Hatt Farm Conversion to Wedding Venue
Alan Payne

I wish to object to the proposals in references PL/2023/04999 and PL/2023/04922 on the grounds of environmental impact of light nuisance, noise disturbance and the impact of rural access for pedestrians. These matters will be dealt with by other local people, so I am limiting my comments to the impact of road users' safety.

My wife and I have lived at the Old Jockey for over 40 years. I have read the Highways Department comments but I disagree with some of the conclusions they have reached which reflect only the access offered on the opposite side of the road which will be further compromised by the traffic increase suggested in the application. Both road access points are at, or adjacent to, blind spots on a particularly hazardous section of the road which already forms a sharp S-bend from the Toll House to Old Jockey Farm.

Service Vehicle Road
At the proposed service vehicle road opposite Short Hill the incline rises at approximately 30 degrees from the Devizes Road and visibility is compromised by a reverse camber. It is now untenable to turn left going up this hill towards Box Fiveways and vehicles trying to do this require to undertake a slow incline and a three-point turn in the entrance to Hatt Farm. The extension of service vehicle traffic at this point effectively makes this junction a Fiveways junction. Views of the road are attached:





The vehicle service road and Jefferys Road are not visible from the south

May I remind the authorities that it took many years of complaining and two fatalities for Box Fiveways to have traffic lights installed at that junction in 1996. Do we have to do the same if this plan is approved?

The volume of traffic at this section obviously depends on when it is recorded. In 5 minutes between 12.35 and 12.40 on 19 July 2023, I recorded 27 vehicles passing this junction: 6 vans, 20 cars and 1 ambulance. Between 14.05 and 14.10 the same day there were 18 vehicles: 1 van and 17 cars. I have photos of these vehicles, which I can provide if evidence is wanted. These numbers seem to be considerably more general traffic than that recorded in the application.

Visitor Access Road

The proposed new road for visitors is nearly opposite the Longsplatt turning, a waste area which was previously a quarry site, creating a steep and obscure junction on to the Kingsdown Golf Club Road. At this point Longsplatt has an adverse camber and is extremely difficult to see traffic coming from the Bath side (and the proposed new road). Visibility of oncoming traffic gets worse as you approach the corner and cars normally require to hog the wrong side of the road to get visibility in the Bath direction.



In 5 minutes between 17.05 and 17.12 on 19 July 2023, I recorded 53 vehicles on this stretch of road: 6 vans, 43 cars, 1 motorbike, 1 bike and 2 lorries. I have photos if wanted.



The proposed new road will effectively make a four-way junction close to the Longsplatt junction and is a short distance from the 90-degree bend at the Toll House. There have been repeated accidents at this corner often at night. For example, in 2022 there were two serious accidents at the corner within a month of each other, both of which caused extensive damage to the wall and gatepost of Keeper's Cottage.

Both Locations

If two vehicles are passing at the same time, it is now very difficult to walk along the Kingsdown Golf Club Road (which I do at least once a week) without having to climb into the roadside hedge. It is now impossible for two vehicles to pass if one is a large lorry, van or machinery vehicle. The amount of difficulty is substantially impacted by adverse weather, dawn and dusk visibility, cyclists, bus timetable, and the farm vehicles which still regularly use the road at seasonal times. It is also relevant to point out that tiredness and intoxication (both of which can be associated with weddings) may also increase the risk of accidents.

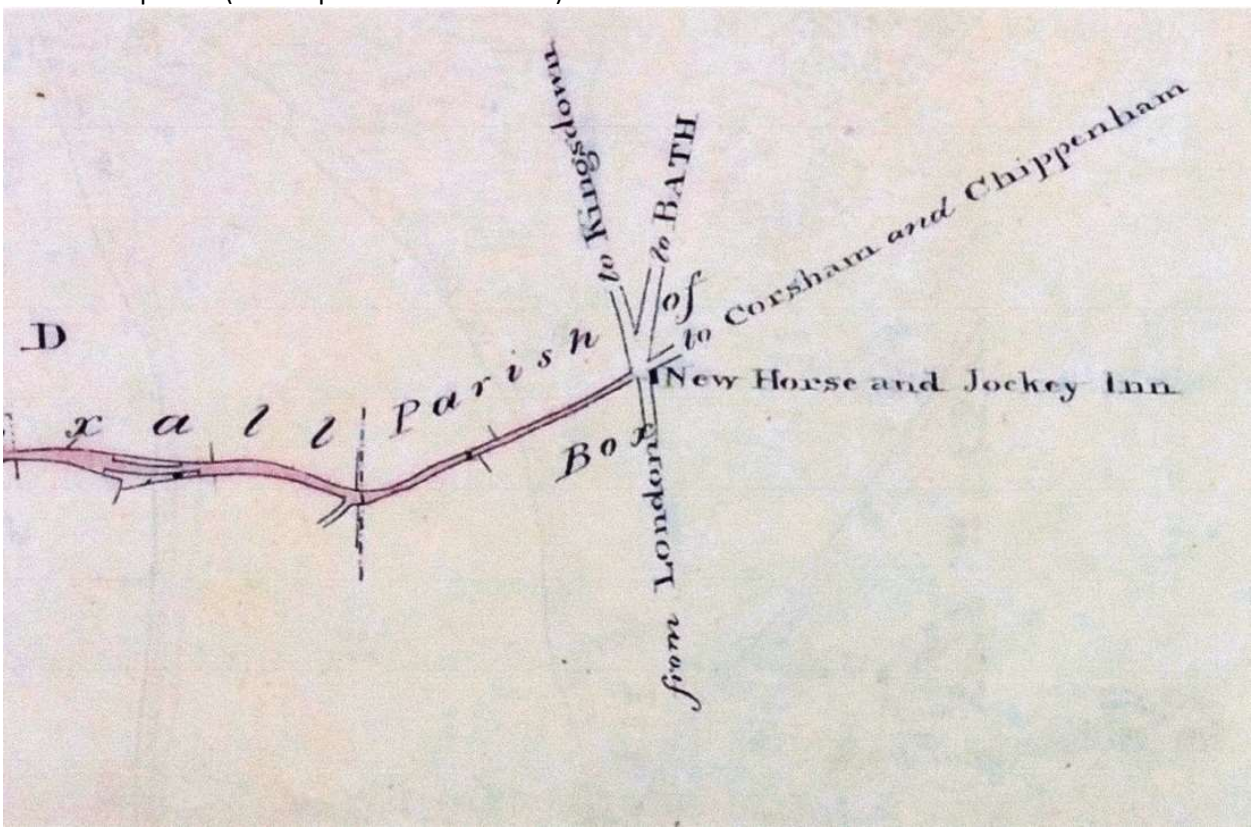
May I respectfully mention to the Cheltenham authors of the Transport Reports that the Wiltshire spelling of the Market Town and name of the road is DEVIZES.

Heritage

As the editor of Box People and Places (kindly extensively referred to in the Heritage statement) can I say how much I enjoyed reading Victoria Hubbard's analysis of the history of the site and buildings.

However, may I point out that the Old Jockey House (pub), Old Jockey Cottages (brewing buildings) and Old Jockey Farm (ostler's cottage) are substantially earlier than Hatt Farm by about a century. The Old Jockey buildings have no known relationship to Hatt Farm (apart from sometimes being in the same manorial ownership). The name of Hatt Farm relates to David Rice Pinchin, who lived at the Farm, and George Pinchin, who built Hatt House. The two started the Box Brewery in the Market Place and these properties provided grain and a residence for each of them, connected through Drilley Lane, adjacent to the Toll House. The Pinchins used an old 1626 name derived from the Hatt Coppice at Hatt House area, rather than the name Jockey.

The Jockey name originated as the *Horse & Jockey Inn* which replaced the earlier name *Cuffs Corner* possibly when the pub was built in 1737 along the medieval ridgeway road (Kingsdown Golf Club to Box Fiveways road). This road lost much of its passing trade after the Corsham-Box Road (originally Beech Road now A4) was built in 1761. By 1840 (about the date that Hatt Farm was built) the Old Jockey was no longer used as a pub but a *Dwelling House Outbuildings Cottages Barton & Gardens* (owned by the Fuller family – Neston Estate – and occupied by Jacob Poulson, A new pub *The New Horse & Jockey Inn* had been created at the Bradford junction (now called Crossroads Farm) and the *Old Horse & Jockey* had ceased to operate (see map below dated 1840).



Although a footprint of Hatt Farm buildings is shown in the 1840 Tithe Apportionment map, the whole complex appears to relate to David Rice Pinchin, possibly built/ rebuilt by him after he received a family inheritance in 1836. Apart from the open-fronted pen sheds, ancillary buildings in the Hatt Farm curtilage have been extensively rebuilt over the years, as shown in the photo below from 1970s-80s. The pen sheds are interesting and had false fronts installed in some for the recording of *Larkrise to Candleford* in 2008.



As explained above, the heritage merit of Hatt Farm appears to relate solely to the farmhouse and the conversion of this building to provide hotel-style accommodation appears to be fundamentally alter the heritage which currently exists. Or have I missed something in the enormous number of documents submitted?