R&S Consultants Ltd.
The Old Coach House,
Barton Hill,
Shaftesbury,
Dorset,
SP7 8DQ.

September 2023

RESPONSES TO COMMENTS accompanying Full Planning Application.

Reference: New Access at Millbrook Trout Farm, Mill Lane, Fovant, Salisbury, SP3 5JP.

Site Location:

New Access:	*Easting 400118*	*Northing 128943*
Existing Access:	*Easting 400023*	*Northing 129057*

Planning Application Reference:

Planning PL/2023/05890 *Proposed agricultural access to existing field.*

Other Supporting Documentation:

22035-200A	*Location & Block Plan.*
22035-201A	*Existing Site Plan.*
22035-202A	*Proposed Site Plan.*
22035-203	*Existing Photo Sheet – Mill Lane Access.*
22035-204	*Existing Photo Sheet – Mary Barter Lane Access.*
22035-205	*Existing Photo Sheet – Tisbury Road Access.*

Design & Access Statement (R&S Consultants Ltd).

Hedge Translocation Document.

Introduction:

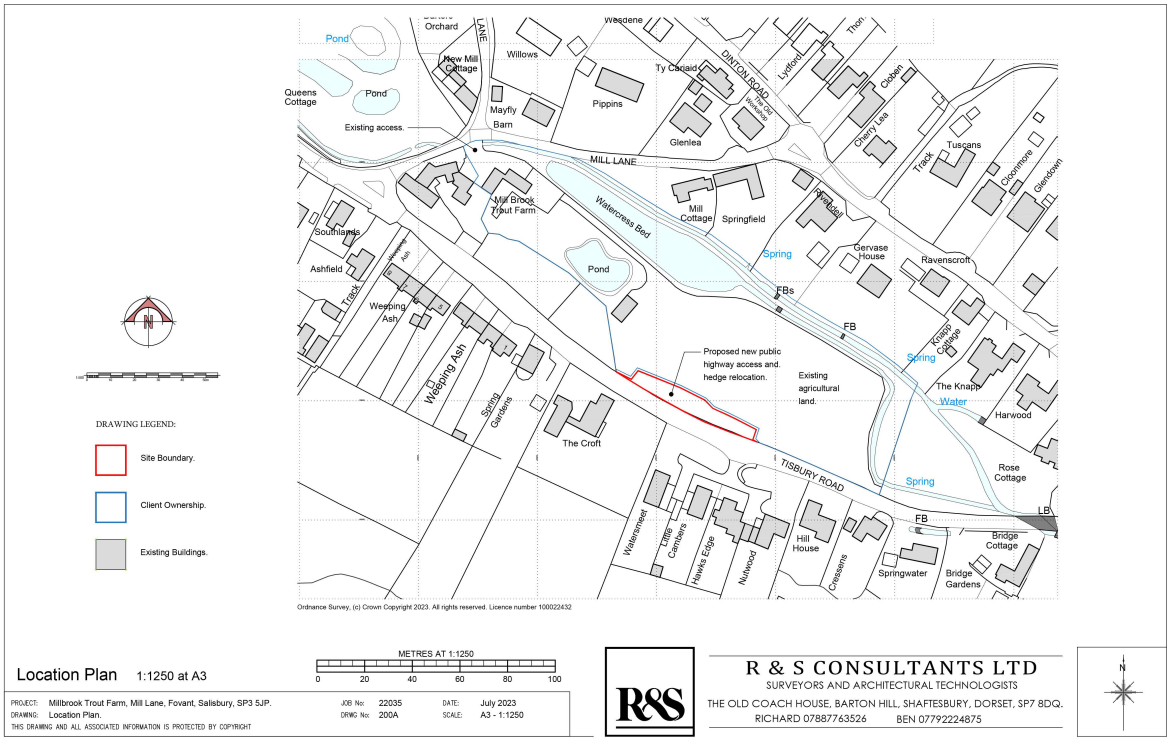
This document relates to the proposal for Planning Permission for a new access to the public highway. The site is located within an existing residential area, centrally within the Wiltshire village of Fovant. The Farm consists of existing agricultural and residential uses, and the new access will provide improved access to latter. The existing access, via the existing residential dwelling, is insufficient for agricultural vehicles to pass safely. A new access is proposed to overcome this issue.

Responses to Consultations:

We have provided responses to planning officer, consultee queries and comments in the hope of clearing up any misunderstandings, and to incorporate information where required. The given responses have been addressed under headings, rather than direct responses to each individual comment.

Drawing Amendments

Revised drawings have been provided to suit the comments of the Planning Officer and Consultees. The Proposed Site Plan 22035-202A has been revised to incorporate the increased visibility splays and hedge locations requested. Existing drawing updated to indicate additional hedge relocations, with revised drawing number 22035-201A. This has also been reflected in the revised Location Plan 22035-200A. To confirm all proposals are on land under the ownership of the applicants. Additional information can be provided if required. Location plan extract included below.



Drawing 22035-200 rev A, with revised red line application boundary to incorporate amended visibility splays and hedge locations to meet Highway Comments.

Existing Access

The existing driveway access to Millbrook Trout Farm is via Mill Lane. This is via an existing bridge over the river, which at this point passes under the public highway. In order to get to the existing site entrance, a vehicle must travel along one of 3 roads, all signposted with blue 'Unsuitable for Large Vehicles' signs.

On arrival at the site, there is an awkward turn to be undertaken, before turning into driveway shared by 2no properties under different ownerships. A gated access to the fields via a narrow track immediately beside the property of Millbrook Trout Farm is difficult with large vehicles. The issues are highlighted on drawings 22035-203, 22035-204 and 22035-205 including photographic information and locations.

There have always been complaints over large lorries and vehicles using the Mill Lane access. There is also the issue of the existing access being part of a shared drive. If the current neighbour were to move and someone less amenable to move in there could be conflict. There has always been a problem with accessing the site using the existing entrance. Access for large lorries always had to be planned in advance. In recent years transport companies have started using larger and larger units chasing economies of scale in these expensive times, making the problem worse. This also applies to farm Machinary which has got considerably larger over the last 10 years.

Most of the traffic coming to the site has to use the Tisbury Road already as it is the safest way in to the village centre. All other roads to the existing entrance are marked 'Unsuitable for heavy traffic'.

The lack of footpaths and density of pedestrians, elderly, horses etc. is the same in Mill Lane where the existing entrance is. Mill Lane is narrower and has less visibility than the proposed entrance location.

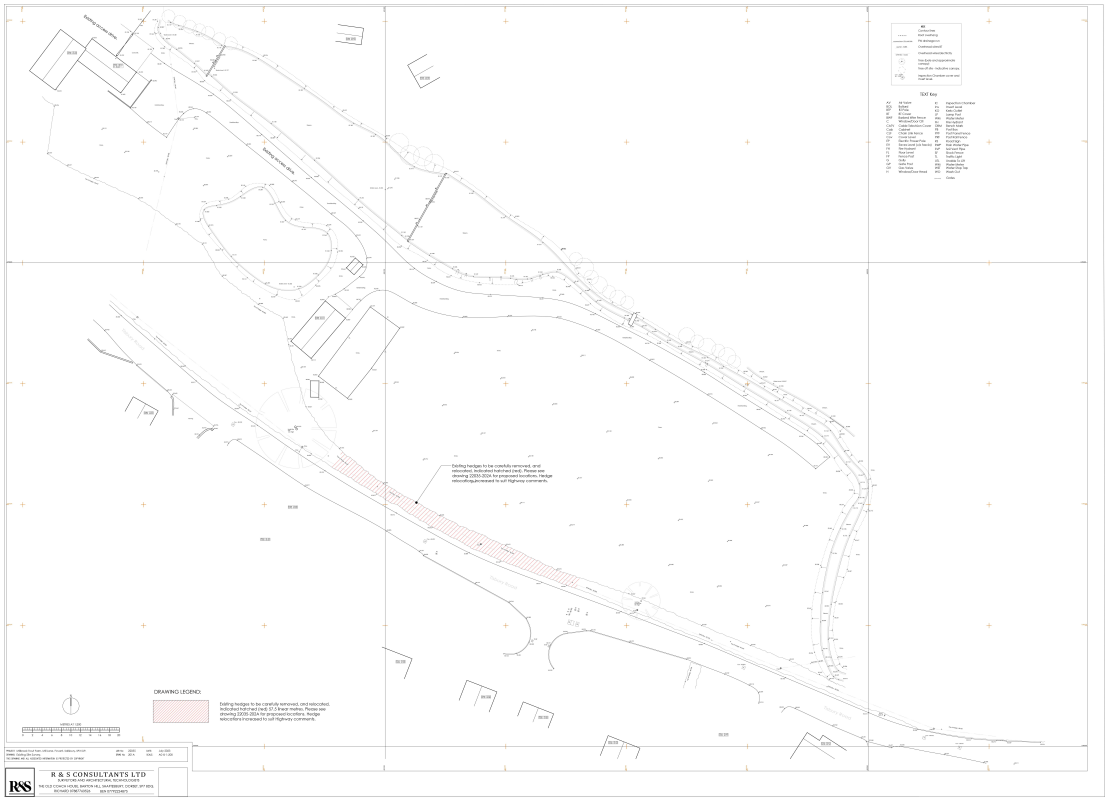
Highways - Pedestrians

Apart from a few small areas, there are only minimal pavements in Fovant, and to my knowledge there have been no serious accidents relating to this fact. When walking through the village, for the main, you are walking on the public highway, and using driveways to move safely out the way of oncoming traffic.

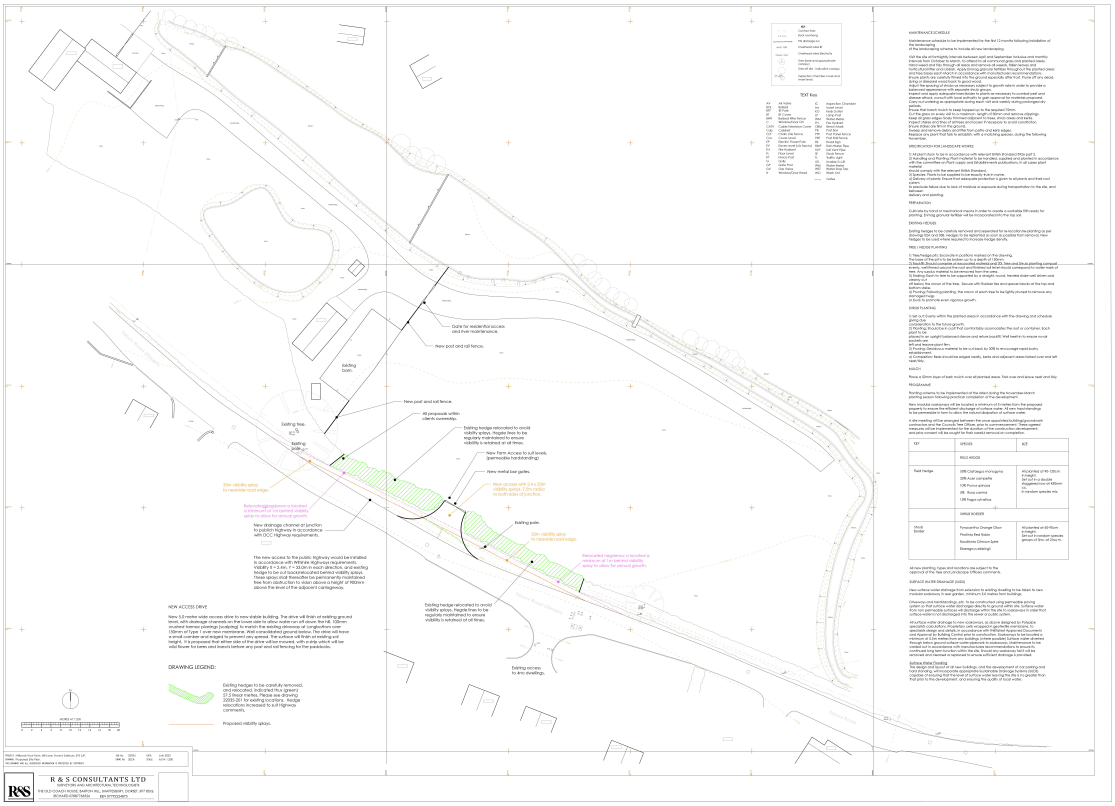
Any mentioned that a proposed entrance under this application would put pedestrians at risk seem ill percieved given the existing situations. This new access would provide an additional point at which to safely leave the public highway to avoid traffic. The current site entrance is smaller, on a more narrow section of road (Mill Lane), so has a similar problem for elderly and pedestrian users. Traffic using the existing entrance may be coming from Tisbury Road anyway.

Highways - Vehicles

A revised Proposed Site Plan 22035-202A has been provided to incorporate highways comments. The visibility splays have been increased to 33m to account for the implied speed limit of 25mph (raised from the 25m / 20mph previously proposed). The re-planted boundary hedges have been moved to be a minimum of 1m behind the splay to allow for growth through the year. An extract of this drawing has been included below for ease of reference, but not to a recognisable scale in this document.



Drawing 22035-201 rev A, with revised hedge locations to meet Highway Comments.



Drawing 22035-202 rev A, with revised visibility splays and hedge locations to meet Highway Comments.

33m of visibility has been achived to the nearside road edge in both directions, ensuring the maximum visibilty onto the public highway. By nature of the road shape, visibility will acutally be increased further.

Please note that since this submission a series of signs have been positioned around the village by Fovant Parish Council in an attempt to solve any speeding problems through the village. There are also illuminated speed check signs located at various points.

We would note that a new access on Tisbury Road will allow an additional point in a narrow road for larger vehicles to pass each other. This can be an issue at present with buses and other large vehciles using Tisbury Road.

The proposed access is located between 2 existing driveway accesses on the opposite side of the oublic highway. No part of the access will be located opposite or interfere with any existing accesses. This new access from the public highway has been located in accordance with comments received through the pre-application process.

The proposed entrance with its splays would provide a widening of the road in terms of pedestrian use, providing somewhere for pedestrians and horses to move out of the way of traffic on that side of the road, improving safety. As an extra benefit, the drainage of the Tisbury road on that side would improve, no longer holding trapped water on the side of the road.

Hedgerow

The proposed site is located within the AONB. It is however not located within the Conservation Area. The existing hedge is a mixture of species, types, heights and sizes. As the provided 'Hedge Translocation Document' the proposals will be sensitively undertaken, to ensure the existing hedgerow can be relocated behind the new visibility splays (by 1m as requested by Highways). This document sets out how

the hedge works will be undertaken and maintained/managed. Works to be sympathetically carried out would cause less disruption than many other recent projects within the village.

We would also like to make reference to planning application PL/2023/04702, where large sections of existing hedges have been removed to make an enlargement to an existing gateway access. As part of this application the Parish Council commented on how the existing drive cut-out should be retained as a passing place. In a similar vein, the proposal under this application would provide the same facility. We note that historic hedge concerns were raised, but not upheld. We also seem to be providing visibility splays the same as this proposal, despite this being in the national speed limit zone. This application was for cars, and not for larger agricultural vehicles. This proposal will hold the same pedestrian issues as the current application. The report includes:

The proposed materials are considered to be complimentary within such a setting and the works would be seen in the context of the existing built form and therefore would not result in any visual harm upon the AONB.

Concerns raised regarding the visual impact upon the area and AONB if used as a driveway have been noted. However, the site itself would still be significantly well screened and such accesses are common within such rural areas and for properties of this size.

The existing gate would be set further back from the highway reducing its prominence with most of the existing boundary hedging being retained.

Other Comments

The site is still known as Millbrook Trout Farm, however the trout farm elements have been removed and infilled (as per previous planning applications). This allows the land to be utilised for other agricultural purposes. Comment received include objections to animal agriculture within this field, however there are other local examples including sheep in the meadows behind Weeping Ash, which is located to the North-West of the application site. Any mentions of land being suitable only for grazing/hay are based on non-proffesional opinions, and the site can now offer suitable land for a wide variety of agricultural processes.

There is mention of future residential proposals for the site. Please note that this application is simply for a new agricultural access to the existing field. This access is proposed for the reasons set out, and the additional justification provided through plans, documents and photographs. This proposal is not to the detriment of the local setting, but designed to improve the current access issues which effect the surrounding areas. Agricultural proposals should be seen as a positive impact on a rural environment.

The applicants for this application have lived in the property for over 24 years. Throughout this time they have received continuous complaints from neighbours and locals. These were about the daily operations of the trout farm/cress beds when run as a business, the daily traffic to and from the site, and now the large vehciles using the small lanes surrounding the site. The creation of the new site entrance would appear to ease these problems on the local highways, but these proposals have also received objection from the same consultees. There have been previous concerns over noise, however this will always be a factor with agricultural fields and holdings. It does seem as though any proposals at this site will be objected against, no matter the content or type of the applications.

A previous access was proposed as a temporary measure for the infill of the trout lakes, which was not enacted by the applicants. It took several years to infill the existing lakes, and this access would have required an extension to the temporary permission to be utilised fully. The decision was made to carry out the infill in a less aggressive manner, by limiting the amount and size of deliveries per day in order not to inconvenience the village residents. This approach did not require the temporary entrance. The use of the existing access was proof of how unfit it is for modern day practices. There is an argument to be made that opening the hedge on the North East side of Tisbury Road by use of adequate splays proposed could improve safety and perhaps cause vehicles to be more cautious. This is something that would not have been achieved through a small temporary access.

It was decided not attend the Fovant Parish Council meeting on 07/08/2023 as we felt it was set up to vindicate 2 specific planning applications, with requests for people to attend with the sole purpose of objections. The purpose of the application is to faciliate a new, and safer access, to an existing agricultural field.