the past such vehicles have caused damage to these structures.

4.24. The proposals are therefore considered to comply with the statutory provisions regarding listed buildings, together with the relevant NPPF and Core Strategy policies.

Drainage

4.25. Core Strategy Policy CP67 (Flood Risk) requires that development is directed towards areas of low flood risk in line with national policy, and that all new development includes sustainable drainage measures where feasible.

4.26. The proposals have been formulated with input from a specialist drainage engineer, and incorporate sustainable drainage measures to appropriately deal with surface water runoff within the Site.

4.27. Key drainage measures including infiltration drainage to each side of the proposed access route, and localised land drains to an attenuation pond at the entrance to the Site are shown on the Proposed Site Plan. The following summary statement upon drainage strategy has been prepared by James Birdwood of BTA Structural Design Ltd:

The proposed access meets the highway at a level of about 125.0m AOD. The track will then slope slightly downhill as it enters the site, reaching a low of about 124.70m AD about 8m from the highway boundary. To the west of this the ground drops to about 124.0m AOD. The highway verge is at a level of about 124.9m AOD opposite this area. On the east side of the drive the ground level is lightly higher, typically 124.8m. The highway verge on this side is correspondingly higher as well. To avoid the risk of run-off from the east side

washing over the drive it is proposed to form a ditch along the eastern side of the drive, and to run land drains under it, discharging to the lower area on the west side where a dry pond will be created. The relative levels of the site and the road at the proposed access will ensure that run-off from the site cannot flow onto the highway.

Ecology

4.28. Core Strategy Policy CP50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) states that development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale and that all development proposals shall incorporate appropriate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development.

4.29. Ecological considerations have informed the scheme development, and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by Stark Ecology.

4.30. The PEA confirms that the Site contains low value habitat that, and that trees and scrub to be removed to form the new access can be mitigated by replacement and additional planting as part of the landscaping for the proposals.



Image: Field boundary condition at location of proposed entrance

4.31. The drainage attenuation pond will also provide a new dynamic habitat for the Site, enhancing biodiversity value.

4.32. As a result of the above-mentioned mitigation measures and enhancements, the proposals will comply with relevant local and national policy and legislation relating to ecological impacts and issues, including Core Strategy Policy CP50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity).

Arboriculture

4.33. The proposals have been informed by arboricultural advice from Bosky Trees, and have been formulated in response to the tree survey findings to minimise loss of trees of value.

4.34. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment report prepared by Bosky Trees and submitted as part of this application confirms that the small number of trees to be removed are not of high value, and their removal can be compensated by planting of a greater number of native trees within the Site as shown on the Proposed Site Plan.

4.35. Tree protection measures and methods to protect retained trees during construction works are set out on the Tree Protection Plan submitted.

4.36. The AIA / TPP report concludes that:

- The new access road will not impede the root protection area of any retained trees;
- Tree protection measures proposed will contain construction works;
- New tree planting will adequately compensate for trees to be removed;
- It should also be acknowledged that the Applicant has planted several acres of woodland at Ivy Farm within the past 20 years, that have greatly increased the local level of tree canopy cover;
- Overall the proposed development will have an acceptable impact on local tree cover.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1. The proposed new access to Ivy Farm from the A420 has been formulated to meet a clearly identified series of existing access issues which result in reduced highway safety, damage to the carriageway surface and large vehicles operated by the Applicant, and frequent minor damage to walls and verges in the immediate vicinity of the existing Ivy Farm entrance gates.

4.2. The siting and design of the new access has been formulated to meet highways, ecology, arboriculture and landscape objectives, and the result is a low-key simple farm access that remains squarely within the existing parameters of the character of the surrounding area.

4.3. The proposals represent sustainable development, compliant with the relevant Cotswold AONB guidance, the relevant policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and the relevant provisions of the NPPF and we therefore believe that planning permission can be granted to allow the Development to proceed.