Justification report for the retention and change of use of an area of hardstanding to the rear of property 8A Greenhill, Lydiard Millicent, Royal Wootton Bassett SN4 8EH

This report has been prepared by Holly Greenman FQA MBIAC of The farm Consultancy Group to provide justification for the retention of an area of hardstanding that has been previously laid by the applicant, Mr James Buckland. The area was previously an area of green field used for agriculture and the grazing of horses, and this use has been in operation since prior to Mr Buckland's purchase of the property, some 7 years ago.

Mr Buckland laid the area of hardstanding, which currently extends to a total 493 Square metres, and extends to the rear of his property and that of a neighbour, No 8 Greenhill. The yard area lies between the access gateway on Green Hill lane and an area of agricultural land that Mr Buckland also owns, which extends to circa 3 acres and lies to the North of Green Hill.

The hardstanding area has grown in recent years to accommodate vehicles used by Mr Buckland, however, an application for the retrospective permission for this area was refused in September 2023 (Ref PL/2022/08676) and so the applicant recognises that the previously laid area will need to be returned to agricultural grassland.

There is however still a need for the applicant to retain some of the yard area, and this is to support the stable building that has been on this area of the property prior to Mr Buckland's occupation of it, and has been determined in previous applications relating to the area to be of lawful development.

Stable buildings and small accompanying yards of the type are commonly found within this area, and are not at odds with the largely residential use of the area and this property type. Mr Buckland has small children, who he hopes will be able to use this area adjacent to their property to safely learn riding and horse care.

It is reasonable to assume that stable buildings of the type found on this land, should have enough accompanying yard area to be able to provide the following supporting infrastructure:

Supporting infrastructure/ equipment	Area occupied by equipment	Total storage area required
Parking area for Horse Trailer	2.5 Metre width by 6 Metre length	15 Metres Squared
Sufficient space for the storage of hay & straw		10 Metres squared
Sufficient space for the storage of soiled straw bedding from the stables, before its application to the adjacent farmland or removal from the yard area by tractor and trailer.	3 M width X 5 M depth	15 Metres squared
Space to store necessary agricultural machinery and equipment that enables maintenance of the grass field ie. A small quad bike and paddock cleaner for collecting horse manure, and weed- wiper or rake for controlling weeds.		9 Metres squared for quad bike storage, plus additional 7 Metres squared for paddock cleaner and rake.
The yard area needs to have a minimum 5 metres of central, clear yard space, to enable access by tractors for the delivery of straw and the collection of muck, and enable them to turn safely and exit the yard in a forward gear.		Owing to the layout of the yard, this will occupy 60 Metres squared within the central area of the yard.
Total Storage need:		56 Square Metres
Plus free yard area for turning		116 Square Metres

The over all area of the hardstanding yard area can be reduced to accommodate these items to 280 square metres, plus the hardstanding that has been laid to the access point. It is necessary that the access point is laid with hardcore, to mitigate mud being taken out on to the road from vehicles exiting the yard, whether this be tractors servicing the agricultural land, or horse boxes exiting the site.

The yard plan in Appendix 1 shows clearly how the applicant has carefully considered the arrangement of each of these facilities.

It is also reasonable that an equestrian/ agricultural yard of this type and use be laid with hardcore. Leaving this area as grassland but continuing to access it by pedestrians, horses and heavy vehicles (which is necessary for the use of this land) would result not only in poor land quality, compaction and potential flooding issues, but precludes the use by being carried out owing to the challenges that

accessing such an area would present, again, be this by foot or by vehicle. There is also concern over the welfare for any horses who were kept in the stables. If they do not have a free- draining area free from mud adjacent to their stables, then it would become impossible for them to be properly looked after or cleaned.

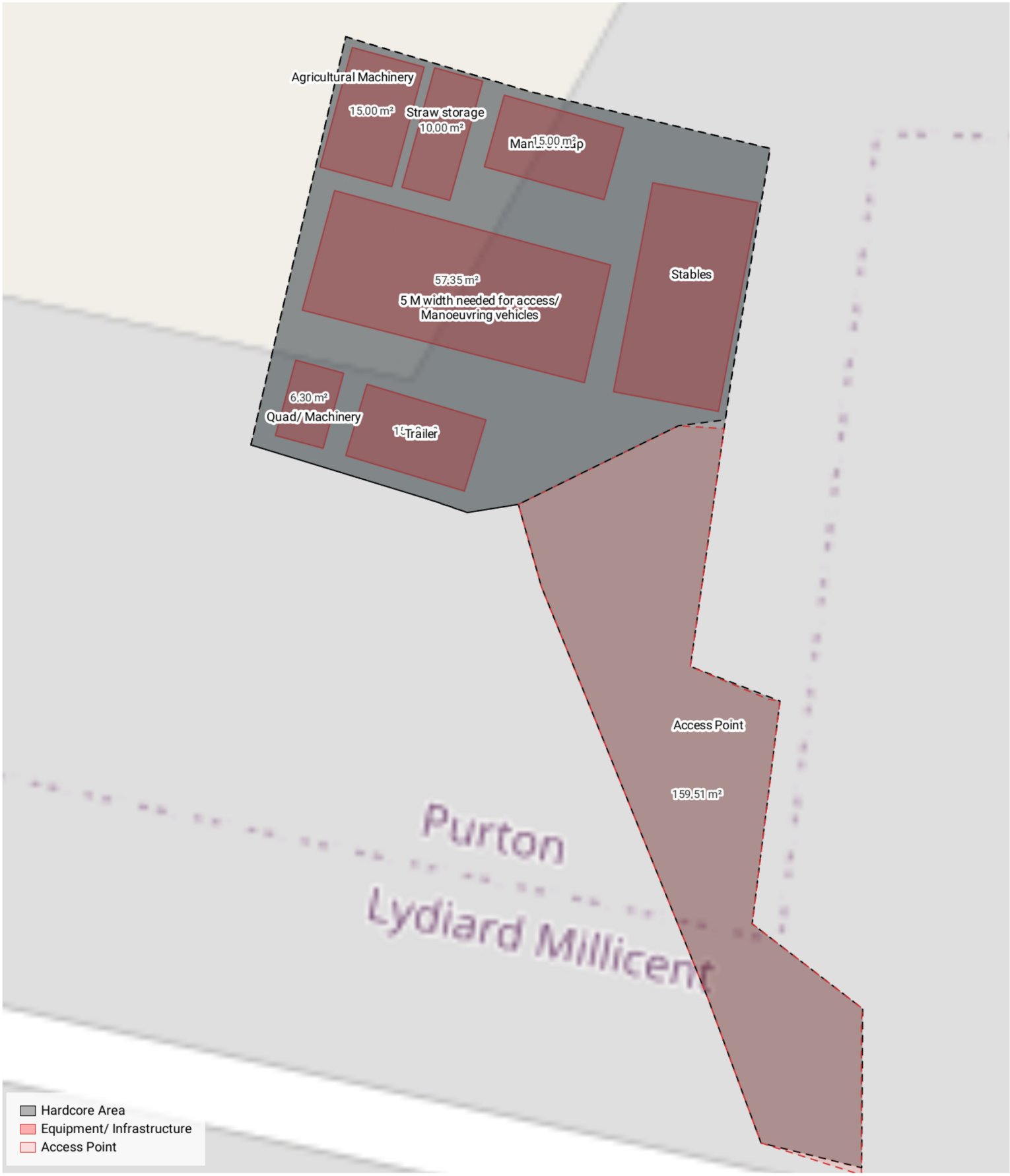
This might result in mud fever (a fungal infection of the skin that is a result of prolonged exposure to dirty, wet conditions) or other lameness. It would also make clearing out their stables challenging, as anyone who has tried to push a heavy wheelbarrow through thick mud can attest. This too can have consequences for animal quality and promote the spread of air-born infections, owing to the high urea content of horse urine.

The proposal is in line with Core Policy 48 and its intention is to enable full functioning of the existing mixed equestrian and agricultural use of the site. Without the supporting yard area, both uses become extremely challenging, and neither the stabling nor the agricultural land can be used to their full potential and intention.

The laid hardcore in these areas is essential to the proper use of these areas, and reduces soil erosion and mud being dragged onto the road.

Appendix 1

Buckland- Yard Layout Plan



Produced on Dec 8, 2023.

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Scale 1:201 (at A4)

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