

ITEM	2	RECOMMENDATION : APPROVAL
REF NO:	3PL/2008/1419/F	
LOCATION:	BRETtenham Home Farm Shadwell	APPN TYPE: Full POLICY: Out Settlemnt Bndry ALLOCATION: No Allocation CONS AREA: N TPO: N LB GRADE: Adjacent Grade 2
APPLICANT:	Mr Philip Hodson Nunnery Stud Near Brettenham	
AGENT:	KWA Architects Chalk Farm High Street	
PROPOSAL:	C of U from agric. fields to equine use incor. an all weather gallop & two stables cons. of six boxes each	

KEY ISSUES

1. Impact on the character and appearance of the countryside
2. Impact on wildlife

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

The proposal is for change of use of 2 agricultural fields to equine use, the development of an all weather gallop and the erection of two stable blocks - each accommodating 6 boxes. The proposed stables are located on the northern part of the site adjacent existing buildings. The 2006 permission for the development of Harling Wood Farm included gallops. The applicant requires separate facilities for both teams, therefore the proposed gallops will be used in association with the team based at Home Farm with the previously approved gallops for use by the team based at Harling Wood Farm. The stables will be used for isolation units for the endurance horses returning from competition to Home Farm. The surfacing of the existing field access is to be the subject of a separate planning application. The agricultural land is currently farmed by a tenant farmer.

SITE AND LOCATION

The site is currently agricultural land located to the north of the A1066 between the highway and the existing stabling, residential accommodation and facilities for equine endurance training based at Home Farm. Home Farm and the adjacent, recently constructed, Harling Wood Farm are the bases for two endurance racing teams; each team has their own separate facilities. The site is adjacent a Site of Special Scientific Interest and County Wildlife site.

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

Planning permission for stabling and residential accommodation at Home Farm was granted in 2001 and 2004. Permission to extend the facilities to accommodate a further endurance team was granted in 2006.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The following National Planning Guidance and/or Saved Policies of the Breckland Local Plan have been taken into consideration in the determination of this application:

PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

CONSULTATIONS

BRETTENHAM/KILVERSTONE P C

This application covers the change of use of agricultural to equine and the erection of 2 stable blocks of 6 stalls each.

Comments: This application once again gave rise to concern by the PC because they seek to further increase in the facilities for endurance horses but in a piecemeal way, without any apparent justifiable need. The PC also considers the concomitant ongoing reduction in agriculture is to the detriment of the farming taking place in the same area. This latest set of applications is believed to be the fifth in a series of applications for endurance horse training and support dating back to 2001. The PC is concerned that there is little evidence of any endurance horse training and that these continuing applications seem to be using the planning system for other hitherto undisclosed purposes. The PC also noted the access to these developments and its predecessors was articulated in previous applications - approvals to be via Home Farm and that access directly onto the A1066 had not been agreed. However, it is clear that this access onto the A1066, which was previously a track, had now been metalled and there is evidence that it is now in regular use to the A1066.

The PC decided to object to this application and recommends that it be considered by the Development Control Committee.

HIGHWAY AUTHORITY - no objection providing the facilities are used solely as ancillary to the existing facilities.

COUNCIL'S HISTORIC BUILDINGS OFFICER - no objection.

COUNCIL'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER - no objection.

COUNCIL'S CONTAMINATED LAND OFFICER - no objection.

NATURAL ENGLAND - no objection to the proposal subject to a condition requiring construction work to be undertaken outside of the nesting season.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY - no objection to the proposal

REPRESENTATIONS

One letter of objection has been received on behalf of the tenant farmer, who has an annual tenancy on the two fields that are the subject of this application raising the following concerns:

- impact of the loss of agricultural land on the agricultural holding,
- loss of habitat of Stone Curlews,
- no consideration of alternative sites
- existing facilities not used all year

ASSESSMENT NOTES

- * The application is referred to Development Control Committee as it is a major application.
- * The main issue is the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the countryside and the adjacent SSSI.
- * The stables are located close to existing buildings but need to be separate from the existing yards as they are to be used for isolation units. There is a need to keep horses, which have returned from competition, away from the horses in training as they travel over Europe and come into contact with other horses which brings risk of infection and is a form of quarantine.
- * The site is bounded to the south and west by mature trees and hedging. It is acknowledged that there will be views into the site from the A1066, however they are limited. They proposed stables will not result in a significant impact on the landscape or detract from views across the countryside. The change of use from arable land to pasture is an acceptable use in the countryside and will not detract from the character of the area.
- * Natural England has raised no objection in relation to the impact of the proposal on the SSSI.
- * The surfacing of the farm access direct on to the A1066 will be dealt with as a separate planning application.
- * The impact on the tenant farmer as a result of loss of land is not considered to be a planning consideration and therefore should be afforded limited weight.
- * The application is recommended for approval subject to conditions

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Permission

CONDITIONS

- 3007** Full Permission Time Limit (3 years)
- 3048** In accordance with submitted AMENDMENTS
- 3920** Restriction of works during nesting
- 3920** Non-standard condition
- 3998** NOTE: Reasons for Approval
- 4000** Variation of approved plans