



PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

GREENACRES FARM
WINEHAM LANE
BOLNEY
WEST SUSSEX
RH17 5SD

CHANGE OF USE OF LAND TO EQUESTRIAN, ERECTION OF A
SANDSCHOOL, AN ALL WEATHER TURNOUT AREA AND CREATION
OF TRACK FOR PRIVATE EQUESTRIAN USE

CLIENT: MS JEN BOOTH

OCTOBER 2025

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Sadler Planning is instructed by Ms Jen Booth to submit a planning application for the change the use of the land to equestrian, erection of a sandschool, an all weather turnout area and creation of track for private equestrian use.
- 1.2 This Planning Statement has been written by Kathryn Sadler BA (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI who has over 20 years experience of working as a Town Planner within local authorities and private practices within the southeast.
- 1.3 The Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with:
- The Plans provided by Meadowbrook Design;
 - The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by C.T Ecology; and
 - The BNG Metric and Details by C.T Ecology.

2.0 The Proposal and Need

- 2.1 This planning application seeks the change of use of the land to equestrian, creation of a sandschool, creation of an all weather turnout area and creation of a track.
- 2.2 The proposed sand school would measure 25m by 60m which gives an area of 1500 square metres. A 1.4m high post and rail fence would be erected around the periphery with a wooden five bar gate for access. The top surface of the sandschool would consist of sand and fibre.
- 2.3 The sandschool is needed to exercise the horses kept on site. The Applicant requires a cushioned surface to exercise the horses as the fields become too hard during the summer and too boggy and wet during the winter to ride on.
- 2.4 The all weather turnout area would have an area of 985 square metres. The turnout area would have a 1.4m high wooden post and electric wire fence around the periphery. The top surface would consist of sand.
- 2.5 The all weather turnout area is needed for the Applicants horses during the winter as the site is on heavy clay which gets poached and becomes unsuitable to turn horses out during the winter due to the wet conditions.
- 2.6 The new porous access track would measure 4.7m wide. The track would consist of Type 1 MOT.
- 2.7 A new porous hard surfaced track is required to connect the proposed sandschool to the existing hard surfaced yard area so that the Applicant can access the sandschool without wading through mud in the winter. It needs to be wide enough that a tractor and harrow can be driven down the track to level the sand school.
- 2.8 A new area of wild flower grassland measuring 1,900 square metres and an area measuring 2,170 square metres of tree planting is proposed along the northern boundary of the field in order to provide a 10% net gain in biodiversity.

The Need

- 2.9 The Applicant has five horses that are kept on site. They are kept within the fields on site.
- 2.10 The Applicant requires a safe and secure area to be able to ride and exercise her horses that consists of a soft but supportive surface. The Applicant has ridden her horses within the fields but finds the ground becomes too hard within the summer and too wet and boggy within the winter.
- 2.11 The Applicant also requires an all-weather turnout paddock which would be surfaced with sand so that she can turn her horses out in the winter when the fields are deep with mud. The ground is clay and so becomes poached in the winter months. If horses are stood in deep mud for long periods of time it can cause mud fever which is painful for horses and can also cause issues with ligaments and tendons.

3.0 The Site and Surrounding Area

- 3.1 The site is located within a countryside location. Greenacres Farm is located on the western side of Wineham Lane and to the south of the A272 which runs along the northern boundary of the site.
- 3.2 Greenacres Farm consists of a detached dwelling with a barn and 15 acres of land.
- 3.3 There is vehicular access to Greenacres Farm from Wineham Lane to a large parking area.
- 3.4 To the north of the site is the A272 road which is a busy road connecting the A23 to the A24. To the east of the site is Wineham Lane. To the south of the site is Greenacre's Cottage, Old Barn Farm and open fields. To the west is the rest of the Applicant's land holding, open fields and woodland.
- 3.5 The area where the proposed all-weather turnout paddock is to be located was where the original house was sited before it was relocated to its current location. The footings, concrete slab and foundations are still in situ. The area was also used to store builders materials prior to the Applicant purchasing the site so there is a lot of hard surfacing in situ. There are fir trees along the northern and western boundaries which provide screening.



Photo Above: The site of the proposed all-weather turnout paddock

- 3.6 The area where the proposed sand school would be located is within an existing grass paddock and is bordered to the south by a row of trees which would help screen the arena.



Photo Above: The proposed location of the sandschool arena



Photo Above: The proposed location of the porous track to give access to the arena

4.0 Planning History

4.1 Greenacres Farm's planning history is set out below:

BK/017/76	Agricultural Building – Approved 6 th July 1976.
BK/024/87	Consultation by Statutory Undertaker – Deemed permission for proposed overhead electricity lines – No Objection 27 May 1987.
BK/047/97	Replacement lean-to building for agricultural purposes – Approved 9 th December 1997.
BK/012/98	Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of one replacement bungalow – Approved 17 th July 1998.
00/00989/FUL	Conversion of existing garage (integral) into accommodation – Approved 29 th June 2000.

5.0 Planning Policy

- 5.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the policies in the Development Plan, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The documents that comprise the Development Plan for Mid Sussex District Council are:
- Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031, Adopted March 2018
- 5.3 Mid Sussex District Council is reviewing and updating their District Plan. Upon adoption, the new District Plan 2021 - 2039 will replace the current District Plan 2014-2031 and its policies will have full weight. In accordance with the NPPF, Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies of the emerging plan according to the stage of preparation; the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the relevant policies; and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF. The draft District Plan 2021-2039 (Regulation 19) is currently at Examination and stage 1 hearings were concluded on the 31st October 2024. There are unresolved objections to the majority of Policies in the draft District Plan and as such, only minimal weight can be given to the Plan. Therefore, this planning application has been assessed against the policies of the current adopted District Plan.
- 5.4 Bolney Neighbourhood Plan 2015 – 2031 was made in September 2016.
- 5.5 On 12th December 2024, the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published and sets out the governments planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024

- 5.6 Paragraph 8 indicates that there are three elements to sustainable development, economic, social and environmental.
- 5.7 Paragraph 11 confirms that at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking, the NPPF states that this means:

“Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations,*

making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination."

5.8 Paragraph 88 states *"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."*

5.9 Paragraph 116 states *"Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios."*

Mid Sussex District Plan 2018

5.10 Policy DP12 (Protection and Enhancement of Countryside) states *"The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:*

- it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or*
- it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan."*

5.11 Policy DP14 (Sustainable Rural Development and the Rural Economy) states *"Provided it is not in conflict with Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside and DP13: Preventing Coalescence:*

- new small-scale economic development, including tourism-related development, within the countryside (defined as the area outside of built up area boundaries as per the Policies Map) will be permitted provided:*
 - it supports sustainable growth and the vitality of the rural economy; and*
 - where possible, utilises previously developed sites.*
- diversification of activities on existing farm units will be permitted provided:*
 - they are of a scale which is consistent to the location of the farm holding; and*
 - they would not prejudice the agricultural use of a unit.*
- the re-use and adaptation of rural buildings for business or tourism use in the countryside will be permitted provided:*

- *the building is of permanent construction and capable of re-use without substantial reconstruction or extensive alteration;*
- *the appearance and setting is not materially altered; and*
- *it is not a recently constructed agricultural building which has not been or has been little used for its original purpose."*

5.12 Policy DP26 (Character and Design) states *"All development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, will be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development:*

- *is of high quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;*
- *contributes positively to, and clearly defines, public and private realms and should normally be designed with active building frontages facing streets and public open spaces to animate and provide natural surveillance;*
- *creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;*
- *protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;*
- *protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;*
- *does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution (see Policy DP29);*
- *creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;*
- *incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;*
- *positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;*
- *take the opportunity to encourage community interaction by creating layouts with a strong neighbourhood focus/centre; larger (300+ unit) schemes will also normally be expected to incorporate a mixed use element;*
- *optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development."*

5.13 Policy DP37 (Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows) states *"The District Council will support the protection and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows, and encourage new planting. In particular, ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees will be protected.*

Development that will damage or lead to the loss of trees, woodland or hedgerows that contribute, either individually or as part of a group, to the visual amenity value or character of an area, and/ or that have landscape, historic or wildlife importance, will not normally be permitted.

Proposals for new trees, woodland and hedgerows should be of suitable species, usually native, and where required for visual, noise or light screening purposes, trees, woodland and hedgerows should be of a size and species that will achieve this purpose.

Trees, woodland and hedgerows will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:

- *incorporates existing important trees, woodland and hedgerows into the design of new development and its landscape scheme; and*
- *prevents damage to root systems and takes account of expected future growth; and*
- *where possible, incorporates retained trees, woodland and hedgerows within public open space rather than private space to safeguard their long-term management; and*
- *has appropriate protection measures throughout the development process; and*
- *takes opportunities to plant new trees, woodland and hedgerows within the new development to enhance on-site green infrastructure and increase resilience to the effects of climate change; and*
- *does not sever ecological corridors created by these assets.*

Proposals for works to trees will be considered taking into account:

- *the condition and health of the trees; and*
- *the contribution of the trees to the character and visual amenity of the local area; and*
- *the amenity and nature conservation value of the trees; and*
- *the extent and impact of the works; and*
- *any replanting proposals.*

The felling of protected trees will only be permitted if there is no appropriate alternative. Where a protected tree or group of trees is felled, a replacement tree or group of trees, on a minimum of a 1:1 basis and of an appropriate size and type, will normally be required. The replanting should take place as close to the felled tree or trees as possible having regard to the proximity of adjacent properties.

Development should be positioned as far as possible from ancient woodland with a minimum buffer of 15 metres maintained between ancient woodland and the development boundary."

5.14 Policy DP38 (Biodiversity) states "Biodiversity will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:

- *Contributes and takes opportunities to improve, enhance, manage and restore biodiversity and green infrastructure, so that there is a net gain in biodiversity, including through creating new designated sites and locally relevant habitats, and incorporating biodiversity features within developments; and*
- *Protects existing biodiversity, so that there is no net loss of biodiversity. Appropriate measures should be taken to avoid and reduce disturbance to sensitive habitats and species. Unavoidable damage to biodiversity must be offset through ecological enhancements and mitigation measures (or compensation measures in exceptional circumstances); and*
- *Minimises habitat and species fragmentation and maximises opportunities to enhance and restore ecological corridors to connect natural habitats and increase coherence and resilience; and*
- *Promotes the restoration, management and expansion of priority habitats in the District; and*
- *Avoids damage to, protects and enhances the special characteristics of internationally designated Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation; nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and locally designated Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, Local Nature Reserves and Ancient*

Woodland or to other areas identified as being of nature conservation or geological interest, including wildlife corridors, aged or veteran trees, Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, and Nature Improvement Areas.

Designated sites will be given protection and appropriate weight according to their importance and the contribution they make to wider ecological networks.

Valued soils will be protected and enhanced, including the best and most versatile agricultural land, and development should not contribute to unacceptable levels of soil pollution.

Geodiversity will be protected by ensuring development prevents harm to geological conservation interests, and where possible, enhances such interests. Geological conservation interests include Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites."

- 5.15 Policy DP41 (Flood Risk and Drainage) states *"Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be implemented in all new developments of 10 dwellings or more, or equivalent non-residential or mixed development²² unless demonstrated to be inappropriate, to avoid any increase in flood risk and protect surface and ground water quality. Arrangements for the long term maintenance and management of SuDS should also be identified."*

Bolney Neighbourhood Plan

- 5.16 Policy BOLE1 (Protect and Enhance Biodiversity) states *"Development proposals should protect and, where possible, enhance biodiversity by:*
- ensuring they do not have an unacceptable impact on sites of environmental importance; and*
 - ensuring they do not result in loss of or unacceptable harm to protected species or their habitats and ancient or species-rich hedgerows, grasslands and woodlands; and in the case of loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats permission will be refused unless the need for, and the benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss; and*
 - preserving ecological networks such as colonies of native flora, migration and transit routes of fauna across roads and between green spaces, feeding and breeding grounds; and*
 - protecting ancient trees or trees of arboricultural value; and*
 - adopting best practice in Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS); and*
 - where possible, planting screening and amenity hedges and trees consistent with native species in the area, paying heed to eventual height, spread and shadow."*
- 5.17 Policy BOLE2 (Protect and Enhance the Countryside) states *"Outside the Built-up Area Boundary, development must demonstrate that it does not have an unacceptable impact on the landscape. In particular, development proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed the requirements of BOLD1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.*

Major development which has an unacceptable impact on the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty shall be refused, unless it can be demonstrated that there are exceptional circumstances and that it is in the public interest."

5.18 Policy BOLD1 (Design of New Development and Conservation) states "Planning permission for new development will ordinarily be permitted subject to the following criteria:

- *It is designed to a high quality which reflects Bolney's rural nature and responds to the heritage and distinctive character by way of;*
- *height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, design and materials of buildings, and*
- *the scale, design and materials of the public realm (highways, footways, open space and landscape); and*
- *It does not have an unacceptable impact on the setting of any heritage asset; and*
- *It respects the natural contours of a site and protects and sensitively incorporates well-established natural features of the landscape including trees, species-rich hedgerows and ponds within the site; and*
- *It creates a safe, accessible and well-connected environment that meets the needs of its users; and*
- *It will not result in unacceptable levels of light, noise, air or water pollution, and*
- *Where possible, it provides lock-up facilities for storage of bicycles, children's pushchairs and mobility vehicles to encourage walking and cycling and to assist accessibility."*

6.0 Planning Appraisal

Principle

6.1 At a national level, the NPPF supports this type of development in principle. Paragraph 88 (Supporting a prosperous rural economy) 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.' The principle of the proposal can therefore be supported."*

6.2 Therefore, planning decisions should support leisure developments in rural areas that require a countryside location. Decisions should support well designed new structures within countryside locations which respect the character of the local area.

6.3 The proposed new sandschool and all-weather turnout area would be sited within the countryside as defined by the Mid Sussex District Plan. Policy DP12 of the Mid Sussex District Plan in part states:

"The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural landscape character of the District, and:

- It is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or*
- It is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan."*

6.4 Policy DP14 sets out the District Plan policy on sustainable rural development and the rural economy and this states in part that:

"Provided it is not in conflict with Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside and DP13: Preventing Coalescence: new small-scale economic development, including tourism-related development, within the

- countryside (defined as the area outside of built up area boundaries as per the Policies Map) will be permitted provided:*
 - it supports sustainable growth and the vitality of the rural economy; and*
 - where possible, utilises previously developed sites.."*

6.5 It is considered that the principle of providing new equestrian facilities on a site that currently is used to graze horses is supported at national level through paragraph 88. Policy

DP14 of the Mid Sussex District Plan supports sustainable growth and the vitality of the rural economy. This proposal would support the rural economy as rural workers would be employed directly and indirectly to build the sandschool and all-weather turnout area. The equestrian use needs to be sited within a countryside location and it is a use that is considered acceptable within the countryside.

- 6.6 It is considered that the proposal accords with policies DP12 and DP14 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and that the principle of providing equestrian facilities is supported by national and local policy.

Design and Scale

- 6.7 The scale of the sandschool and all-weather turnout area have been kept to a minimum. The sandschool needs to be at least 25m by 60m as the Applicant competes in Eventing (Dressage, Show Jumping and Cross Country) and therefore needs to practice dressage which requires a standard arena of 20m by 60m, show jumping and cross country which requires more space to jump and turn within the arena.
- 6.8 The all-weather turnout area has been designed to fit within the existing vegetated boundaries. Therefore, the existing trees have dictated the size of the area. The larger the turnout area, the more space horses have to freely move around the space which is better for their joints.
- 6.9 The all-weather turnout area would also enhance this area of the site as the previous owner of the site had left the footings of the old house in situ and there were areas of hardstanding, piles of scattered hardcore and building materials on site.
- 6.10 The design is high quality and the layout provides appropriate soft landscaping / screening in accordance with policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and BOLD1 of the Bolney Neighbourhood Plan.

Sustainable Development

- 6.11 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF has three overarching objectives, an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective. This proposal would support the economic objective and would provide sustainable growth and improve the vitality of the rural economy in this area. This proposal would support the rural economy as rural workers would be employed directly and indirectly to construct both the sandschool and the all-weather surface.
- 6.12 The site is sustainably located to nearby dressage and show jumping venues such as Hickstead, Hascombe Farm, Belmoredean and Brendon Stud.
- 6.13 The social objective would be met as this proposed equestrian facility would provide a purpose built facility which would enable the Applicant to train and exercise her horses on site.

- 6.14 The environmental objective would be met as the proposal preserves the landscape setting, enhances the amount and quality of native tree planting on site, and provides enhanced grassland habitat.
- 6.15 Therefore, this proposal accords with the overarching objectives of sustainable development and makes effective use of the land in accordance with paragraph 8 of the NPPF.

Biodiversity

- 6.16 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been carried out by C.T Ecology and this has found that the application site is dominated by managed grassland (where the sandschool is proposed) and areas of concrete forming the foundations of a former house and a discrete area of concrete (where the all-weather turnout area is proposed). The site is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory designations.
- 6.17 The survey area is of value within the immediate vicinity of the site, providing habitats to support breeding birds and foraging bats with connectivity for more mobile species including badger and hedgehog to pass through the site.
- 6.18 Based on the results of the current assessment, no further surveys are required to inform the planning application, instead adopting a precautionary approach for different elements of the works in relation to breeding birds, reptiles and badger is considered sufficient to fully safeguard these species groups.
- 6.19 Although the site has limited potential to support great crested newt, due to the site falling within a red impact risk zone, precautionary measures should be implemented as part of the site preparation and construction phases in order to fully safeguard this species.
- 6.20 Details regarding recommended mitigation to include precautionary working practices, together with habitat enhancement measures are provided in the recommendations section of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal submitted with this application. It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with policy DP38 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and Policy BOLE1 of the Bolney Neighbourhood Plan.

BNG

- 6.21 The total area of habitat to be lost to facilitate the development equates to 0.028 ha which comprises modified grassland together with 10 trees.
- 6.22 The proposed on-site biodiversity net gain would consist of:
- Existing grassland within the northern extent of the site (equating to 0.19ha) would be enhanced to create wildflower grassland. Overseeding with an appropriate wildflower grassland mix would serve to enhance the sward with long-term meadow management promoting a diverse range of flowering species to develop throughout the growing season. Yellow rattle would be incorporated into the seed mix in order to

suppress growth of coarse grasses during establishment. The area would be fenced to restrict horse grazing; and

- A series of 117 trees will be planted to form a tree line along the northern site boundary, buffering the site from the adjacent 'A' road. These will comprise a mix of native specimens.

6.23 C.T Ecology have provided the BNG Metric which shows the total Biodiversity Net Gain delivered would be 11.06 %. Therefore, the proposals would accord with policy DP38 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

6.24 The all-weather turnout paddock is sited between the existing bungalow, the existing barn and the A272 so is well screened by existing built form and existing mature trees. No neighbours would be effected by the all-weather turnout area.

6.25 The proposed sandschool is to be sited to the west of the bungalow on site and beyond the rear gardens of Greenacres Cottage and Old Barn Farm. There is an established tree belt along the southern boundary of the field which would screen views of the proposed sandschool from neighbours.

6.26 The exercising of horses is a quiet countryside activity which would not disturb neighbouring occupiers amenities. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed sandschool and all-weather turnout area would not have a material impact on nearby residential amenities in accordance with policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Access / Parking

6.27 Access to the site would be achieved via the existing vehicular access from Wineham Lane. This entrance gives access to the house and to the land holding. There is plenty of space to park and turn in front of the house.

6.28 It is therefore considered that the proposal would be in accordance with policy DP21 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and paragraph 116 of the NPPF.

Drainage / Flood Risk Assessment

6.29 Flood mapping produced by the Environment Agency has been used to identify flood risk at the site. The full extent of the site lies within Flood Zone 1 which has a low risk of flooding from rivers (and the sea).

6.30 The proposed development area is not at risk of alternative sources of flooding including surface water flooding, groundwater flooding or flooding from reservoirs.

6.31 Both surfaces will be permeable. The all-weather turnout area drainage would be piped to the existing surface water runoff system. The sandschool surface water would be piped into the existing ditch network to the south of the field.

6.32 It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with policies DP41 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 At a national level, the NPPF supports this type of development in principle. Paragraph 88 (Supporting a prosperous rural economy) 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”*
- 7.2 Therefore, planning decisions should support leisure developments in rural areas that require a countryside location.
- 7.3 The proposed sandschool and all-weather turnout area would be sited within the countryside as defined by the Mid Sussex District Plan. Policy DP12 of the Mid Sussex District Plan states the countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural landscape character of the District, and is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.4 Policy DP14 sets out the District Plan policy on sustainable rural development and the rural economy and this states that new small-scale economic development, including tourism-related development, within the countryside will be permitted provided it supports sustainable growth and the vitality of the rural economy; and where possible, utilises previously developed sites.
- 7.5 It is considered that the principle of providing a sandschool and all-weather turnout area is supported at national level through paragraph 88. Policy DP14 of the Mid Sussex District Plan supports sustainable growth and the vitality of the rural economy. This proposal would support the rural economy as rural workers would be employed directly and indirectly to construct the sandschool and all-weather turnout area. Therefore, the principle of the proposal is supported at national and local level.
- 7.6 A preliminary ecological appraisal has been carried out and found that the site is of value, providing habitats to support breeding birds and foraging bats with connectivity for more mobile species including badger and hedgehog to pass through the site.
- 7.7 Based on the results of the current assessment, no further surveys are required to inform the planning application, instead adopting a precautionary approach for different elements of the works in relation to breeding birds, reptiles and badger is considered sufficient to fully safeguard these species groups.
- 7.8 Although the site has limited potential to support great crested newt, due to the site falling within a red impact risk zone, precautionary measures would be implemented as part of the site preparation and construction phases in order to fully safeguard this species.
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- 7.9 Details regarding recommended mitigation to include precautionary working practices, together with habitat enhancement measures are provided in the recommendations section of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal submitted with this application. It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with policy DP38 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.
- 7.10 The proposed native planting scheme and enhanced grassland would enhance the biodiversity value of the site by 11.06% in accordance with policy DP38 of the Mid Sussex District Plan. This should be given considerable weight in the determination of the application.
- 7.11 The proposal considered that the proposed equestrian facilities would not have a material impact on nearby residential amenities in accordance with policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.
- 7.12 There is enough parking and turning space within the existing yard for horseboxes and cars, vehicular movements to the site would be kept to a minimum as it would be the Applicants home. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal would be in accordance with policy DP21 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and paragraph 116 of the NPPF. Therefore, this should be given weight in the determination of this application.
- 7.13 The full extent of the application site lies within Flood Zone 1 which has a low risk of flooding from rivers (and the sea). The proposed development area is not at risk of alternative sources of flooding including surface water flooding, groundwater flooding or flooding from reservoirs.
- 7.14 This application is submitted to you for your favourable consideration.