

Application No: 09/4311M

**Location: NEW BARN FARM, CHELFORD ROAD, OLLERTON,
KNUTSFORD, CHESHIRE, WA16 8SZ**

**Proposal: CONSTRUCTION OF BUILDING TO PROVIDE AN INDOOR
RIDING ARENA ON SITE OF EXISTING OUTDOOR MANEGE**

For NEW BARN LIVERY LTD

Registered 26-Jan-2010

Policy Item No

Grid Reference 379103 376228

Date Report Prepared: 23 March 2010

REASON FOR REPORT

The application is for a major development and is required to be dealt with by Committee under the Council's terms of delegation.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE

MAIN ISSUES

- Whether the proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt and if so whether there are any very special circumstances that would outweigh the harm caused by inappropriateness and any other harm
- Whether the visual impact of the proposal is acceptable
- Whether the proposal would have any adverse impact on protected species

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

New Barn Farm is located within the Green Belt to the north of the A537 Chelford Road, within a ribbon of development. The wider site measures 4.6 hectares and comprises a number of existing buildings including a dwelling and 14 stables. A manege is located to the rear of the buildings, with paddocks beyond. Car parking exists to the front of the site adjacent to Chelford Road. An equestrian business currently operates from New Barn Farm.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought to erect a building to provide an indoor riding arena on the site of the existing outdoor manege. The footprint of the building would measure 25m x 60m, it would have an eaves height of 3.5m and a ridge height of 7m. It would be partially clad in profiled steel sheeting, with the majority of the building being open sided.

RELEVANT HISTORY

80098P

Full Planning

CHANGE OF USE OF FARM TO SHIRE HORSE CENTRE. TEMPORARY CARAVAN

approved 19950301

98/0177P

Full Planning

RENEWAL OF A TEMPORARY PERMISSION FOR A RESIDENTIAL CARAVAN FOR A FURTHER 3 YEAR PERIOD

refused 19980422

99/1428P

Full Planning

CHANGE OF USE OF Paddock TO FORM MANEGE; EXTEND EXISTING CAR PARK TO PROVIDE 12 CAR PARKING SPACES; INTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING STABLE TO PROVIDE MESSROOM, W C AND SHOWER

approved with conditions 19990908

09/0482M

Full Planning

CONTINUED USE OF LAND AND BUILDINGS FOR LIVERY, TRAINING CENTRE & HORSE RIDING SCHOOL. FORMATION OF A PARKING AREA FOR 12 VEHICLES AND ALTERATIONS TO AN EXISTING BUILDING TO FORM OFFICE, RECEPTION, STORAGE, REST ROOM AND W.C.'S.

approved with conditions 20091123

POLICIES

Regional Spatial Strategy

DP1 – Spatial Principles
DP2 – Promote Sustainable Communities
DP4 – Make the Best Use of Existing Resources and Infrastructure
DP5 – Manage Travel Demand: Reduce the Need to Travel and Increase Accessibility
DP7 – Promote Environmental Quality
RDF4 – Green Belts
W1 – Strengthening the Regional Economy
W6 – Tourism and the Visitor Economy
W7 – Principles for Tourism Development
L1 – Health, Sport, Recreation, Cultural and Education Services Provision
EM1 – Integrated Enhancement and Protection of the Regions Environmental Assets

Local Plan Policy

NE11 – Nature Conservation
BE1 – Design Guidance
GC1 – New Buildings
RT13 - Tourism
DC1 - New Build
DC6 – Circulation and Access
DC32 – Equestrian Facilities
DC33 – Outdoor Commercial Recreation

Other Material Considerations

PPG2: Green Belts
PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth
PPS7: Sustainable Development In Rural Areas
PPG17: Outdoor Sport and Recreation

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Highways: no highways objections in principle subject to appropriate conditions.

VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL

Ollerton with Marthall Parish Council: no objection to the proposal if there are no significant planning issues that are of concern to the Council.

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

A letter of support has been submitted in relation to the application. The letter is from a horse practitioner based in Knutsford who is expressing interest in running clinics for national and international training purposes from New Barn Farm if it has an indoor arena.

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

A Planning, Design & Access Statement and an additional letter regarding PPS4 has been submitted in support of the application. Full copies of the statement and letter are available online with the main points raised summarised below:

- The proposed development is appropriate development in the Green Belt
- If the Authority does not consider that it is appropriate development then the specialist nature of the business at New Barn Farm comprises a very special circumstance which justifies approval of the application
- The design and siting of the building would minimise its impact on the visual amenities of the Green Belt
- Not anticipated that the proposals would result in any intensification of the use of the site in terms of either the number of horses or the number of visitors at any one time. It would however allow for certainty in the planning of the use of the site on a daily and seasonal basis and the continued development of the business, which is currently weather dependant
- The proposal meets priorities for sustainable development
- The proposal complies with national policy and development plan policy

In summary the additional letter states that the new PPS4 positively encourages sustainable economic and tourism development in rural areas, particularly where this is in support of existing rural enterprises. Particular reference is made to support for equine businesses that provide suitably located recreational facilities, and also to training businesses.

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

New buildings in the Green Belt can be acceptable in principle provided that the building is required for a limited number of purposes as outlined in PPG2 and Local Plan Policy GC1. If the building is not considered to be required for any of the listed purposes then very special circumstances would be required.

Green Belt

Local Plan Policy GC1 replicates guidance contained within PPG2 and states that within the Green Belt approval will only be given for new buildings for a

limited number of purposes including essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation. The erection of new buildings for any other purpose other than those listed would be inappropriate development which is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt.

Local Plan Policy DC32 relates specifically to equestrian facilities and states that within the countryside the establishment of equestrian facilities will normally be allowed provided that, amongst other things, proposals for stables and ancillary facilities are small scale and required in the interests of animal welfare, the development is not prominent in views from local vantage points and that larger scale facilities utilise redundant buildings or are sited within an existing complex of buildings; form part of a farm diversification scheme; and remain as part of the original holding. Local Plan Policy DC33 deals with outdoor commercial recreation and states that such facilities will be assessed against the criteria listed within the policy. This states, amongst other things, that the design, siting, scale and materials of any necessary buildings or structures should harmonise with the existing landscape setting of the site and should not significantly harm or detract from the visual character of the site and its surroundings. Wherever possible new buildings should be sited in close proximity to existing non-residential/non-sensitive buildings to minimise visual impact.

In this case, a relatively large building is proposed to provide an indoor riding arena on the site of an existing 60m x 20m manege. The arena is required in connection with an existing equestrian business which operates from the site. The proposed building would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt if it is considered that it is an essential facility for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation. However, as the building is required to provide a covered area for use in association with an existing equestrian business it is considered that it is not an essential facility for outdoor sport and recreation. It is therefore considered to be inappropriate development. As such very special circumstances are required to overcome the harm caused by inappropriateness and any other harm.

Visual Impact & Impact on openness

The manege is located to the rear of existing buildings on the site. A number of other buildings are located between the manege and the A537. The existing buildings are agricultural in character and appearance. The maximum ridge height of the existing buildings is 4.5m. The ridge height of the proposed building measures 7m, with an eaves height of 3.6m.

The Council's Landscape Officer notes that the site is generally well screened by mature boundary trees and hedgerows and a mature roadside tree belt so the proposed building would not be prominent in the landscape. She notes that the western part of the building would be visible from the A537 at the site entrance but would be viewed as part of the existing farm complex. She considers that the visual impact from this direction could be minimised by using appropriate building materials and colours and notes that there is scope to plant a new native tree and shrub belt along the northern edge of the

recently formed car park. She considers that this would eventually screen or filter views of the building from the site entrance.

Whilst the footprint and ridge height of the building would be larger than existing buildings on the site, the visual impact of the building is considered acceptable. This is due to the position of the manege/building within the site and due to the presence of other existing buildings and screening. Part of the side of the building would be visible from the site entrance as it projects beyond existing buildings and the roof would be visible above existing roofs. However, the comments of the landscape officer are noted and it is considered that the visual impact of the building could be minimised by the use of appropriate materials, colours and by providing additional landscaping. Nevertheless the provision of the building would inevitably reduce the openness of the Green Belt.

Very Special Circumstances

The applicant states that if the Council considers that the proposed building is inappropriate, then there are clearly very special circumstances that outweigh the harm caused by inappropriateness. In summary it is stated that New Barn Farm is a specialist equestrian business, not a general riding school or livery establishment. The proposed development is essential to the continuing development and success of the business and it would contribute towards the achievement of a number of other significant planning objectives, including those in PPS7, PPS4 and RSS policies W6 and W7 which encourage promoting and harnessing the potential of sport and recreation to enhance tourism development and promoting sustainable tourist activity, by diversifying the rural economy. It is stated that the development would achieve the objectives of RSS policy L1 which seeks to ensure that health, sport, recreation, cultural and education services are accessible to all members of the community including, amongst others, disabled people. The applicants point to RSS policy RDF2 which exceptionally permits new development in open countryside where it has an essential requirement for a rural location, which cannot be permitted elsewhere, or is needed to sustain existing businesses. The applicants consider that because of the particularly specialist nature of the business, the proposed development would not set any undesirable precedent for other equestrian businesses nearby.

A letter from the applicant has been submitted with the application and this explains how the existing business operates and why there is a need for a covered riding arena. In summary, it is stated that the applicant is a very experienced horsewoman who previously operated Mobberley Riding School. The existing equestrian business at New Barn Farm currently offers particular specialism's in terms of training, education and the provision of facilities and riding lessons for the disabled. Additionally boarding livery is offered either for horses to be cared for whilst the owners are away or for owners to bring their own horses to training courses offered at the site. The applicant would like to the site to become a centre of excellence in a number of specialist areas and the provision of an indoor arena is key to the continued successful development of the business. It is stated that there is a significant unmet

demand from a very wide range of specialist organisations for an indoor riding arena in this area. It is also stated that business is lost whilst the manege is outdoors as clinicians/trainers are unwilling to make repeat bookings due to the lack of certainty regarding weather conditions. In particular it is stated that the lack of indoor training and riding facilities severely limits the potential of the business to offer a full and regular programme of activities for the Riding for the Disabled Organisation (RDA), both in terms of providing opportunities for disabled people to ride horses, and in providing a centre for the training of volunteers and instructors. The arena cannot be sited elsewhere as many of the activities use horses and ponies permanently stabled at the site. This is particularly the case with the RDA which is a core element of the business.

Having considered the particular circumstances of the business on the site and having regard to the particular experience and knowledge of the applicant, it is considered that the specific needs of the business do in this case amount to very special circumstances sufficient to outweigh the harm caused by inappropriateness and a loss of openness.

Highways

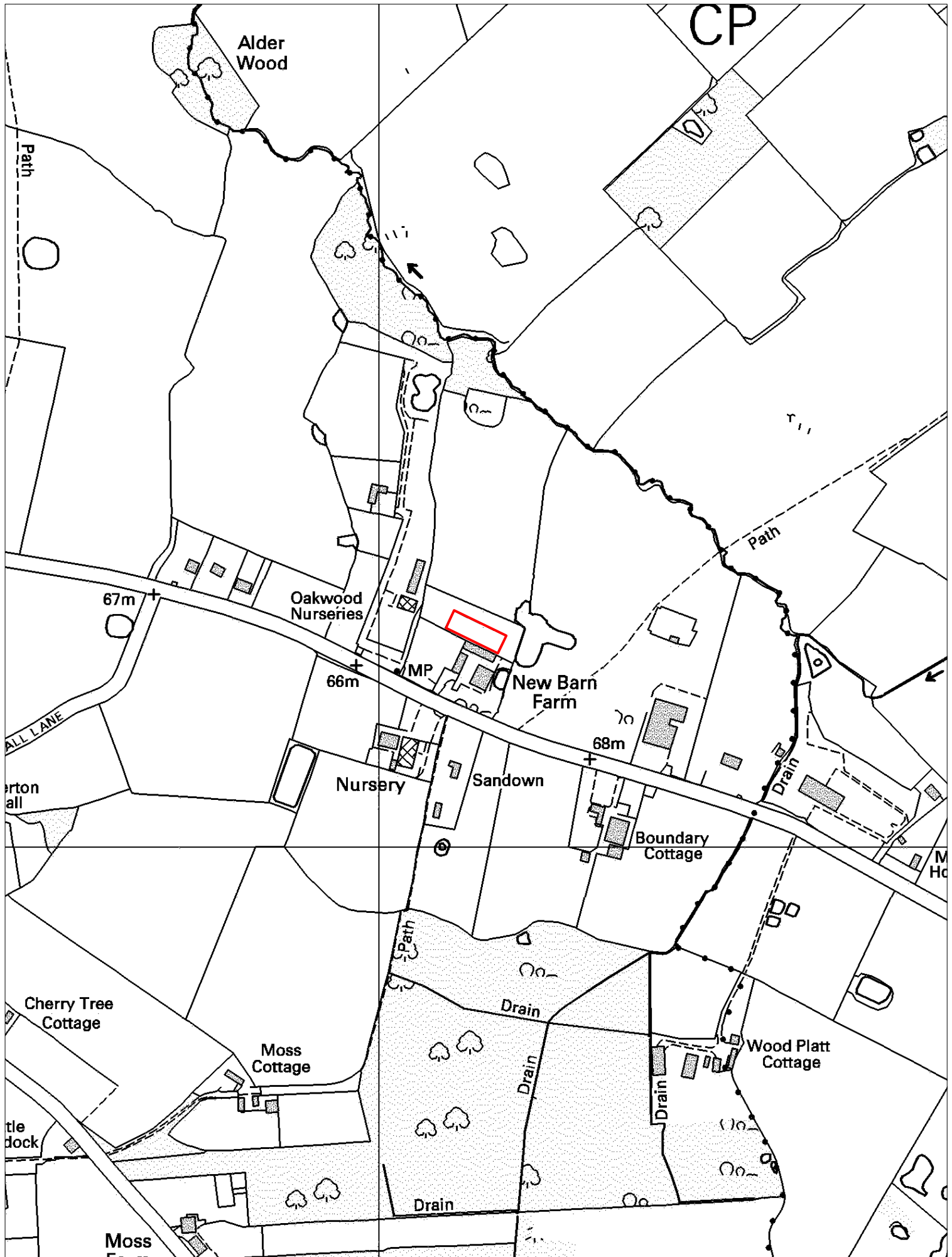
Vehicular access to the site is directly off the A537, with parking provided to the front of the site. It is considered that the existing access and parking arrangements are acceptable given that the proposal is to serve an existing business operating from the site and given that the site already has the use of an outdoor manege. No objections are raised by the Strategic Highways Manager subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions. In this case it is not considered necessary to attach any highways conditions.

Ecology

There is an existing pond located to the east of manege. However, as the proposal is to erect a building over an existing area of hardstanding, the Council's Nature Conservation Officer does not anticipate there being any ecological impacts associated with the proposed development.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION

The proposed building is considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt which would reduce openness. However the visual impact of the building is considered acceptable and it is considered that in this particular case there are sufficient very special circumstances to outweigh the harm caused by inappropriateness and by the reduction in openness. The particular requirements of the business are such that there is a genuine need for an indoor riding arena, the provision of which would allow the business to consolidate and to further develop. For that reason it is considered that planning permission should be granted for the proposal.



NEW BARN FARM, CHELFORD ROAD, OLLERTON, KNUTSFORD, CHESHIRE EAST, WA16 8SZ
NGR- 379,100 : 376,230

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey map with the permission of HMSO.

© Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to legal or civil proceedings. Cheshire East Council, licence no. 100049045 2010.

#

Application for **Householder**

RECOMMENDATION : Approve subject to following conditions

1. A01AP - Development in accord with approved plans
2. A01LS - Landscaping - submission of details
3. A02EX - Submission of samples of building materials
4. A03FP - Commencement of development (3 years)
5. A04LS - Landscaping (implementation)
6. A12MC - No lighting
7. A15LS - Submission of additional landscape details
8. A24EX - Details of colour