

Delegated Report

Planning Ref: 24/00805/FUL

Applicant: Davidson Equestrian And Eventing Ltd

Ward: Barwell



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

Site: Inglenook Farm, Leicester Road, Barwell

Proposal: Erection of an indoor riding school, including associated works

1. Recommendations

- **Grant planning permission** subject to Planning conditions outlined at the end of this report

2. Planning application description

- 2.1. This application seeks planning permission for the erection of a covered indoor riding school arena. The proposal would be sited on land currently being used as an outdoor riding school arena and would not extend beyond the limits of this area.
- 2.2. The proposed building would comprise a 20m by 40m single storey agricultural shed style building, at 5.5m in height to the ridge and 3.8m in height to the eaves.
- 2.3. The facing elevations would comprise a short red brick supporting wall, with vertical cladding and extensive glazing to the facing elevations. The roof would be finished in green coloured 'Plastisol' box profiled sheeting.
- 2.4. The application has been amended to change the orientation of the building and reduce the footprint by approximately two thirds.

3. Description of the site and surrounding area

- 3.1. The application site lies adjacent to Leicester Road to the south east of Barwell and less than a kilometre from the centre of the village. The site lies in a predominantly rural area characterised by agricultural and leisure uses. The wider Inglenook Farm site comprises a series of agricultural buildings, an existing house and an equestrian use. The site falls within the countryside and within the designated Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge, to the southeast of Barwell, south west of Earl Shilton and directly north of the A47.

4. Relevant planning history

07/00261/CLU

- CERTIFICATE OF LAWFUL EXISTING USE FOR MANÉGE
- CERTLE
- 11.04.2007

07/01482/FUL

- ERECTION OF CHICKEN PENS, FENCE AND REPLACEMENT STABLES
- PER
- 04.03.2008

08/00807/FUL

- PROPOSED NEW STABLE AND RETENTION OF EXISTING STABLE
- PER

- 05.01.2009

08/01170/FUL

- RETENTION OF HORSE EXERCISER
- PER
- 20.03.2009

23/00131/FUL

- Proposed replacement and extension of existing barns and erection of new detached barn
- PER
- 13.04.2023

24/00213/FUL

- Retention of timber stables
- PER
- 01.05.2024

5. Publicity

- 5.1. The application has been publicised by sending out letters to local residents. A site notice was also posted within the vicinity of the site and a notice was displayed in the local press.
- 5.2. No representations have been received.

6. Consultation

- 6.1. No objections have been received from the following consultees:
 - Barwell Parish Council
 - HBBC Pollution
 - Local Highway Authority (LHA)
 - Leics. County Council Ecology

7. Policy

- 7.1. Core Strategy (2009)
 - Policy 3: Development in Barwell
 - Policy 6: Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge
 - Policy 14: Rural Areas: Transport
- 7.2. Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (2016)
 - Policy DM1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 - Policy DM4: Safeguarding the Countryside and Settlement Separation
 - Policy DM10: Development and Design
 - Policy DM17: Highways and Transportation
 - Policy DM18: Vehicle Parking Standards
- 7.3. National Planning Policies and Guidance
 - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)
 - Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
 - National Design Guide (2019)

7.4. Other relevant guidance

- Good Design Guide (2020)
- National Design Guide (2019)

8. Appraisal

8.1 Key Issues

- Assessment against strategic planning policies
- Design and impact upon the character of the area
- Impact upon neighbouring residential amenity
- Impact upon parking provision and highway safety

Assessment against strategic planning policies

8.2 Paragraph 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states that the development plan is the starting point for decision making and that the NPPF is a material consideration in determining applications.

8.3 The development plan in this instance consists of the adopted Core Strategy (2009) and the adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (SADMP) Development Plan Document (2016).

8.4 The spatial distribution of growth across the Borough during the plan period 2006-2026 is set out in the adopted Core Strategy. This identifies and provides allocations for housing and other development in a hierarchy of settlements within the Borough. The Core Strategy identifies Barwell as an urban area supporting Hinckley as the sub-regional centre.

8.5 Policy 6 of the Core Strategy states that the following land uses will be acceptable in the Green Wedge, provided the operational development associated with such uses does not damage the function of the green wedge:

- (a) Agriculture, including allotments and horticulture not accompanied by retail development
- (b) Recreation
- (c) Forestry
- (d) Footpaths, bridleways and cycleways
- (e) Burial grounds
- (f) Use for nature conservation

Furthermore, any land use or associated development in the Green Wedge should:

- (a) Retain the function of the Green Wedge
- (b) Retain and create green networks between the countryside and open spaces within the urban areas
- (c) Retain and enhance public access to the Green Wedge, especially for recreation and
- (d) Should retain the visual appearance of the area

8.6 The application site is located within the countryside approximately 0.5km south of the southern boundaries of Barwell and Earl Shilton. Policy DM4 of the adopted SADMP relates specifically to development proposals in the countryside and states that to protect its intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character, the

countryside will first and foremost be safeguarded from unsustainable development. The policy goes on to list several categories of development that would be considered sustainable in the countryside subject to meeting several other criteria.

- 8.7 Policy DM4 of the SADMP sets out the circumstances in which development would be considered sustainable within the countryside, such as buildings for outdoor sport and recreation purposes, or which leads to the enhancement of the immediate setting and does not impact upon the intrinsic value of the open character of the countryside. This is echoed in Policy 6 of the Core Strategy which allows for recreation uses in the Green Wedge which retain the function of the green wedge, retain its green networks, retain and enhance public access, and retain the visual appearance of the area. Whilst Policy DM4 and Policy 6 of the Core Strategy were adopted over five years ago both policies remain consistent with the NPPF in protecting the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and significant weight can still be applied to the policies.
- 8.8 Notwithstanding that the application site is located in the countryside; the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Policy DM1 of the SADMP provides a presumption in favour of sustainable development and recognises that recreational uses can contribute to the social role by improving the health and wellbeing of the participants. Whilst the recreational use of the proposal is tampered to a degree due to the private use of the site by the applicants and those paying for livery, there is considered to be a degree of recreational use which, by virtue of the proposal, could not readily be provided within or adjacent to the settlement boundary. It is also a material consideration that existing equine uses have been granted on the site, and this proposal would support, diversify and extend these existing uses. Policy DM4 of the SADMP supports certain forms of development in the countryside subject to there being no adverse impact on the appearance or character of the landscape, it being in keeping with surrounding development, it being effectively screened by landscaping and there being no adverse impact on highway safety.
- 8.9 Policy 6 of the Core Strategy accepts recreational uses in the Green Wedge subject to a number of criteria, including the retention of the visual appearance of the area. The proposed building is large in scale but well screened from public vantage points in the area and considered to be of a design and scale which is proportionate to the wider equestrian/recreational activities on the site. The development would not interrupt any green networks in the area, nor would any public access to the Green Wedge be restricted by virtue of the proposals. It is therefore not considered that the proposed building would not significantly adversely affect the function of the Green Wedge.
- 8.10 Furthermore, in line with Policy DM4 of the SADMP, the proposal relates to a development to support outdoor recreation purposes and is not considered to adversely impact upon the intrinsic value of the open character of the countryside.
- 8.11 In summary, the principle of development is considered acceptable in this case as the proposal meets the criteria for sustainable development under Policy DM4 of the SADMP and Core Strategy Policy 6.

Design and impact upon the character of the area

- 8.12 Policy DM4 of the SADMP requires that development in the countryside does not have an adverse effect on the intrinsic value, beauty, open character, and landscape character of the countryside, does not undermine the physical and perceived

separation and open character between settlements and does not create or exacerbate ribbon development.

- 8.13 Policy DM10 of the SADMP seeks to ensure that new development should complement or enhance the character of the surrounding area with regard to scale, layout, density, mass, design, materials and architectural features.
- 8.14 Whilst large, the design and form of the proposed building is broadly similar to other rural buildings within the site and would be viewed in context with these rather than seen as a large, isolated building. The proposed building would be well screened from the public highway by extensive and mature trees and hedgerows and set back from Leicester Road by approximately 40m. Glimpsed views of the building may be possible during the winter months. However, these views would be in the context of the existing buildings associated with the existing equestrian use. Lastly, it is considered that the scale, design and materials of the proposed building is appropriate to the character of the area and the scale of the existing and proposed operation.
- 8.15 In summary, it is considered that the proposed development would not result in significant adverse harm to the character of the surrounding area with regard to scale, mass and design. The proposal therefore complies with Policy DM10 of the SADMP in this regard.

Impact upon neighbouring residential amenity

- 8.16 Policy DM10 (a) and (b) of the SADMP states development will be permitted if it would not have a significant adverse effect on the privacy and amenity of nearby residents and occupiers of adjacent buildings, including matters of lighting and noise and that the amenity of occupiers would not be adversely affected by activities within the vicinity of the site.
- 8.17 No representations have been received regarding the proposal. The nearest residential property (not associated with the business) is White Oaks, over 300 metres southwest of the application site. It is not considered that possible additional trips associated with the development would result in adverse impacts in respect of noise and disturbance over and above that already experienced by the residential, agricultural/equestrian function of the site. Therefore, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy DM10 in relation to residential amenity considerations.

Impact upon parking provision and highway safety

- 8.18 Policy DM17 of the SADMP supports development that makes best use of public transport, provides safe walking and cycling access to facilities, does not have an adverse impact upon highway safety. All proposals for new development and changes of use should reflect the highway design standards that are set out in the most up to date guidance adopted by the relevant highway authority (currently this is the Leicestershire Highway Design Guide (LHDG)).
- 8.19 The Applicant is proposing to utilise the existing access onto Leicester Road. The LHA has been consulted and state that there appears to be no material impact on the public highway.
- 8.20 In summary, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in highway terms and satisfies Policy DM17 and DM18 and the requirements of the NPPF.

Impact on ecology and biodiversity

- 8.21 Policy DM6 of the SADMP states that development proposals must demonstrate how they conserve and enhance features of nature conservation and geological value including long term future management. Paragraph 174 of the NPPF states that development proposals should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.
- 8.22 The initial submission was subject to BNG requirements; however the red line plan was later amended, restricting development to artificially unvegetated and unsealed surface. This proposal is therefore confirmed to be exempt from BNG under the de-minimis exemption by Officers and LCC Ecology.
- 8.23 It is noted that a Great Crested Newt Pond lies within 200m of the site, and an informative has therefore been added to ensure care is taken during construction.
- 8.24 In summary, it is considered that the proposed development would not result in harm to ecology and biodiversity and therefore complies with Policy DM6 of the SADMP in this regard.

9. Equality implications

- 9.1 **Where No Known Implications** Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:-
- (1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 9.2 Officers have taken this into account and given due regard to this statutory duty, and the matters specified in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 in the determination of this application.
- 9.3 There are no known equality implications arising directly from this development.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1. The proposal represents an equestrian use in the countryside which is acceptable in this instance taking into account the existing equestrian operations and business within the site. Its scale, siting, form and materials are appropriate, and the development would not have an adverse visual impact on the area, nor would it damage the function of the Green Wedge. There would be no significant adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity or highway safety (subject to conditions). Therefore, the proposal complies with Policies DM1, DM4, DM10, DM17 and DM18 of the SADMP and Policy 6 of the Core Strategy.

11. Recommendation

- **Grant planning permission** subject to planning conditions outlined at the end of this report

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the submitted application details, as follows:

Proposed Floor Plan - Drg. No. HMD/PD/0554/01-Rev.A, received 23 May 2025

Proposed Elevations - Drg. No HMD/PD/0554/02-Rev.A, received 23 May 2025

Proposed Block Plan - Drg. No. HMD/PD/0554/03-Rev.B, received 23 May 2025

Site Location/Layout Plan, received 16 October 2025

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Policy DM10 of the adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2016).

3. The materials to be used externally shall accord with the approved Proposed Elevations - Drg. No HMD/PD/0554/02-Rev.A, as received by the Local Planning Authority on 23 May 2025.

Reason: To ensure that the development has a satisfactory external appearance in accordance with Policy DM10 of the adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2016).

11.2 Notes to applicant

1. The approved development may require Building Regulations Approval, for further information please contact the Building Control team via e-mail at building.control@blaby.gov.uk or call 0116 272 7533.
2. Great Crested Newts, a species fully protected by law, could potentially be breeding in a pond within 200m of the proposed development, with several potential GCN ponds nearby, therefore there is a small possibility that a newt, or small numbers of newts could be present on the site. The applicant should therefore exercise due care during implementation of the proposed development, ensuring that all contractors are aware of the possibility of finding great crested newts, and stored materials are carefully removed by hand. Work should cease if a great crested newt is found, and advice from a licensed ecologist should be sought.