

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT:**Application Ref:** F/25/99256**Site Address:** ASHBOURNE STABLES, MORTIMERS LANE, LOWER UPHAM, SOUTHAMPTON, SO32 1HF**Case Officer:** Clare Martin**Description:** Construction of new vehicular access

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• Outside the urban edge – Countryside • Great Crested Newts (red zone)		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
There have been various planning applications at the site, including the widening of the existing vehicular access that was permitted in 1993 under planning application Z/26232/006.		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☒	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	None		
Highways (HCC):	<u>No objection – 26/8/25</u> New information has been received from the agent which clearly shows vehicle tracking for a car and horse box trailer accessing the site with two-way designated lane movements achievable. Updated visibility splay drawings have also been provided which show an appropriate visibility splay of 2.4 x 154.0m as requested (Drawing 6344/002). This splay will of course need to be free from any vegetation or other vertical obstruction within its envelope, and clearance will need to be covered under a condition.		
Ecology Officer: (summarised)	<u>Biodiversity Net Gain - Comment</u> The Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment report has been updated (18/9/25 issue 2.0) to reflect the changes in the amended metric. The report has been amended with page numbers as requested. The biodiversity metric has been amended and now shows no errors. The overall net gain in area, linear and watercourse-based units is more than 10% which are appropriate. The description of the ditch (on page 5) matches definition in the UK Hab classification, and the report has now explained why this cannot be considered as headwaters of the adjacent river system The ditch habitat type condition sheet has been added to the condition assessment column. A biodiversity gain plan and a habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP) must be produced for this site. In this specific case only, the final documents can be conditioned. <u>Species (including Great Crested Newts)</u> Preliminary Ecological Appraisal The updated PEA report by Arbtech has been amended with a more detailed description of the ditch (r1g		

	50) and clarified that it is not likely to have been part of the river system flowing south through Pond Farm and the golf course, with no evidence of any flow. Precautionary working methods have been recommended in the PEA for birds, reptiles, amphibians (including great crested newts), badgers, otters, water voles and hedgehogs. These are appropriate and must be implemented. The rapid risk assessment for great crested newts shows that an offence is highly unlikely, so as long as the recommendations in the report are followed as written, I don't think that it will be necessary to have any further surveys or a district level license in this case.
Tree Officer	<u>No objection</u> There are no significant trees that would be influenced by the proposals.
Nature Space:	<u>Comment</u> There are 11 ponds within 500m of the development proposal, with the closest being located 90m southwest and 100m north. There are recent great crested newt records within 500m. The development falls within the red impact risk zone for great crested newts. Impact risk zones have been derived through advanced modelling to create a species distribution map which predicts likely presence. In the red impact zone, there is highly suitable habitat and a high likelihood of great crested newt presence. Using a precautionary method of working will minimise the risk of impacting individual great crested newts during site clearance and construction, should they be present in the area. However, with such nearby ponds and a ditch which requires culverting, there is a risk that great crested newts may be encountered at the planning application site. Whilst the ditch held insufficient water levels at the point the survey took place, water levels may rise and become more suitable by the next active period. Therefore, whilst a precautionary method may be appropriate, there are risks associated with this approach and resulting delays if great crested newts are discovered. On this account, the applicant may pursue: • <i>District Licensing Scheme</i> – Potential impacts to great crested newts can be dealt with through the Council's District Licence. In order to take this route a NatureSpace Report or Certificate must be submitted prior to determination. This option provides certainty and avoids potential delays should great crested newts be encountered. OR; • <i>Precautionary Working Methods Statement</i> - If the applicant does not wish to take the district licensing route, a precautionary approach may be acceptable due to the low scale of impacts. If the applicant decides a precautionary working method statement is appropriate, we recommend the use of a compliance condition to ensure the measures outlined within the report are secured.
Fair Oak and Horton Heath Parish Council:	<u>No objection</u>, but we will be guided by Highways who have not yet commented.

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
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Details: Carried out October 2025

Pre-commencement Conditions:

Yes ☒

No ☐

Details: Email from Agent agreeing pre-commencement condition (7/10/25)

Legislation:

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:-

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

Policy:

National Planning Policy Framework

Planning Practice Guidance

Development Plan: The Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 The most relevant policies are:

- Strategic policies: S1(delivering sustainable development), S2 (approach to new development) & S5 (countryside)
- Development management policies: DM1(new development criteria), DM11(nature conservation) and DM13 (transport).

Supplementary Planning Documents: Trees and Development

Proposal:

The proposal is to provide a second access to the site from Mortimers Lane, located approximately 110m to the east of the existing access. The access will allow large horse boxes and other equestrian vehicles direct access to Ashbourne Stables, including the outdoor sand school and indoor riding arena. At present large vehicles must travel through the narrow confines of the existing site that is shared with other users.

Assessment:

Principle

The site is located within an area of countryside where the types of development are controlled by Policy S5. The proposed new access would serve an existing riding school, which as an outdoor recreational use is allowed under policy S5. Riding stables are also a common feature of rural areas. As such the principle of development is acceptable, subject to the details according with the relevant planning policies.

Impact on Countryside

Policy S5 (2a) requires new development in the countryside to avoid adverse impact on the rural character of the landscape.

The proposed access would be 6.3m wide and would flare out where it adjoins Mortimers Lane. The hedge has already been removed, and the proposed work would comprise culverting the watercourse, installing hard surfacing and would have a similar appearance to the existing site access. The area within the visibility splay contains low vegetation so no further clearance is required to make way for the development. It is considered that the access would have a minimal impact upon the rural character of the landscape.

Highways and Access

Policy DM13 (1b) requires that new development does not cause or increase danger to road users or have a significant detrimental impact on the operation or safety of the highway network.

The proposed access is located off Mortimers Lane, which is a 60mph main road and therefore requires a 2.4m by 154m visibility splay. Amended plans have been provided showing the required visibility splay as well as tracking information demonstrating that cars with horse boxes are able to safely access the site. This information has been reviewed by the highways officer and no objection raised (subject to a condition requiring visibility splay to be kept clear of vegetation over 1m in height).

Ecology

Policy DM11 states that development will not be permitted if it is likely to have a direct or indirect adverse effect on priority habitats, protected or priority species, or on the local ecological network unless it can be demonstrated that a) there are no alternative solutions, b) the adverse impact are unavoidable and c) measures are taken to mitigate or compensate for the adverse effects.

It is understood that the 6m of hedgerow was removed in January 2025 to facilitate the access and the proposal will involve no further removal of hedgerow. A preliminary ecological appraisal has been submitted, which has been reviewed by the Ecology Officer who has raised no objection. The report covers working methods for birds, reptiles, amphibians (including great crested newts), badgers, otters, water voles and hedgehogs. The report considers that the access works and culverting of the ditch will have no effect on upon great crested newts. The assessment has been accepted by the Ecology Officer, although it is noted that water levels were low at the time of the survey which could have impacted the results. While Nature Space has taken a more cautionary approach recommending the district licencing scheme, they have accepted that due to the scale of the development Great Crested Newts can be dealt with via a working method statement in this instance. The working method statement has already been included within the preliminary ecological appraisal and will be secured via condition.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The National Planning Policy Framework requires all new development to demonstrate a 10% biodiversity net gain (unless it qualifies for an exemption).

A biodiversity net gain assessment and metric have been submitted, which shows more than a 10% net gain in area based, linear based and watercourse-based biodiversity. The information has been reviewed and approved by the Ecology Officer, and a biodiversity gain plan and habitat management and monitoring plan will be secured via condition.

Trees

Policy DM1 requires development not to result in the loss or damage of important trees. The amended visibility splay and access information has been reviewed by the Tree Officer, who has concluded that there are no significant trees that would be influenced by the proposals.

Equalities Act:

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty.

Section 149 (1) states:

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.
When making policy decisions, the Council must take account of the equality duty and in particular any potential impact on protected groups.

It is considered that this application does not raise any equality implications.

Climate Change:

In July 2019, the Council declared a Climate Change and Environmental Emergency. In doing so it agreed, among other things, to: (a) put in place measures to ensure the Council's own operations and functions achieve carbon neutrality by 2025; (b) work with partners to aim for all projects and services delivered in the Borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030; (c) ensure that the Council's procurement policy recognises carbon neutrality as one of its primary considerations; and (d) recognise the urgency of action to mitigate and adapt to climate change in every decision taken by the Council. This is underpinned by the Climate and Environment Emergency Strategy 2020–2030 and the supporting Climate and Environmental Emergency Action Plan – Update June 2020.

The declaration of the Climate Change and Environmental Emergency demonstrates a strong commitment from the Council to achieve net zero. The NPPF, development plan and plan policy do not set this as a specific target, but it is a material consideration to be considered alongside all other material considerations. In any case addressing climate change is a core part of the NPPF and plan policy. The need to support the economy is part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Local Plan, as is an assessment of climate impacts.

Conclusion:

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☒

REFUSE ☐

Comments ...