PROPOSED EQUESTRIAN ALL-WEATHER TURN-OUT AND EXERCISE AREA
DON HILL HOUSE FARM, HILLTOP LANE
GREEN MOOR, WORTLEY S35 7DQ

24/47

21.09.09

Design & Access Statement

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Mr & Mrs Roebuck are applying for Planning Permission for the formation of an all-weather turn-out and exercise area for horses. They have lived and kept horses at Don Hill House Farm for over eight years, where there are four stables within the farmyard and a storage barn. They own paddock land to the north of Don Hill House Farm and to the east as identified on the layout plans. The land to the east is separated from the immediate farm and stables by a public highway.

1.2 Mr & Mrs Roebuck currently keep four horses for their own use and there is no intention to increase this within the long term or to operate a commercial livery.

2.0 Assessment

2.1 Don Hill House Farmhouse comprises a small farmhouse with stone barn. There is an adjoining yard with four timber stables and a storage barn which are part of a small agricultural holding totalling 18.5 acres of which the immediate ownership at Don Hill House Farm forms six acres. The agricultural holding No is 47/735/0081. The farm is located approximately 1.5 miles to the north of Stocksbridge and on the south western outskirts of Green Moor village. The site lies just to the north of Hunshelf Bank and enjoys extensive views on a north facing slope.

2.2 The proposed exercise area lies within the paddock immediately adjoining the farmyard. The whole of the paddock has a steady gradient of approximately 1 in 10 from its high point at the south down towards the north.

2.3 The Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Unitary Development Plan allocates the land as Green Belt and an area of Borough landscape value. The relevant policies are GS7, GS9 and GS13.

2.4 Green Belt

- GS7 – maintain the openness of the Green Belt and not to conflict.
- GS9 – development should not result in significant harm to the amenity of the Green Belt.

2.5 Area of Borough Landscape Value

- GS13 – any development should ensure no loss of valuable landscape features, be sympathetic to the area and conserve or enhance the overall character of the area.

3.0 Involvement

3.1 There are no immediate neighbours who are likely to be affected by this proposal and therefore no consultation has been carried out.

4.0 Evaluation

4.1 The formation of an all-weather turn-out and exercise area requires limited alteration to the existing ground levels. It will provide a much needed facility, allowing horses to be exercised without the need to leave the farm curtilage during poor weather. This will have the benefit of avoiding conflict with traffic using the public highways. Local roads are relatively narrow with poor visibility and are used on a regular basis as a short cut to Stocksbridge. The exercise area will reduce the frequency with which horses need to be transferred or exercised via the public highways.

4.2 The exercise area is to be constructed within the corner of a paddock currently used by horses. Whilst the works to construct the all-weather surface constitute a "change of use" from agricultural land in planning terms, there is no material change in the use of the land.

4.3 The site area is protected from public view by the existing mature hedge to the roadside (east) boundary and tree and shrub planting to the south.



Photo 1 – corner of field where turn-out and exercise area proposed

4.4 The works are limited to the formation of the exercise area, re-grading of levels, the erection of a timber post and rail fence and the laying of an all-weather surface. There are no proposals to provide any other structures such as temporary or permanent lighting.

4.5 The local landscape, as can be seen on photograph 1, includes a number of existing overhead power lines and a telecommunications mast in close proximity to the site.

4.6 The proposals are consistent with the planning policy requirements in that there are no new buildings and that development is limited to minor alterations to ground levels, replacement of turf with sustainable bio-degradable desiccated pallet-wood chippings and the erection of a traditional timber post and rail fence and gate.

4.7 Formation of the exercise area will have no impact on the openness of the Green Belt or result in significant harm to the local amenity.

4.8 The proposals result in no loss of any landscape feature and the partial excavation of the exercise area, to allow it to "sit" into the landscape whilst gradually re-grading of ground levels to the north, will maintain a natural appearance sympathetic to the setting.

5.0 Access

5.1 The proposals create no detrimental issues with regard to access. They do have the potential to improve highway safety by resulting in a reduction of the frequency that horses will need to be transported or ridden along the local country lanes for exercise.

6.0 Summary

6.1 The applicant and owners of Don Hill House Farm have a genuine need to exercise horses which are kept for their own private use. The creation of a turn-out and exercise area within the existing paddock will allow use in all weather conditions without the need to transport horses off site. The exercise area has been integrated into the landscape without detriment to the openness of the Green Belt or compromise to the visual amenity of the area. The proposals are consistent with the use of agricultural land within the countryside and have the potential to improve highway safety.

