PL/2023/10965 Windmill Stud Planning application for erection of permanent equestrian worker's accommodation including a critical overnight observation stable.

Windmill Stud Business

Use of stables.

According to the Planning Statements, Julia Norman only uses 8 to 10 stables for own use that includes some livery. The remaining stables are rented to Mollie Summerland and Mellisa Joannides. Who run their own businesses using these stables, which include livery.

This is similar to the business that her father James Hussey runs at in the Uffcott Farm area where separate businesses use offices on the site.

This is why the renters of the stables have their own staff, that are not employed by Windmill Stud.

Below are the links to Mollie Summerland's and Mellisa Joanniddes websites:

Mollie Summerland https://www.molliesummerland.com/contact

Melissa Joannides https://www.mjeventing.com/services

Proposed Location

Highways

Both AECOM and Wiltshire Highways in their reports, have stated that there should be no further expansion in Uffcott. They have also stated that due to the lack of local transport, shops and schools it is not suitable for anyone who does not have a car.

The C121 is a loop road with one end at the crossing to Broad Hinton and the other at the Southrop cross roads. Both of these junctions are not ideal and there have been many accidents.

The Southrop leg used by Windmill Stud is a narrow road and two cars can pass with caution, but anything larger, such as Horse Boxes, Large Delivery Vans, Tractors and Lorries mean that one vehicle need to stop on the side of the road, while the other passes.

The other leg goes to the Broad Hinton Cross roads and is a single track road with occasional passing places. Near the pond by Dunsford Farm the road floods and is unpassable by anything but Tractors.

Parish Plan

The Parish Council have expressed their opinion that the proposed application for Windmill Stud should not be approved. In addition to this a detailed report from the consultants AECOM looked at the suitability for additional housing in the Parish are and fully discounted any additional housing being built in Uffcott.

Below are sections from the Neighbourhood Plan, following the analysis by AECOM.

This link gives the complete report:

https://www.bhwbparishcouncil.org.uk/_files/ugd/1adbd5_d6ea3c18ba8a409aac61f0026d343801.pdf

4.5 The above highlights that housing provision in Winterbourne Bassett and Uffcott is unsuitable on AONB grounds, whereas there may be a limited role for new housing provision on the edges of Broad Hinton.

The site that is opposite the proposed development U1 Uffcott New Cottages.: Residential uses:

A greenfield site falls within the North Wessex Downs AONB, Marlborough Downs Nature Improvement Area and is classified as Best and Most Versatile agricultural land (grade 2: very good quality). The site is a considerable distance from a local centre/shop, train station, primary school, secondary school, open space/recreation facilities and cycle route.

The site also has high visual amenity sensitivity as it is relatively open and has strong intervisibility with the North Wessex Downs and Wessex Ridgeway to the south east.

As per the AONB Position Statement on housing, secondary 'large villages' may play a limited role in accommodating housing on the edge of the settlement, whereas development in 'small villages' should not be supported. The site should therefore be precluded on AONB grounds, as Core Policy CS CP1 (Settlement Strategy) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy defines Uffcott as ‘undefined’.

Community uses:

The site is not suitable for community uses as it is relatively isolated and a considerable distance from existing services and facilities and the main built-up area of Broad Hinton. Development in this location would also create adverse visual amenity impacts on the surrounding landscape.

Renewable energy uses:

Renewable-energy related uses in this location would be unsuitable as the site is exposed and has long-distance open views towards the North Wessex Downs. Development in this location would be prominent and would cause adverse landscape impacts.

Location of accommodation

The latest Justification statement, makes a case for the need for accommodation near the main stables, to allow checking the horses easily and being able to view the field where the horses are grazed. They also state that a fire in the barns would necessitate the grooms being close to get the horses away from the stables. **Why then would they then want the grooms quarters to be built at a point that is farthest away from the stables and not closer or at least as close as the former managers dwelling was built. The answer to this is the obvious one, that these building would later be sold on the open market for profit.**

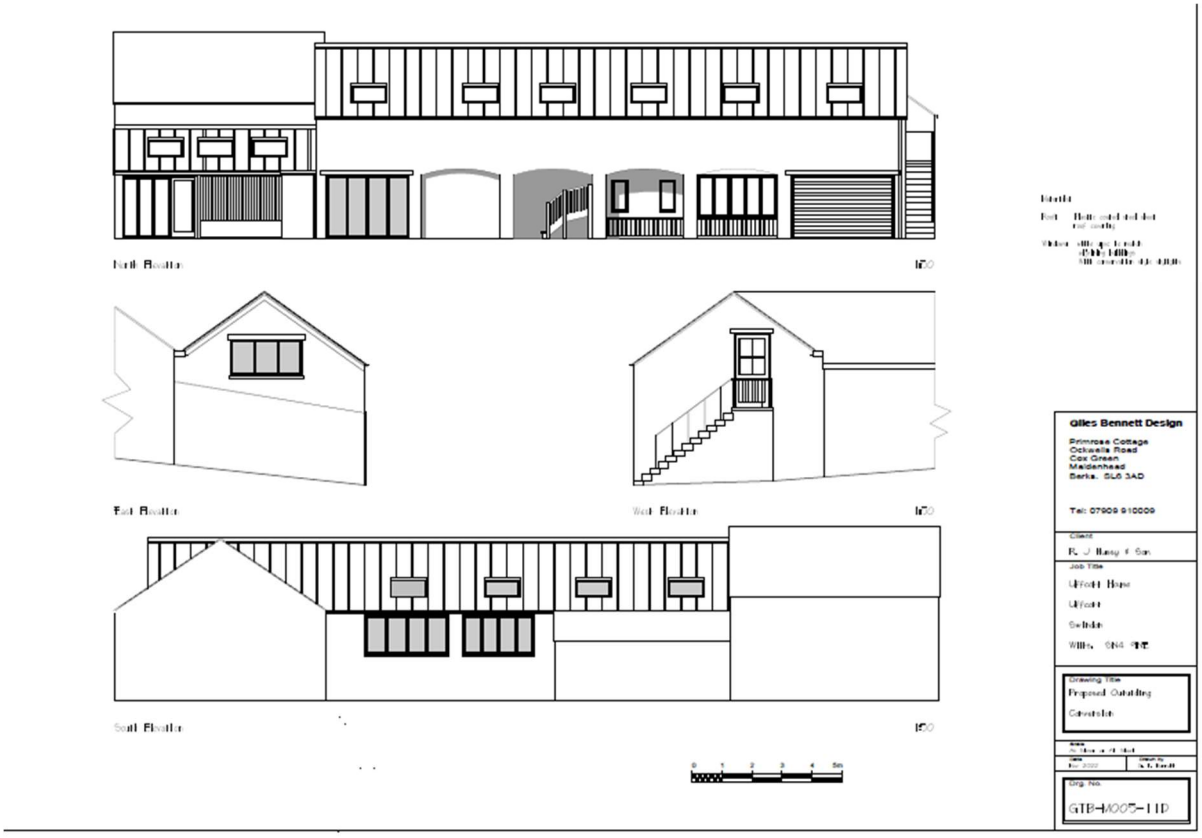
Alternative Solutions

1. Rosamin House is available and is only 200M from the Stables. The second statement made reference to being able to view the fields where horses are kept. This could be done with CCTV. Plus when it is dark, it would not be possible to view the horses. The proposed location is 250M
2. Below is the suggested location, which is only 80M from the stables.



3. The Manager's House was approved by planning on the basis that it was required to live near the Horses. Julia Norman now occupies this house, but it has been stated that due to travel requirements and having a young family she now not able to perform her duties as Manager. It is therefore suggested that she moves to another location and makes the house available for it's originally stated use. This enables the staff to use the house to be used by the staff of Windmill Stud.
4. Another alternative solution for the Grooms accommodation is the converted building in the commercial area by Uffcott House. An application was made for a change of use for this building and this could be easily converted, as the roof and structure of the building has already been refurbished. The work was done under PL/2022/09240. Location and plan shown below.




North Elevation
1:50
East Elevation
West Elevation
1:50
South Elevation
1:50
0 1 2 3 4 5m
Giles Bennett Design
Primrose Cottage
Ockwells Road
Cox Green
Maidenhead
Berks. SL6 3AD
Tel: 07909 910009
Client
R. J. Hussy & Son
Job Title
Uffcott House
Uffcott
Swindon
Drawing Title
Proposed Outbuilding
Drg. No.
GTB-M005-11D

Location of Isolation Stables

Should the isolation stables be attached to the general Grooms accommodation. The answer is no.

Also to implement the measures below it is impractical to locate this next to an existing housing area.

The block plan shows the isolation stable attached to the accommodation of the grooms and also access for the delivery of bedding and food to be via the car park.

The used bedding should be incinerated onsite and not moved to another location. This would not be possible next to existing housing in Uffcott.

This information was taken from the British Equestrian Webpage

https://www.britishequestrian.org.uk/equine/health-biosecurity/biosecurity

Also from the document on the site BIOSECURITY ADVISORY STANDARDS 2018.

A section from this document is shown below:

BIOCONTAINMENT GUIDELINES

Biosecurity measures to prevent infectious disease from entering a premises are very similar to the Biocontainment practices necessary to stop infectious disease from spreading within those premises and 'escaping' from it.

• Affected horses should be prevented any contact with other horses.

• As part of the movement restrictions, post restricted access signs to all perimeter entrance points to the premises, closing off all but the main entrance where the use of disinfectant mats should be implemented.

• Footbaths and hand sanitizers (62% alcohol gel) should be placed at the main entrance and other access points within the premises, e.g., between barns or other groups of stables.

• All other species of animals such as dogs and yard cats should be excluded from the premises.

• Soiled bedding material from stables of affected horses must be placed in enclosed containers for incineration and not put on open air muck heaps.

• Rodent, bird and insect control should be implemented especially around the isolation unit.

• Repellent insecticides and insect-proof screens should be used if appropriate, around the isolation stables.

• Non-essential access should be limited during any outbreak and a record of all visitors kept including the horses that they have contact with.

• Assign specific members of staff to care for any exposed/affected sick horses and separate staff to look after healthy horses.

• Ensure that staff understand hygiene principles and thereby do not pass diseases to horses at other premises.

• The isolation/quarantine unit should have a changing area for staff so that clothing and footwear worn in the restricted area are not worn elsewhere.

• Barrier clothing, waterproof footwear and disposable gloves should be used when working with sick and in-contact horses and after use they should be disposed of or laundered and disinfected.

• Eliminate the use of communal water sources. Instruct staff not to submerge the hose when filling water buckets.

• When using disinfectants, always follow the instructions on the label. Select a Defra approved disinfectant and chose from the general order disinfectants that have documented effectiveness in the presence of 10% organic matter, works in the water hardness of the locale and is safe to use in the environment of horses and people.

http://www.archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/diseases/control/disinfectants.htm

• Horse specific equipment (feed and water buckets, head collars etc) should be clearly marked as belonging to an individual horse and is to be used only on that horse.

• Any shared equipment (lead ropes, bits/bridles, twitches, thermometers, grooming kits etc) should be cleaned of organic debris and disinfected between horses.

• Equipment that cannot be properly disinfected (like sponges or brushes) should not be shared between horses, but separate labelled equipment should be provided.

• Cleaning and disinfection should be carried out in an area with a solid floor and a drain, with minimal walk through and traffic flows, which can itself be cleaned and disinfected at the end of the session.

• Cloth items such as stable rubbers, towels, bandages etc should be laundered and thoroughly dried between each use Disinfectant may have to be used as part of the rinse cycle, e.g., Virkon.

• Ointments and other topical medications should be dispensed from larger containers into smaller carefully labelled containers for individual use.

• Stables, mangers and yards should be kept clean, free of standing water and thoroughly scrubbed and cleansed with an appropriate detergent/disinfectant after use and then allowed to dry.

• Take care when using pressure washers as those set at greater than 120psi can produce aerosols that spread infectious agents through the air.

Federation Equestre International
https://inside.fei.org/fei/ehv-1/biosecurity-how-to/isolation-unit

From the FEI website is an extract below:

How do I know which is the best area of my yard to set up an isolation unit?
The best types of stables to use are those:

1. located outside rather than in a barn
2. located away from other horses
3. which have solid walls from floor to ceiling to create a physical barrier and eliminate shared airspace

The material from which the stables are made should also be considered as this can impact the ability to clean and disinfect them effectively.

Wooden stables have porous, rough surfaces which make cleaning and disinfection very difficult. Modifications can be carried out, such as filling holes and knots in the wood with plastic wood products or caulking, and applying marine varnish. This results in a smooth, waterproof surface that is easy to clean and disinfect.

Concrete blocks also have porous, rough surfaces which can trap organic matter. Appling enamel or heavy duty outdoor paint results in surfaces that can be easily cleaned and disinfected.

Asphalt floor can be washed and disinfected easily. Sand, dirt or compacted clay floors cannot be adequately cleaned.

Isolation unit access

Only personnel who are looking after the horses in the isolation unit should be given access. This is to prevent the possibility of disease transmission to other horses. Physical barriers constructed around the isolation unit can help to set clear boundaries and prevent inadvertent access.

Always make sure that any other horses are not walked in close proximity to the isolation unit.

Stabling of horses
When planning the stabling of horses in isolation, there are a number of key actions and considerations to be aware of:

1. If possible, stable horses in the groups in which they travel and refrain from stabling the horses directly next to each other. It is useful to identify dedicated storage areas for the belongings of each horse to avoid them from being mixed up and used on other horses.
2. Attach a clipboard containing the FEI's Temperature Monitoring Record outside each stable for the recording of rectal temperatures.
3. Identify a changing area near the entrance of the isolation stables so that clothing and footwear worn in the restricted area are not worn elsewhere.

4. Provide hand washing facilities as well as hand disinfection gel for everyone handling horses. Make sure you provide separate protective clothing and footwear for those handling and treating sick horses.
5. Communal water troughs must not be used.

Example of Existing Isolation Stable at Liverpool University

All the stables in the intensive care unit are heated and monitored 24 hours a day though surveillance systems including CCTV.

The hospital has strict and robust biosecurity protocols to minimise the potential spread of infection. Stables are cleaned twice a day and are routinely steam cleaned as part of our regular cleaning protocol. We provide individual grooming kits, halters and rugs for each horse.



Please note that Liverpool University say that they use CCTV for monitoring, which the Justification report, said was not suitable.

Suggested size and use of the proposed buildings

Numbers of Staff

From the Justification Statement that has just been issued.

Julia Norman's Yard: 2 full-time members of staff, and 3-4 part time. Equates to 3 full time.

Mollie Summerland's Yard: 2 full-time members of staff, and 1-2 part time. Equates to 3 full time.

Karen Niklasson's Yard: 3 full-time members of staff, and 2-3 part time. Equates to 4 full time.

It is assumed that the part time staff (marked in Red) can be discounted, as they would not be full time on site.

As stated in the Justification and as their web sites show. Mollie Summerland and Karen Niklasson both have their own businesses that they run from the Barns. Therefore the only staff that work for Julia Norman at Windmill Stud, that should be considered under the application from Julia Norman are the 2 Full time staff.

Each of the two storey Terraced houses are at least 80 square Meters, which is more than enough space to house two Grooms. So only one house would be required by Julia Norman. An alternative to this would be a double sized single storey dwelling. Also the Stables do not need to be double storey, as shown on the plan. This would lessen the visual impact in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and would be better placed at the rear of the Managers House.

As highlighted in the Highways Document. Should the use as a rural worker's dwelling cease and the dwelling be converted to a family home, then all future occupiers would be entirely reliant on private journeys via automobile to access all daily services. As one of the drivers from Julia Norman and likely her father James Hussey, to locate the Houses by the road is to later sell them at a later date. As the Hussey family has previously done with the farm workers houses in Uffcott.

Use of Land

Of course there is also the question of why an equestrian business was created and is continuing to use what was Agricultural land and if all permission are in place for it's creation and continued expansion. Also the question of whether some of the previous permissions should have been approved, given what is the current status. The includes the Managers House that cannot be considered as the Managers House, if as per their documentation, it is stated that they can no longer perform the task of looking after the Horses.

If you are using your land for equestrian purposes and it is classed as agricultural land the Local Authority could take enforcement action against you so it is imperative you know the difference and use limits to stay within the use permission of your land.

Many land users and owners are unaware of the distinctions on land use for Agriculture and Equestrian. If you license or lease land it could be you as the owner who becomes liable for the breach depending on the agreement in place.

Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 defines 'Agriculture' as:

"horticulture, fruit growing, seed growing, dairy farming, the breeding and keeping of livestock (including any creature kept for the production of food, wool, skins or fur, or for the purpose of its use in the farming of land), the use of land as grazing land, meadow land, osier land, market gardens and nursery grounds, and the use of land for woodlands where that use is ancillary to the farming of land for other agricultural purposes".

In relation to equestrian use to be able to fall within the definition above means having horses and dealing with them in very much the same way as cattle, sheep or pigs i.e. for slaughter, working horses on the land (ploughing for example) and turning horses out for grazing only.

Many of today's livery yards fall within the definition of Agriculture for equine use for grazing horses on the land, livery's riding off site and having permission granted only for the yard and sand school. But this can become blurred if more is done to the horse apart from grazing as additional feeding on the land, rugging the horses and/ or riding on the land will fall within the "equestrian use"

You as the landowner or user may then need to apply for planning for a change of use from agricultural to equestrian. Below is a detailed note outlining possible classes and exemptions:

"Horse riding (including jumping, eventing, dressage and similar equestrian activities) are undoubtedly among the "other indoor or outdoor sport and recreations" that fall within Class D2(e), but the keeping of horses (as distinct from their use) falls outside the scope of this use class, and is therefore sui generis. The same applies to the breeding of horses, such as race horses and hunters.

Thus stud farms and livery stables (stables where horses are kept for the owner, and fed and groomed for a fee) are sui generis uses.

There may be an exception in the case of stables if these are genuinely incidental or ancillary to some other use. For example, the keeping of one or two horses on a residential property for purely domestic recreational purposes would almost certainly be subsumed within the C3 use.

Similarly, if horses are stabled at an equestrian centre solely for the purpose of their recreational use there, this would generally be accepted as ancillary to the D2 use of this planning unit, but not if this is in practice a livery.

Racecourses and training establishments for race horses must probably be regarded as sui generis uses. It might be argued that for the jockeys (as well as the horses) it certainly involves physical exertion, but the primary focus is on the performance of the horses, and so there must be some doubt as to whether horse racing meets the criterion in the case of Millington and by RFU. As with other spectator sports, horse racing clearly does not involve any physical exertion on the part of the race goers. A fortiori, race horse training would not appear to pass the physical exertion test, as the object is to train the horses, and any physical exercise on the part of their riders is purely fortuitous."[1]

If the activities above do not put you within the legal use of the land use you will need to apply to your local planning authority for change of use from agriculture to equestrian.

Enforcement can action can be taken for a number of unlawful equestrian uses such as:

Agricultural buildings on farms to be used for keeping horses; and

Turning horses out on agricultural land with additional feed, rugging and riding on the land.

Enforcement action will focus on returning land and buildings to their original state, which can cost if you have agreed a formal written lease with an equestrian tenant for such use of a building for a use that is not permitted. All is not lost you can maybe work with the local authority to understand what they will allow and put in retrospective planning permission.

Final Comment

It is obvious from the above information that the Isolation Stable should not be attached to the Grooms Accommodation.

There is no need for the Grooms Accommodation to be on the Main Village Road and in practice this should be located closer to the Main Stable. Suggested site is to the rear of the Managers House, where it will have a lower impact on residents of Uffcott and the Area Outstanding Natural Beauty.