

Supporting Statement

RETROSPECTIVE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR
OUTDOOR RIDING ARENA

Old Bridge Farm, Biddulph. ST8 7SJ.

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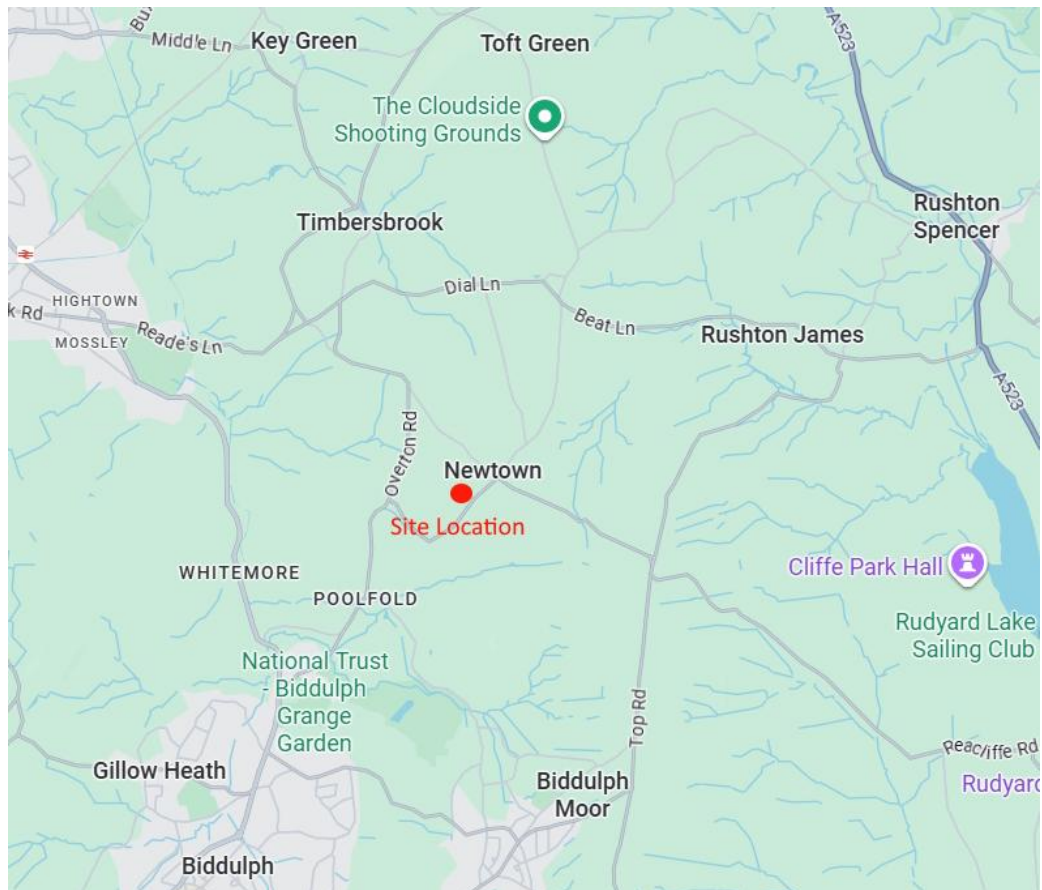
1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document has been prepared in support of a Retrospective Planning Application for an Outdoor Riding Arena Development at Old Bridge Farm on behalf of the applicant Beverly Curtis.
- 1.2 This document provides an overview of the existing site prior to construction works taking place, it sets out details of the arena construction as well as justification for the proposed works.
- 1.3 It should be noted the applicant was unaware that the proposed works would require planning approval. The applicant held talks with planning enforcement following completion of the arena and now seeks to rectify the planning situation through submission of a retrospective application.
- 1.4 It is important to note that the all-weather arena is solely for private use by the applicant and her family some of whom are professional riders. The arena is intended as a private equestrian training facility on land within the applicant's ownership and close to the family home. The arena will not be used by members of the public. Horses that use the arena are already kept on site.

2.0 EXISTING SITE APPRAISAL

- 2.1 The existing site at Old Bridge Farm extends to approximately 12.5no. acres and includes the applicant's dwelling as well as residential curtilage, mixed-use equestrian/agricultural barn and associated access/parking. The wider site consists of grazing land which supports the applicant's horses and livestock.
- 2.2 The site is bordered to the Southeast by Biddulph Park Road and to the Northeast by Biddulph Common Road. Agricultural land lies to the Northwest and Southwest. Vehicular access to the site is from Biddulph Park Road.
- 2.3 Topography undulates across the site with high ground situated to the East. The applicant's dwelling and proposed outdoor arena occupy the lowest part of the site with views of the arena construction from key visual receptors limited in part by a combination of existing ground levels, mature landscaping and existing built development.
- 2.4 Equestrian grazing land within the footprint of the arena development was considered to be of poor quality as it often became waterlogged due to site topography.
- 2.5 The closest neighbouring residential property to the arena construction is Park Farm which lies approximately 125m to the Northeast separated by mature trees and hedgerow.
- 2.6 The arena is situated directly adjacent to the applicant's residential curtilage and within close proximity the equestrian/agricultural barn which is used to house the applicant's horses/livestock.

Retrospective Planning Application for Outdoor Riding Arena.
Old Bridge Farm, Biddulph. ST8 7SJ.



The proposed site is located around 200m West of Newtown village centre and 2km Northeast of Biddulph. Land within the applicant's ownership shown in BLUE.



3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The proposals amount to private equestrian training facilities which are intended to be used by the applicant and her family many of whom are professional riders.
- 3.2 The proposed all-weather surface will also be used on occasion as a corral for the applicant's livestock.
- 3.3 The position of the proposed arena was chosen due to its proximity to the existing equestrian/agricultural built development. The arena is also clearly visible from the applicant's dwelling allowing riding within the arena to be monitored for reasons of safety.
- 3.4 The riding arena will be used for show jumping practice, its dimensions will allow the applicant's competition horses sufficient space to gallop, jump and turn as they complete a set of show jumps. The arena will also be used for lunging, exercising and all-weather turn-out of horses kept on site.
- 3.5 The arena surface is a specialist mix of natural sand and fibres bound by a perimeter timber post and rail fence. The surface specification has been chosen based on horse welfare and performance; it is a free-draining surface constructed with a clean drainage stone base. Land drains have been installed as part of the arena construction with an outfall connected to an existing pond on site.
- 3.6 A modest amount of cut/fill was needed as part of the arena construction; existing and proposed ground levels have been indicated on drawing L103. Grass banks forming the edge of the arena construction have been constructed to a maximum gradient of 1 in 2.

- 3.7 The applicant has a total of 9no. horses on site which are mostly turned out in the surrounding grass paddocks.
- 3.8 An agricultural barn is used as shelter for the horses which have freedom to move between the barn and paddocks. The barn lies just 30m from the arena development.
- 3.9 Access to the arena is via an existing gate off the applicant's driveway, from here a new farm track links the arena surface to the residential curtilage. The farm track has been constructed in tarmac planings and includes a turning area close to the existing access gate.
- 3.10 No trees have been affected by the arena construction works; excavations have been kept clear of all RPAs.
- 3.11 No lighting is proposed as part of this application.

4.0 ACCESS ISSUES

- 4.1 The proposals amount to private equestrian training facilities which will be used by the applicant and her family. The size and quality of the riding arena replicates competition standards allowing show jumping fences to be laid out for practice purposes.
- 4.2 Vehicular access to the site is via private driveway leading from Biddulph Park Road to the South, the driveway connects to the applicant's dwelling and existing equestrian/agricultural uses to the public highway.
- 4.3 The proposed all-weather riding arena has been located on land previously used as equestrian grass turn-out. The applicant owns 9no. horses all of which are kept on site.

- 4.4 There are no proposals to increase the number of horses on site, it is not anticipated that the construction of an arena will see an increase in traffic movements to/from site.
- 4.5 Horsebox parking will be situated close to the applicant's dwelling as is currently the case.
- 4.6 There are no proposals to alter the existing vehicular or pedestrian access to site.
- 4.7 Vehicle turning areas are located close to the applicant's dwelling with all vehicles able to enter the public highway in forward gear.
- 4.8 Parking associated with the existing dwelling will remain unaffected by the works.
- 4.9 A new farm vehicle turning area has been constructed as part of the arena access track, this will be used by vehicles/machinery needed to maintain the arena surface,
- 4.10 There are no proposals to alter the existing vehicular access off Biddulph Park Road, this access has proved to be sufficient for the applicant's residential/agricultural/equestrian needs in the past.

5.0 SUMMARY

- 5.1 This document has been prepared in support of a Retrospective Planning Application for an Outdoor Riding Arena Development at Old Bridge Farm on behalf of the applicant Beverly Curtis.
- 5.2 Works on the arena construction are now complete; this application seeks to make those works lawful development.

- 5.3 The arena occupies an area of land previously used for equestrian grazing/turn-out, this area of the site is low lying, close to the applicant's dwelling, well connected to the equestrian barn and partly screened from key visual receptors by a combination of natural topography, built development and mature landscaping.
- 5.4 The arena will remain in private use, only horses owned by the applicant will use the all-weather facility. The applicant Beverly Curtis is a former member of the GB Equestrian Team and has competed at major events including Badminton and Burghley. Beverly retired from International competition after falling and breaking her back in 2015, she is now registered disabled. Beverly has coached her children and grandchildren some of whom have gone on to compete in high level equestrian competition. The proposed arena will allow Beverly the opportunity to continue coaching/supporting her family members from her home at Old Bridge Farm.
- 5.5 The arena construction has had no impact on trees or hedgerow on site.
- 5.6 No external lighting has been installed, and none is proposed.
- 5.7 Cut and fill required to create a level arena surface was nominal as can be seen from the accompanying site section drawing.
- 5.8 The proposals will have no traffic impact; the facility will only be used by horses already kept on site.
- 5.9 It is considered that the development will have nominal impact on the site as a whole. The proposed arena is a private scale all-weather facility for outdoor sport and recreation; it will provide the applicant and her family with a safe space to ride as well allowing horses to be exercised and turned-out during winter months regardless of paddock conditions.

6.0 ADDENDUM



The applicant Beverly Curtis (top left) who is a retired member of Team GB. Beverly has competed at Badminton and Burghley Horse Trials as well as numerous International equestrian venues during her professional career. The proposed all-weather arena will allow Beverly to continue to support members of her immediate family (pictured) all of whom compete at high level on horses kept at the application site.

