Response to Application SMDC/2022/0635 to vary Condition 4

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. This is a joint response from the nearest neighbours to the Applicant: the owners of Lawn Farm, Thorney Edge House, Blackwood Farm and Mill Lodge; signatory names are included at the end of this letter.

We wish to strongly object to this Application.
The original reasons given by SMDC for the inclusion of condition 4 of SMD/2018/0061 were "to define the permission in the interests of the character and appearance of the area, protection of the Green Belt, residential amenity and Highway Safety".
These highly valid reasons still endure; nothing has changed.

Thorney Edge is a rare gem of a country lane with its pretty ancient well and cobbled ford, attracting many visiting walkers, riders, rambling groups, joggers and cyclists – adults, young children and unaccompanied older children.
Mr. Pearson's arena is accessible by three routes, all of which are extremely narrow with severe blind bends, no passing places and steep hills, together with a very tight "packhorse" style old bridge on one route. In some parts the lane access is tightly edged with old stone walls on either or both sides, giving no room at all for manoeuvre. Recent inevitable roadwork diversions demonstrated the limitations of these roads, leading to tailbacks of cars that could not cross due to the lack of width at certain points.
Quite simply, the approach cannot safely accommodate horse box traffic of any magnitude; it is impossible for two horseboxes travelling in opposite directions to cross safely, without driving offroad onto grass verges or dangerously reversing back around blind bends. In winter the lane is not gritted and can be challenging in a car, never mind a horsebox unfamiliar with the area.

The two liveries referred to by Mr. Pearson to justify his Application are both "permanent stay" liveries which were already operating in established stabling in 2018 when Condition 4 was put in place (again, nothing has changed). By definition, horses remain on site at both these properties and do not "come and go" in horseboxes on a daily/weekly basis. We all testify that these liveries

generate close to zero (if not zero) client horsebox journeys each week and do not disturb us as residents in any way.
In contrast, Mr. Pearson's request to teach visiting clients and their horses for 12 hours a day, seven days a week could potentially generate up to two or three hundred arrival/departure client horsebox journeys along this country lane each week. (168 if lessons were hourly, 336 if lessons were half hourly).
Mr. Pearson states that he wishes to "have liveries stay in the stables and use the arena" but the stables serving the arena have yet to be built – hence the need for clients to "use car and trailer or horsebox" on visits. In this respect, the Application to vary condition 4 seems premature, somewhat "cart before the horse". Mr. Pearson currently has his property up for sale for 1.2 million, which may perhaps indicate that the removal of Condition 4 is purely speculative.
Could Mr. Pearson not use nearby facilities for his teaching (Lodge Farm 2 miles/Beaver Hall 6 miles) until he sells his property and leaves the area?

We feel that any variation to Condition 4 will greatly endanger drivers, riders, walkers and cyclists and spoil the amenity and character of this beautiful rural lane which is enjoyed by so many and which must remain protected.

On a very brief but relevant tangent, we wish to flag to SMDC the apparent non-compliance by the Applicant with other conditions of SMD/2018/0061 which required completion before first use: 9 (surfacing), 14 (landscaping) and 15 (removal of pre-existing gate), despite the arena having been in use for some time. The site has a distinctly "unfinished" appearance.

Signatories:

Mr. & Mrs. P .Blessington Lawn Farm

Mrs. M .Pegg Blackwood Farm

Mr. & Mrs. R. Jackson Thorney Edge House

Mr & Mrs. D. Litherland Mill Lodge