

Design & Access and Planning Statement

Land off Bradford Road, Trowbridge



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To Support a Full-Application for the Erection of a Temporary Rural Workers Accommodation Unit and Stable Building (Part Retrospective), with associated vehicular access, for an Existing Equestrian Business and Rare Breeds Small Holding on Land off Bradford Road, Trowbridge. BA14 9AX.

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Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary	1
1.1 Introduction	1
2. Site Background	2
2.1 The Site	2
2.2 Flood Risk	2
2.3 Local and National Designations	2
2.4 Surrounding Development	2
2.5 Planning History Summary	2
3. Background	4
4. Pre-Application Enquiry	5
5. The Proposed Development	6
5.1 Proposal Summary	6
5.2 Temporary Mobile Home for an Essential Rural Worker	6
5.3 The Stable Building (Part Retrospective)	7
5.4 Associated Vehicular Access	8
5.5 Conclusion	9
6. Rural Worker Dwellings within The Green Belt	10
6.1 Pre-Application	10
6.2 Previous Applications Approved within the Green Belt	10
7. Local Planning Policy	11
8. National Planning Policy	13
9. Conclusion	16

Documents Submitted Alongside This Statement:

Document	Produced By
4052 P1 001 Site Location and Block Plans - Rev B	Head Projects
4052 P1 002 Existing Site Plan	
4052 P1 003 Proposed Part Site Plan - Rev B	
4052 P1 004 Proposed Mobile Home Plans and Elevations	
4052 P1 005 Proposed Stable Plans and Elevations - Rev A	
4052 P1 006 Wessex Water Asset Overlay - Rev A	
Tree Information Letter - 220505 Land Off Bradford Road FLA	Furse Landscape Architects
Q835 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal - Land off Bradford Road	Chalkhill Environmental Consultants
Flood Risk Assessment	AGM Ltd
Foul and Non-Mains Drainage Assessment	
Appendix A	

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Arena Global Management Limited (AGM Ltd) is an independent and specialist town planning consultant in the Bath region. AGM Ltd has prepared this Design & Access and Planning Statement on behalf of Mr L. Dunnill.
- 1.1.2 This Design & Access and Planning Statement forms part of a Full-Application to the support the erection of a temporary rural workers accommodation unit and stables (part retrospective), with associated vehicular access, for an existing equestrian business and rare breeds small holding on Land off Bradford Road, Trowbridge. BA14 9AX.
- 1.1.3 The Proposals consist of:
- The Siting of a Temporary Mobile Home for an Essential Rural Worker
 - The Erection of a Stable Building (Part Retrospective)
 - Associated Vehicular Access
- 1.1.4 This Statement is set out in the Chapters laid out in the Table of Contents.
- 1.1.5 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying documentation submitted alongside this Application. The list of documents associated with this Application can be found within Page iii.
- 1.1.6 Both Local and National Planning Policy has been carefully considered in developing the Proposal and it is understood that the Proposed Development is in accordance with all relevant planning policy. Therefore, the development proposals should be found permissible by the Local Planning Authority.

2. SITE BACKGROUND

2.1 The Site

- 2.1.1 The Application Site is located to the north-west of Trowbridge and is accessed via an existing arrangement off Bradford Road which connects the Site to Trowbridge in the south, as well as other nearby conurbations such as Bradford-Upon-Avon to the north. Trowbridge contains a number of local services, infrastructure and facilities which serve the wider community

2.2 Flood Risk

- 2.2.1 The Application Site is located within both Flood Zone 1 and Flood Zone 3. The temporary mobile home is to be sited within Flood Zone 1, with a safe provision of both access and egress proposed. The proposed stable building is to be sited within Flood Zone 3 however, a flood gap has been provided around the perimeter of the stable to allow potential runoff to flow through without being interrupted. More information with regards to the positioning of these elements can be found within the documents submitted alongside this Application.

2.3 Local and National Designations

- 2.3.1 The Application Site is located within the following designations:
- Greenbelt
 - Bath / Bradford on Avon Bat SAC (Yellow Zone)

2.4 Surrounding Development

- 2.4.1 The Application Site is an existing rural business which specialises in the breeding of rare animals (particularly birds of prey) as well as horses. A Wessex Water Plant is located to the immediate north of the Application Site, with residential development apparent to the immediate south-west and south-east. The closest residential property is located approximately 220 m from the Application Site.
- 2.4.2 The town centre of Trowbridge is located approximately 930 m to the south-east of the Application Site and contains a variety of local services to sustain daily life practices. This includes such services like a railway station; multinational supermarkets; cafes and restaurants; leisure facilities; and a Community Hospital. Frome Railway Station provides services from Great Western Railway.

2.5 Planning History Summary

- 2.5.1 The Wiltshire Council's Planning function has been interrogated for previous Applications on the Application Site. The following Applications have been returned:

Application	Summary
20/07372/FUL	Steel framed barn clad in green tin to fit in with the surrounding area. Decision: Application Withdrawn.
W/88/01174/FUL	Change of use to lorry park. Decision: Application Approved with Conditions.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1.1 The Applicant owns the Application Site as well as the neighbouring field to the north-east (outlined in blue on the Site Plan). The Site is presently used as a rare breeds small holding, which contains several livestock animals that are under the care of the Applicant. Within this operation, rare breed birds of prey and horses are bred and reared for eventual custom.
- 3.1.2 The Applicant breeds a number of rare breed birds on Site, namely American Redtails, Sparrow Hawks, Goshawks, and Ferruginous hawks. These breeds can lay eggs up to three times a year, with an associated clutch size (number of eggs laid) of between 3 and 5. This represents itself as a particular challenge as at any one point in time, there could be upwards of 25 rare birds on Site that need to be cared for and appropriately reared. The Applicant has also successfully (and naturally) crossbred a Harris and Redtail, being one of only three people in the UK to have achieved this. The Applicant is therefore well respected within the raptor world.
- 3.1.3 The value of these rare breed birds is relatively high and can present themselves as an easy target for thief's and burglary. It is therefore vital to have somebody on hand 24/7 to ensure that the animals are not only looked after but can act as a necessary deterrent to any potential criminality. Furthermore, the requirement and associated need for somebody to be on Site 24/7 is facilitated by the specific nest-site requirements raptors demand. Each species has its own preferences with regards to position, orientation, shelter, accessibility, and visibility of the nesting-site. Furthermore, the breeding period can often be detrimental to the future health of the birds, with some failing to crack open the shell of their egg, thus reducing (if not stopping) its intake of oxygen.
- 3.1.4 Bird of Prey related crime has increased during the last five-years, with a distinct rise witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The RSPB's Birdcrime 2020 report identified that persecution levels had reached a 30-year high. Furthermore, the associated value of un-hatched eggs (for a variety of reasons) has become a commodity for common thieves to steal.
- 3.1.5 The Applicant also cares for several other animals which require his attention and care during their respective breeding periods. Rhea birds are also present on Site and represent a key element to the current rare breeding enterprise. Associated laying Rhea birds can sell for upwards of £1,000 due to the current value of their eggs.
- 3.1.6 The Applicant also keeps horses on Site via the orchard to the north-east of the Application Site (as well as sheep). The Applicant is looking to improve the current breeding and rearing programme, as well as the horses' general welfare, through the provision of a new stabling block. It is vitally important to live within close distal proximity to the stables during the critical breeding and rearing period as a variety of complications can occur. More information on this can be seen within **Appendix A**.

4. PRE-APPLICATION ENQUIRY

- 4.1.1 A Pre-Application enquiry was submitted in August 2021, with a response received in October 2021 (ENQ/2021/04032). The Pre-Application was for the “the siting of a temporary rural workers accommodation for equestrian use and a rare breeds small holding”.
- 4.1.2 Within the LPA’s response, the Officer stated that, in their view, the Proposed erection of a temporary rural worker’s dwelling would not be considered as a ‘very special circumstance’, thus being contrary to the Green Belt policy as set out and defined within the National Planning Policy Framework. As Chapter 6 of this Statement demonstrates, a number of Applications, similar to that of the Proposed, have been granted permission whilst being within the Green Belt designation. This would demonstrate a national precedent of rural workers dwelling being considered appropriate development within the Green Belt.
- 4.1.3 The Officer did however state that the temporary accommodation, in terms of its design, is considered suitable for its rural location. The design of the temporary mobile accommodation has not changed from the Pre-Application enquiry and should therefore still be considered suitable in terms of its design.
- 4.1.4 The Officer also concluded that there would be no impact on nearby neighbourhood amenity. It is understood that this remains unchanged within the Full-Application proposals.
- 4.1.5 With regards to Ecology, the Officer highlighted the Site’s location within the Bath / Bradford on Avon Bat SAC (Yellow Zone) and that any forthcoming Application should be accompanied by advice from a qualified ecologist. As per the recommendation, Chalkhill Environmental Consultants were instructed to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Assessment. The conclusion of their documents is to be read in conjunction with this Statement.

5. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Proposal Summary

- The Siting of a Temporary Mobile Home for an Essential Rural Worker
- The Erection of a Stable Building (Part Retrospective)
- Associated Vehicular Access

5.2 Temporary Mobile Home for an Essential Rural Worker

5.2.1 The Proposed Temporary Mobile Home is to be single-storey and contain the provision for two double bedrooms, an open kitchen / dining and lounge area, as well as a bathroom. The Mobile Home will be finished in treated timber boarding (cedar or equivalent), with artificial slate utilised on the roof. Premium timber double glazed windows will also be used. The Mobile Home utilises a similar palette of materials to the proposed stables, as well as other animal pen structures currently on Site, unifying the whole Site and further establishing its use as a rare breeds small holding and equestrian business. The Proposed palette of materials is therefore considered to be rural in its aesthetic, positively reacting to the local vernacular.

5.2.2 **Figure 1** demonstrates the Temporary Mobile Home as Proposed.



Figure 1: Temporary Mobile Home as Proposed

5.2.3 The size of the temporary mobile home is modest for its requirement and would allow for the Applicant to live within proximity to the animals that are situated on Site. As can be demonstrated within the Proposed Site Plan (**Figure 2**), the aviaries and stable building are located no more than 50 m from the Mobile Accommodation

unit, thus allowing the Applicant to swiftly respond to any complications that may occur during the breeding and rearing period of both the horses and bird of prey.

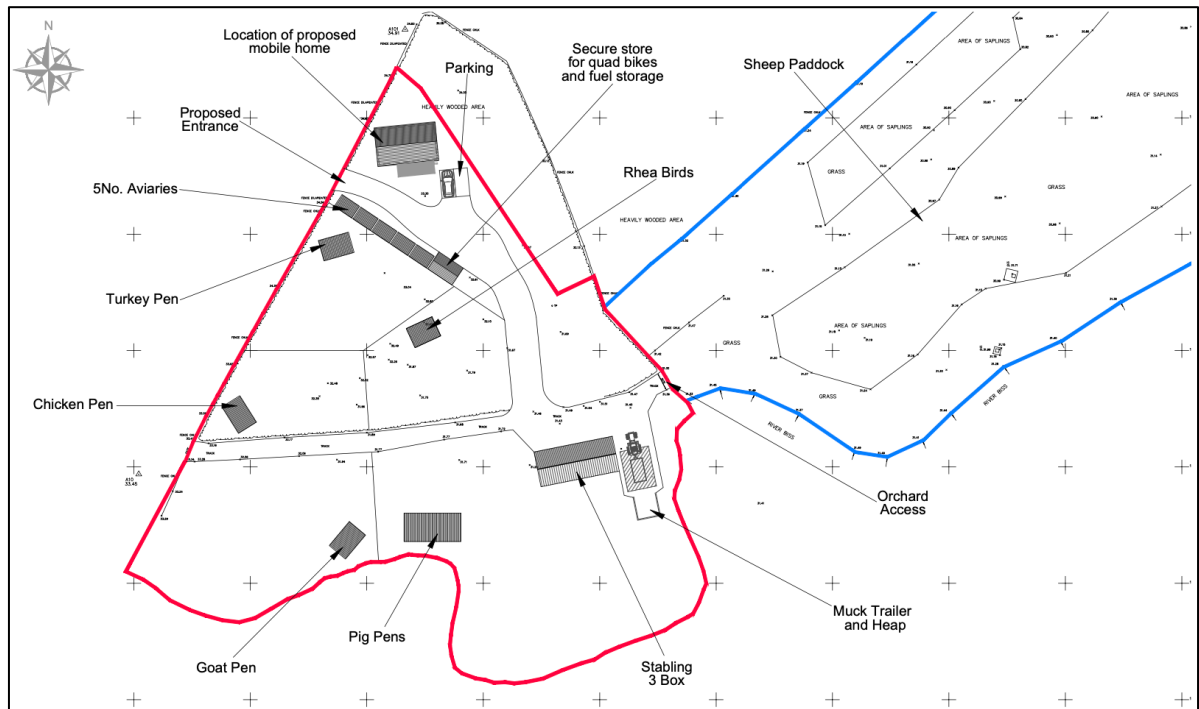


Figure 2: Proposed Site Plan

5.2.4 The Proposed Temporary Mobile Home is to be sited within Flood Zone 1, thus negating its likelihood of flooding.

5.3 The Stable Building (Part Retrospective)

5.3.1 The Proposed Stable Building is to provide three stabling boxes as well as a separate Tack and Feed store. This would allow for the rural enterprise to expand and improve on its existing horse breeding programme, which is often critical to the future livelihood of the stock. This element of the Proposals is part-retrospective and was part-erected in February 2022.

5.3.2 The Stable Building is to be finished in Horizontal Timber Cladding, with a grey profiled metal sheet roof. The choice of materials has been carefully considered alongside the proposed temporary mobile home, as well as other animal structures currently existing on Site, to ensure that it is sympathetic to the local character.

5.3.3 A flood gap has also been provided, which runs along the perimeter of the stable building. This has been recommended by infrastructure planning consultancy Calibro, to ensure that the discharge from any future flood event is not obstructed by the structure itself.

5.3.4 Stable buildings are typically constituted as essential facilities in conjunction with a land use for outdoor recreation. Within Table 2: Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification of the PPG, such facilities are classified as being ‘water compatible’

and therefore acceptable within Flood Zone 3. Furthermore, land and buildings for agriculture and / or forestry are classified as being ‘less vulnerable’.

5.3.5 Whether the stables are classified as being ‘less vulnerable’ or ‘water compatible’, Table 3: Flood Risk Vulnerability and Flood Zone ‘Compatibility’ of the PPG makes it clear that the erection of stables would be considered an appropriate form of development within Flood Zone 3a, and there is no requirement to apply the Exception Test.

5.3.6 More information can be found within the Flood Risk Assessment that is submitted alongside this Application.

5.3.7 **Figure 3** demonstrates the Stable Building as Proposed.

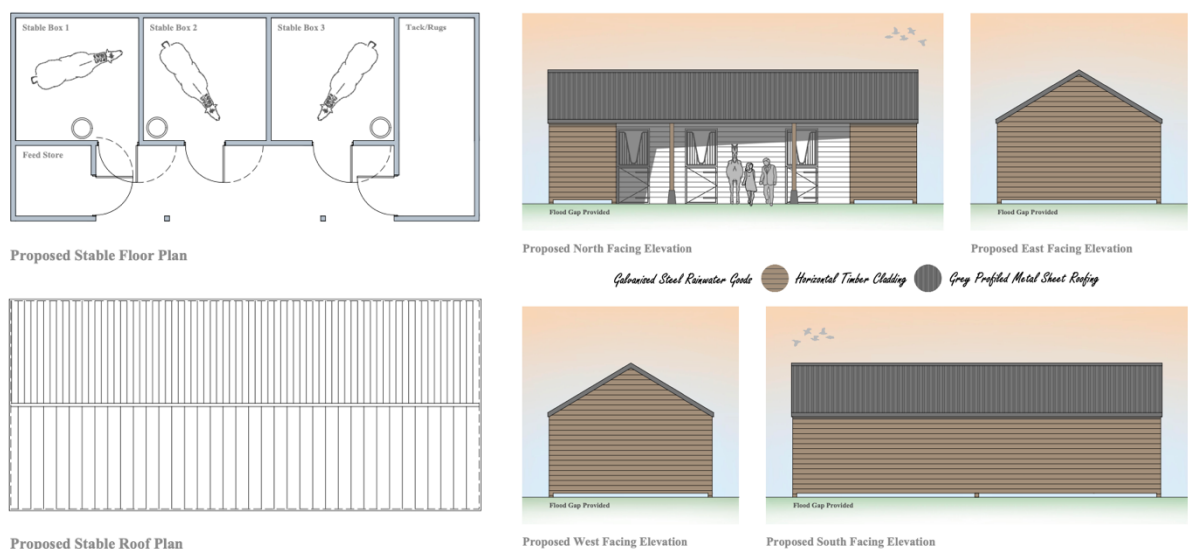


Figure 3: Stable Building as Proposed

5.4 Associated Vehicular Access

5.4.1 A new vehicular access track is Proposed to the north-west of the Application Site and connects both the proposed mobile home and wider site-infrastructure. It joins the existing access track to the south of the Site and has been sited in such a location that is outside the requisite Flood Zone 2 / 3. With the access track being in Flood Zone 1, safe access and egress can be maintained for the rural worker during times of increased rainfall discharge. Key elements of the rare breeds small holding have also been sited close to the access track in the event of a flood emergency. This demonstrates that the Site’s constraints have been appropriately considered and appropriately mitigated.

5.4.2 The Proposed Access track can be evidenced within Figure 2.

5.5 Conclusion

- 5.5.1 This Chapter has discussed the Proposed Development. Each aspect of the Application is necessary to the successful daily operation of the existing rural enterprise. Without the provision of these additional elements, the business would suffer a detrimental impact and significantly reduce its operation(s).

6. RURAL WORKER DWELLINGS WITHIN THE GREEN BELT

6.1 Pre-Application

- 6.1.1 Within the Pre-Application, the Officer stated that, in their view, the Proposed erection of a temporary rural worker's dwelling would not be considered as a 'very special circumstance', thus being contrary to the Green Belt policy as set out and defined within the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 6.1.2 As this Chapter will demonstrate, a number of temporary rural worker dwellings have previously been granted permission within the Green Belt. This therefore demonstrates that such development can be considered appropriate and in-line with Green Belt policy.

6.2 Previous Applications Approved within the Green Belt

Application	LPA	Description
16/03652/FUL	B&NES	Erection of additional livery stables and a rural workers accommodation unit.
PK17/0164/F	South Gloucestershire	Siting of a temporary static caravan and additional stabling to be erected inside existing barn.
PK14/2036/F	South Gloucestershire	Change of Use of land from part agricultural and part keeping of horses to Stud Farm (sui generis) as defined in Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), stationing of 1no. mobile home and erection of 2no. foaling boxes.
19/02105/FUL	B&NES	Erection of Temporary Agricultural Workers Dwelling and the Installation of Stables within the Existing Barn (Retrospective).
18/01562/FUL	B&NES	Erection of a Temporary Rural Workers Accommodation Unit (three years).

7. LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

7.1.1 The following policies from the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015 - 2026) have been taken into consideration in assessing the principle of development:

- Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy
- Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy
- Core Policy 45: Meeting Wiltshire's Housing Needs
- Core Policy 48: Supporting Rural Life
- Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Core Policy 51: Landscape
- Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping

7.1.2 **Core Policy 1 (Settlement Strategy):** This policy "identifies the settlements where sustainable development will take place to improve the lives of those who live and work in Wiltshire". Within this, Trowbridge is defined as a 'Principal Settlement', and is identified as a settlement in which sustainable development will take place to improve the lives of all those who live and work in Wiltshire. They are to provide the most significant level of jobs and homes, as well as support the wider community facilities and infrastructure.

7.1.3 **Core Policy 2 (Delivery Strategy):** This policy seeks to "deliver development in Wiltshire between 2006 and 2026 in the most sustainable manner". The proposed development is located within the Trowbridge Community Area but is outside a defined settlement boundary. Within Core Strategy 2, the Policy sets out a number of exceptions where development can occur outside settlement boundaries, this includes Core Policy 48 – Supporting Rural Life which will be discussed later in this Chapter. The proposed development provides 1 no. temporary mobile home for a rural worker, complying with both Core Policy 2 and Core Policy 48. Once a Planning Officer has been allocated to this Application, we can directly send across a copy of the Business Plan and associated Accountancy documentation to be read in conjunction with this Application. A redacted copy will also be sent across.

7.1.4 **Core Policy 45 (Meeting Wiltshire's Housing Need):** This policy states that "New housing, both market and affordable, must be well designed to address local housing need incorporating a range of different types, tenures and sizes of homes to create mixed and balanced communities". The proposal of 1 no. temporary mobile home for a rural worker reflects the need for a permanent presence on site to maintain and look after the birds of prey and horses during the critical breeding and rearing period. More information on the breeding and rearing of horses can be evidenced within [Appendix A](#).

- 7.1.5 **Core Policy 48 (Supporting Rural Life):** This policy explains the approach taken to support rural communities. It permits that whilst “Residential development will not normally be permitted in the countryside” ... “additional dwellings may be justified in certain circumstances when they are required in the interests of supporting rural employment, for example in association with equestrian activities when worker accommodation is needed onsite”. The proposed development conforms to this objective, providing worker accommodation for the maintenance, management and overall welfare for the animals contained on site. Furthermore, the Policy also maintains that Proposals should be supported by functional and financial evidence. With regards to this point, please refer to the submitted business plan and associated accountancy documentation.
- 7.1.6 The care of rare breed livestock, and in particular the breeding of horses and birds of prey, require 24/7 care. It will be essential for security, overall management, and the welfare of all animals, including any breeding mares and horses, to always have someone on site. Breeding horses spend a lot of time in the stable, and during the critical foaling and aftercare period it is vital to have someone living on site to reduce the risk of serious health implications from occurring.
- 7.1.7 **Core Policy 50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity):** This policy requires “Development proposals [to] demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale”. Furthermore, it maintains that “All development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity”. Please refer to the Tree Information Letter (Furse Landscape Architects) and Ecology documentation (Chalkhill Environmental Consultants) submitted alongside this Application.
- 7.1.8 **Core Policy 51 (Landscape):** This policy maintains 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”. The Proposed development has been carefully designed to sensitively coexist within the immediate locality and utilises a palette of materials that seek to create a coherent Site that is evidently both rural and equine in Use.
- 7.1.9 **Core Policy 57 (Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping):** This policy states that “A high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings”. Developments are expected to “create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality”. The proposed stable buildings will complement the ruralistic Use of the Application Site and its immediate locality (being that of a rare breed small holding).

8. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

- 8.1.1 Legislation and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) require that planning applications are to be decided in accordance with the statutory development plan for an area unless other material planning considerations indicate otherwise. As a matter of policy, the Government has stated in the NPPF (Paragraph 14) that this means approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay.
- 8.1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (updated in July 2021) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF must be considered in the preparation of Local Plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 8.1.3 The following Chapters of the NPPF have been deemed relevant to this application:
- Part 2: Achieving Sustainable Development
 - Part 6: Building a Strong, Competitive Economy
 - Part 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- 8.1.4 **Part 2: Achieving Sustainable Development** - Paragraph 11 states that "Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development". Paragraph 8, which precedes this point, considers that sustainable development has been accomplished when three overarching objectives have been achieved. These objectives are economic, social, and environmental in principle. Paragraph 9 follows, stating that "Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development", taking the local circumstances into account. The proposed development achieves these three objectives. The provision of a temporary mobile home for a rural worker as well as the necessary equine infrastructure, enable the growth and expansion of this rare breeds small holding business within the rural economy. Finally, the materials used for construction are sustainable in nature and rural in both feel and aesthetic.
- 8.1.5 **Part 6: Building a Strong, Competitive Economy** - This states that "Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand, and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, considering both local business needs and wider opportunities for development". Furthermore, under the 'Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy' sub-section, Paragraph 84 states that:

"Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;

b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;

c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and

d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.”

8.1.6 The Proposed Development seeks to expand and grow the existing rare breeds small holding business, with the provision of a temporary mobile home and associated equine infrastructure, thus improving the current breeding, rearing, and training programme of horses and mares. The proposed development therefore achieves this policy objective and supports businesses within the rural economy that are so important to the general economy.

8.1.7 Part 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment - This policy states that:

“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;

c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;

d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and

f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.”

- 8.1.8 The Application Site is located within the national Green Belt designation and as such, the necessary factors have been taken into consideration. As demonstrated within the ecology documentation, biodiversity net gain is proposed through implementation of a 1.2 m wide margin along the new path, sown with a suitable wildflower mix.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1.1 This Planning Statement forms part of a Full-Application to support the support the erection of a temporary rural workers accommodation unit and stables (part retrospective), with associated vehicular access, for an existing equestrian business and rare breeds small holding on Land off Bradford Road, Trowbridge. BA14 9AX.
- 9.1.2 The Proposals consist of:
- The Siting of a Temporary Mobile Home for an Essential Rural Worker
 - The Erection of a Stable Building (Part Retrospective)
 - Associated Vehicular Access
- 9.1.3 Each aspect of the Application is necessary to support the successful operation of the existing rare breeds small holding business, who specialises in the breeding, rearing, and selling of horses and birds of prey.
- 9.1.4 Once a Planning Officer has been allocated to this Application, we can directly send across a copy of the Business Plan and associated Accountancy documentation to be read in conjunction with this Application. A redacted copy will also be sent across.
- 9.1.5 As demonstrated within this Statement, any impacts arising from the proposed development have been suitably mitigated through the design and provision of specific measures identified within the supporting material. The proposed development is therefore in accordance with National planning policy and the adopted local Development Plan and should be granted permission.

APPENDIX A

Breeding of Horses

Mares

Mares are covered when they are in season. Each season lasting up to 6 days. Usually, a season occurs every twenty-one days from April until October.

The ideal time for a mare to be covered is from May through to August, the pregnancy lasts 11 months and the foal will be born between April and July. Some mares may not conceive straight away and will be covered again at their next season.

Different mares will be constantly occupying the stables and fields during these months, some for foaling and aftercare, as explained later in this text.

This five-month period (April to August) will be the busiest, constant care and observation will need to be provided for both mares and foals to prevent the problems that can occur with breeding horses.

The upkeep and quality of the premises and the standard of management and hygiene all contribute towards the health and safety of the mares and foals on site. Foals require constant vigilance as they are very inquisitive which can easily lead them to becoming injured. The presence of full-time accommodation for the stud manager to enable constant supervision is a vital factor.

Some of the foals bred and owned by the Applicants, from their own resident mares, will be for sale at some point. Therefore, because of the dependency on the sale of the offspring for income, each of the proven broodmares will be bred from on an annual basis.

The Stud will have a specialist stud vet who will visit on a regular basis. A local blacksmith and local suppliers will all be supported in the running of the business.

The importance of the Stud Veterinary visits will include:

- Two swabs taken from each mare
- EVA blood tests of mares
- Examinations of mares whilst at stud
- Pregnancy Diagnosis

Care of Resident Brood Mares

A mare will conceive more easily if she is in good overall general health and soundness. Careful feeding of protein and vitamins carried out during pregnancy is necessary, without which the offspring may lack in size and bone. A mare's condition needs to be maintained. Constant care with feeding and diet is important.

Mares can become stressful when in foal and are therefore susceptible to problems brought on by stress, such as colic.

These problems usually occur during the night-time; therefore, it is important to be able to check the welfare of all the horses at the stud at all hours of the day and night.

Mares once covered will be swabbed check for infection (results take 24 - 48 hours).

Mares may also be ultra-sound scanned to enable the vet to check foetal progress.

Mares will come into season 7 - 10 days after having a foal and then the mare's system will return to its usual season every 21 days. She can be put back into foal from the first season after foaling.

The critical period for a mare is between 5 - 8 weeks into pregnancy, the mare's system is especially susceptible to abortion.

Correct feeding during pregnancy is important. Several small feeds are to be fed rather than one or two larger feeds. In- foal mares have difficulty in digesting large feeds with a lot of bulk. Feeding needs to be at regular times to aid digestion. Extra minerals will be fed at later stages of pregnancy.

Mares returning for foaling will arrive four to six weeks prior to foaling. Each mare will need time to settle down before foaling and the staff will need to become familiar with her behaviour.

For the birth it is imperative to be on-hand to observe the mare prior to and during the foaling. Foaling will take place in a stable, with easy access to hot water should it be needed by a vet. The mare should be closely observed during the final stages. Foaling normally occurs between 2000 hours and 0700 hours, more often in the early hours of the morning.

Observation is crucial for the foaling process, with someone on hand to call the vet if necessary. Problems can and do occur including straining and nothing appears, straining stops and the mare appears to have given up, once foaled excessive bleeding when the umbilical cord breaks, abnormalities in the foal, extended labour pain from the mare and no afterbirth expelled (after 8 hours). The afterbirth will be examined to make sure it is whole, a minute piece of afterbirth retained can be a problem for the mare, causing infection and the mare is less likely to conceive again. A mare or foal can easily be lost simply because the birth wasn't observed. A vet needs to be called as soon as complications are observed.

It is important that the new-born foal and mare are observed to ensure that the mare has accepted her foal and it is drinking and she is feeding.

Early foals (those born April/May) and the mare will initially have to be stabled.

Late foals (those born July)- the mare will have to have extra dietary supplements with her feed. There are days during the summer that the mare and foal will have to be stabled. The weather could be hot with many flies - not pleasant for a young foal and a medium for spreading disease. A young foal can be extremely susceptible to summer colds and infections.

Mares should be put on to three feeds per day to ensure sufficient protein to produce milk for the foal.

The Foal

The first three to four weeks in the life of the foal are the most critical period. It is exceptionally vulnerable and susceptible to disease and observation is vital.

Routine handling is carried out so that it is easier to handle and deal with ailments. Once the mare and foal start to go out to grass, it is important to be able to catch them to bring them back in during bad weather. The foal is vulnerable and must not be subjected to rain or strong winds. Two people will be needed to handle the mare and foal; one to lead the mare and one to supervise the foal, helping it to keep its balance. During the first week one to two hours grazing twice a day is sufficient, increasing depending on the weather. Things can go wrong very suddenly, and it is important to have someone on hand.

There are many ailments, illnesses and abnormalities that can occur in foals. All need immediate action and require constant supervision.

Feet trimming will be carried out by the blacksmith at 4-6 weeks of age and again at 10 weeks, then will continue on a monthly basis.

Resident Foals

At five - six months the foals will be weaned away from their mothers. During this stressful time for mare and foal constant attention should be paid to the animal's wellbeing. Horses can panic when separated so weaning should be a slow process to avoid the stress. A mare's udders should be checked twice daily for two days and then daily for a least a week to make sure her milk is drying up and no infection has set in.

After weaning the foals will be out in the field for a few hours during the day and closed in at night.

During the first-year colts may be castrated. After the operation the colt will need to be walked in hand every two hours for the first few days until any swelling has gone down. During years three or four the horse will be broken in. This can take 6 - 8 weeks depending

on the behaviour and acceptance of the training by the horse. Breaking in usually occurs during the end of the summer months. Most of this training requires two people.

Once broken the horse may be ridden over the winter months or be brought back into work during the spring.

All the above procedures for breeding and looking after visiting and resident mares and foals justify the need for accommodation and someone to be on hand 24/7 to look after the horses.

In addition to the mares and foals, there will be young horses in training for competition which will also require supervision. Their training will continue throughout the winter months in preparation for competition and sale during the spring and summer. Some of the young horses in training will be completed during the winter as a result of their training. All are valuable horses for the owners and on-site accommodation will ensure the best of care and supervision for the horses on site.

Conclusion

The business dependency will be based on the successful production, breeding, and management of resident mares. Therefore, every opportunity to aid this success and sustainability should be supported. The granting of the proposed scheme with accommodation for the Stud Manager, as well as the necessary equine infrastructure, is a major factor to the success of the business.