

A dark brown horse with a white blaze on its face and white socks on its lower legs is running through a lush green field. The horse is captured in motion, with its mane and tail flowing. The background is a soft-focus green field.

The Horse Trust Speen

Planning Design & Access Statement
January 2017

Jeffrey Charles Emmett

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANCY

Star - originally rescued from Spindles Farm, Amersham

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Foreword

“The Horse Trust (a Registered Charity) exists to enhance and improve the quality of life of horses, ponies and donkeys in the UK. We do this by developing, demonstrating and disseminating best practice in equine care from our base in Buckinghamshire.

The Horse Trust provides a place of sanctuary for horses from the local area that have suffered cruelty or neglect and are in need of urgent care and shelter. It is predominantly however a unique, specialist retirement and respite home for working horses that have given a lifetime of service to their country or community. Most of our equine residents come from various police forces, including Thames Valley, the armed forces and charities such as Riding for the Disabled. We also provide high quality training aimed at professionals focusing on practical, advanced equine welfare and quality of life assessment.

The Horse Trust supports and trains local authority officers, RSPCA inspectors and other charity field staff from one day introductory courses in horse handling, all the way through to the only Level Three Diploma in Equine Legislation and Field Skills. We provide them with the skills needed to effectively investigate equine welfare concerns identified on commercial or private premises, at markets or sales and during transport. They are taught how to catch and handle horses in order to examine them, given instruction in conducting welfare and the risks posed by exotic equine diseases.



Patron HRH Princess Anne, Princess Royal meeting Horse Trust Staff

Police Officers, Fire & Rescue Officers and Highways England Traffic Officers frequently attend training sessions at our Home of Rest to learn horse handling skills, such as how to approach and catch a horse, how to scan a microchip and how to lead and tie up a horse in a place of safety. These practical skills are invaluable at a time of emergency when a horse or horses are loose on a highway or involved in an accident or other emergency. The demand for our specialist training is growing locally and nationally and we aim to provide these vital skills and knowledge to as many relevant professionals as possible, to keep them, the public and horses safe in moments of crisis”

Jeanette Allen - CEO Horse Trust



Pollyanna on arrival to The Horse Trust in February 2014



Pollyanna fit and healthy 2 years after arrival



Training in the existing classroom

Preamble









This Planning Design and Access Statement is in two parts:

Part I sets out the operational requirements of The Horse Trust by its Chief Executive Officer, Jeanette Allen.

Part II sets out the normal requirements of a Design and Access Statement by Jeffrey Charles Emmett Assoc RICS Senior Partner.



The Proposed Development

- A**  Erection of a Barn structure to Incorporate an Indoor Equine Training Facility, Learning Centre and Tractor Shed
- B**  Erection of an extension to an existing Barn and Creation of Covered Area
- C**  Demolition of an existing buildings and erection of Replacement Structure to Provide an Archive / Office / Storage facility
- D**  Erection of a Structure for the storage of small Maintenance Equipment
- E**  Demolition and erection of Replacement Field Shelter and Associated Hardstanding
- F**  Engineering operation to create three Small Sand Paddocks
- G**  Engineering operation to create a second Car Parking Area
- H**  Insertion of an External Door into the South Elevation (Single Storey Kitchen) of A Grade II Listed Function Barn (Sefton Barn)



Existing Corral Barn



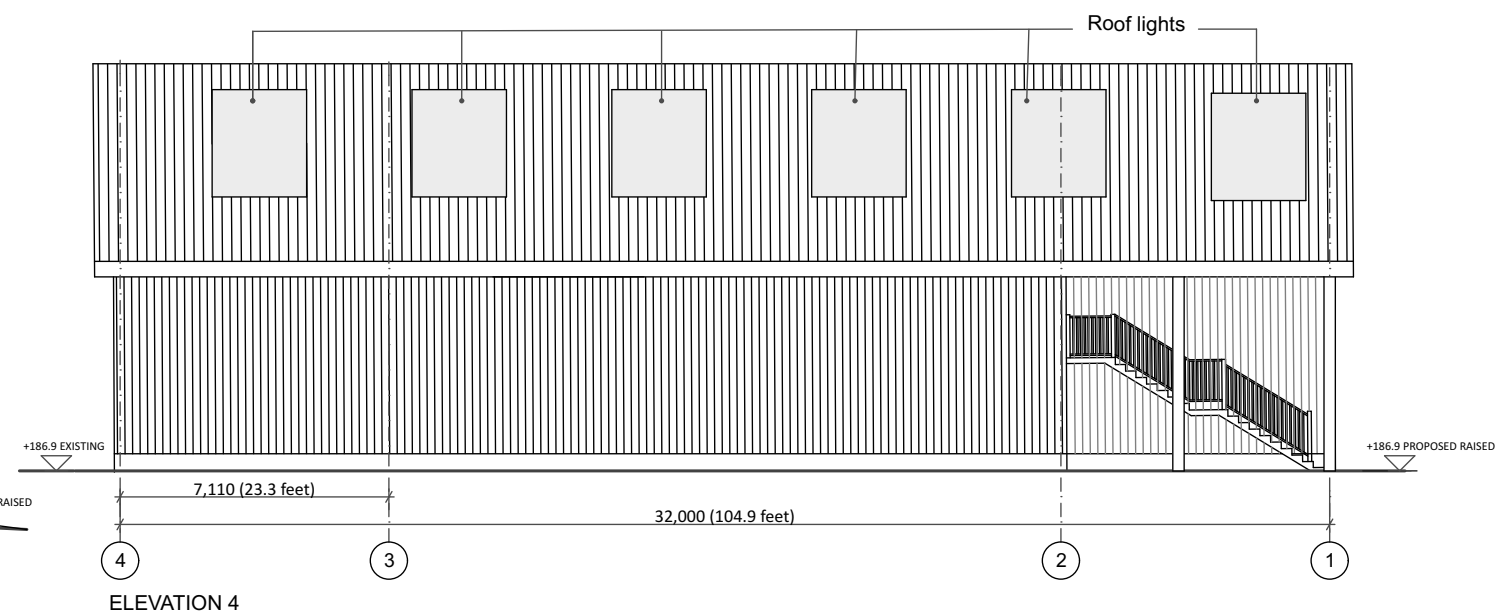
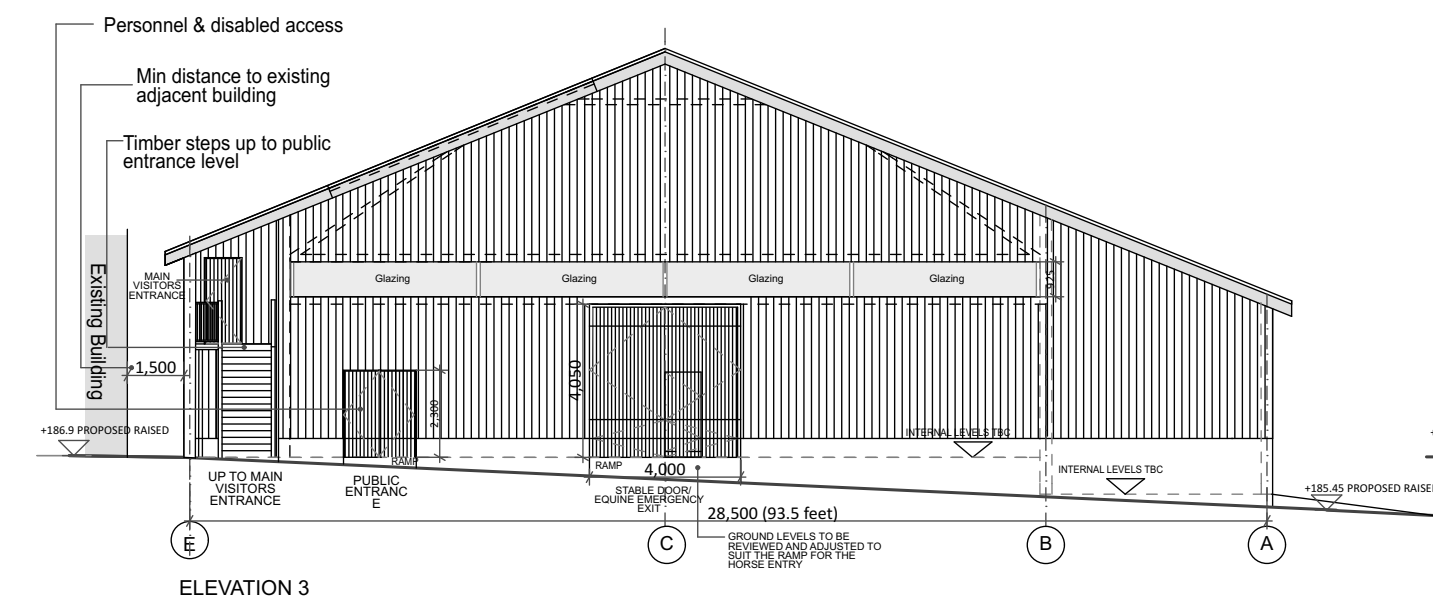
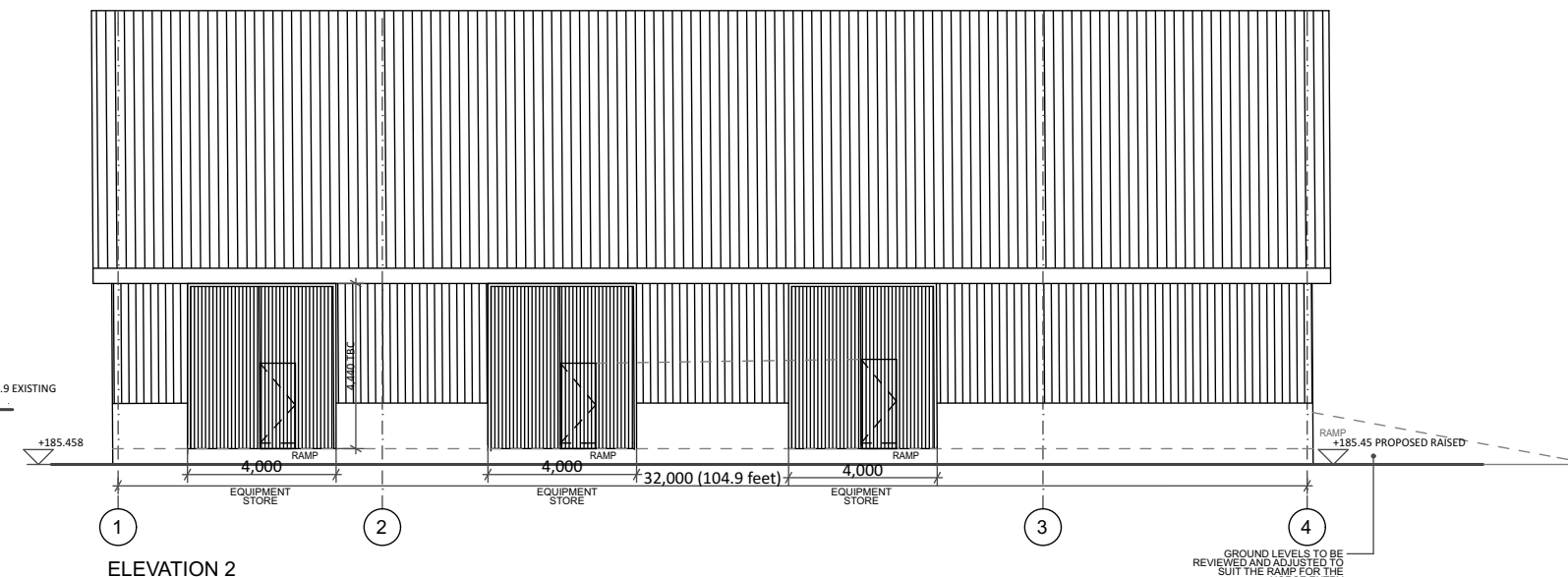
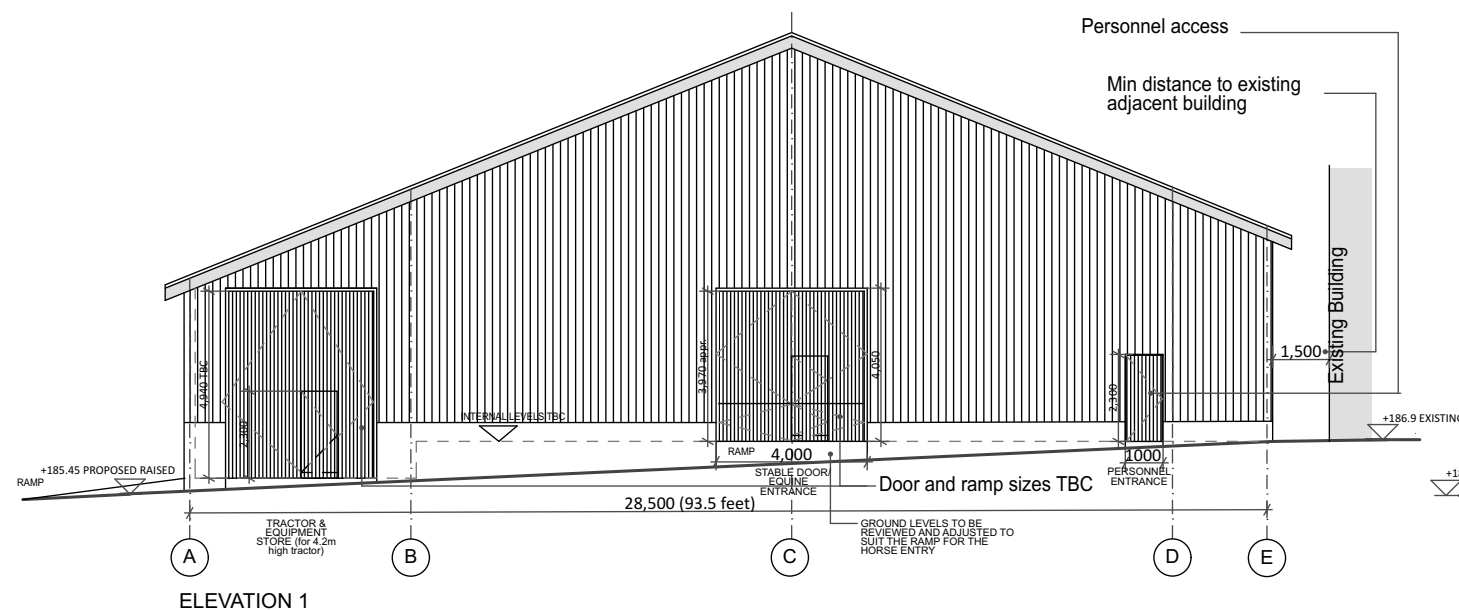
Proposed Indoor Equine Training Facility Centre and Corral Barn Extension
(photo montage)

A Indoor Equine Training Facility & Learning Centre incorporating Tractor/Large Implement Shed

The UK is in the grip of an equine crisis and as a consequence, The Horse Trust now has to accommodate a greater number of rescue cases. There is therefore an increased number of horses currently undergoing training, either in preparation for re-homing, or because they have had no previous human interaction, or have experienced extreme negative associations with humans. This crisis affects not only the horses and ponies that have been ill-treated and need urgent rescue; it also impacts significantly on the public and charitable services called on to deal with these animals on the frontline. Over the past few years, as more and more enforcement and non-enforcement organisations are finding the need to competently deal with horses, large and small, within their professional role, The Horse Trust has received a huge demand for “specialist training” and is uniquely placed to meet this demand. The Horse Trust is therefore dedicated to meet this increase in the amount of training that it can currently offer. This will ensure that best practice in equine welfare and handling is provided to the organisations that require such training and will achieve the Charity’s aims by preventing cruelty to horses.

As your Council Members are aware from the many public demonstrations that we have staged, the Horse Trust already provides essential training to the emergency services (Fire and Rescue Service and the Police), to Local Authorities, to the RSPCA, the Highways Agency and other welfare groups from all over the UK. The training we provide ensures these groups are given the skills to enable them to carry out their duties in a way that reduces the stress for the equine, whilst keeping themselves and the public safe.

In addition, many other equine learning groups and charities use, or have expressed an interest in using The Horse Trust equine knowledge and facilities. (e.g. Safe Horizon, an independent support and consultancy service for organisations, Police Officers and their families affected by psychological injury, stress and mental ill health)

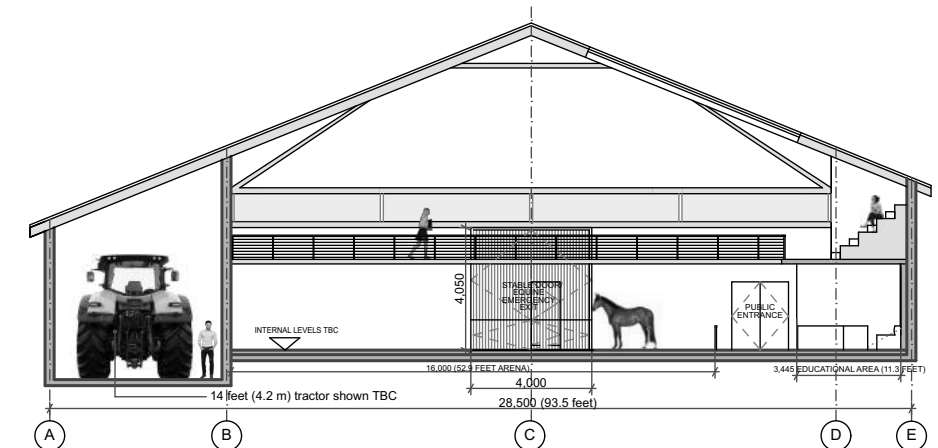


A Indoor Equine Training Facility & Learning Centre incorporating Tractor/Large Implement Shed

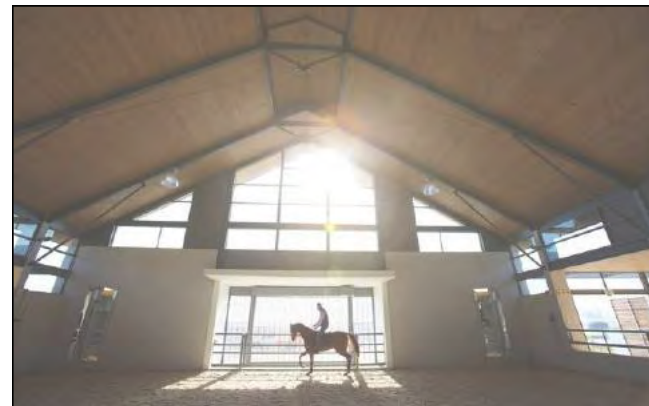
There is therefore an increased demand for us to run more educational courses as well as to cater for larger groups, and the consequential income from this service assists and supports the Charities main aims. Currently, poor weather conditions can limit the number of courses we are able to offer, or may result in the need to cancel courses or reduce the vital practical elements of the course. The provision of an indoor school arena, together with improved classroom facilities, will mean that we will be able to deliver courses all year round, whatever the weather, in a safe environment that is conducive to effective learning.

Currently, when students / delegates attend a training course, all we can provide is hot water in flasks, as there is no kitchen provision to our present facility. Having a small kitchenette area within the proposed new facility will increase the appeal and comfort for our students / delegates.

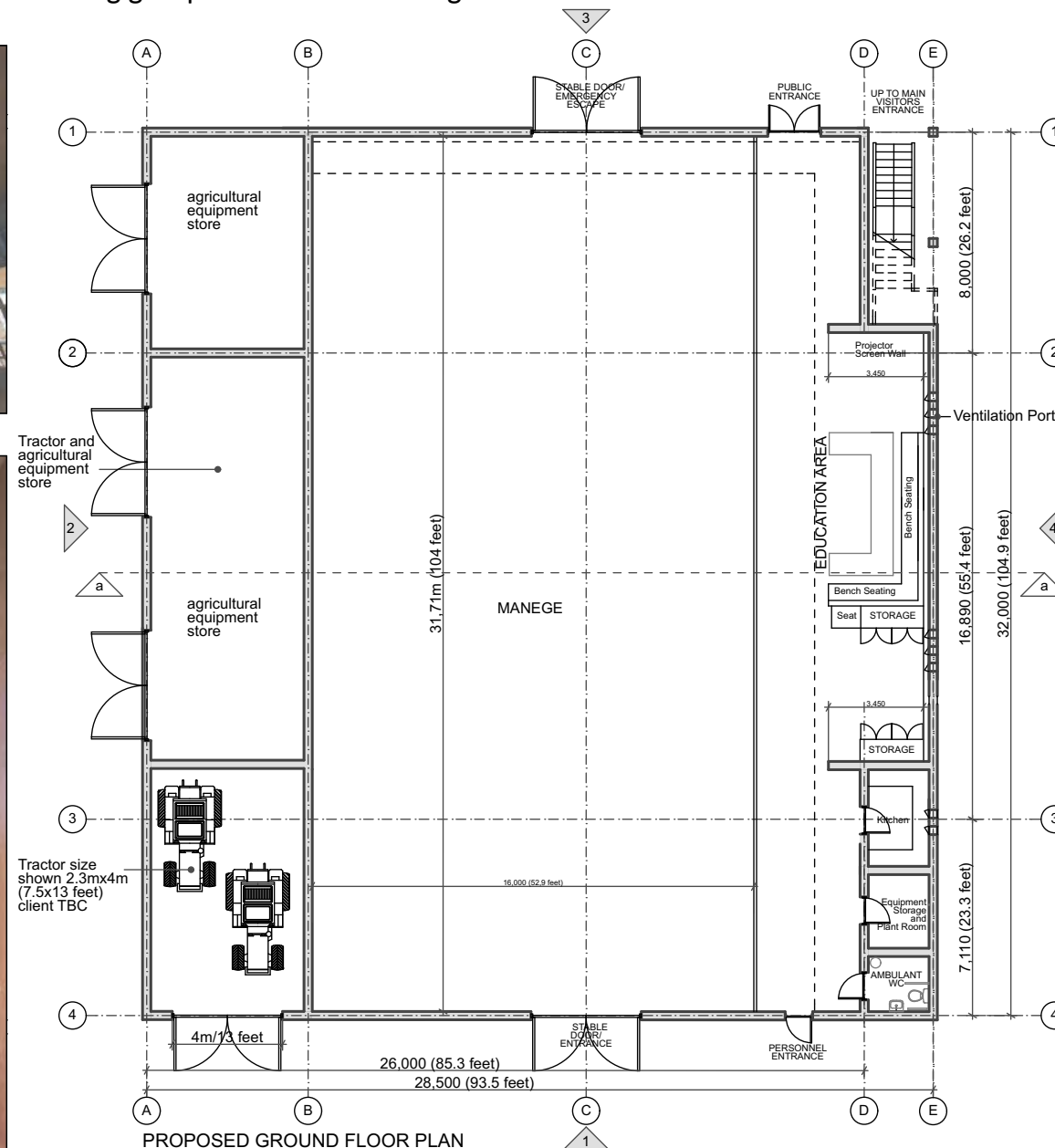
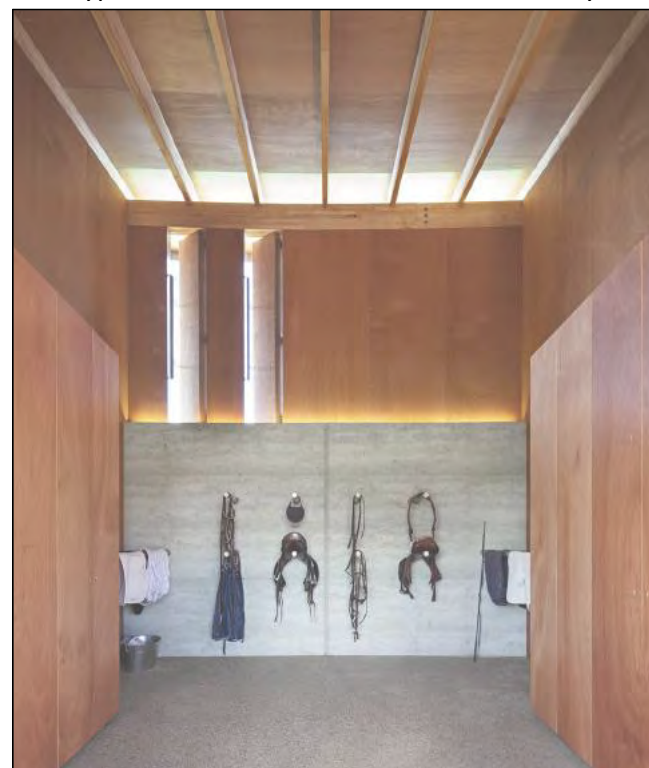
In short, a larger purpose built education room (20 persons), in addition to our existing classroom facility (12 people) will improve the capacity and flexibility for delivering training. This will also benefit the internal team as it could be used for our staff meetings, meetings with external professional clients, and visiting groups such as local colleges.



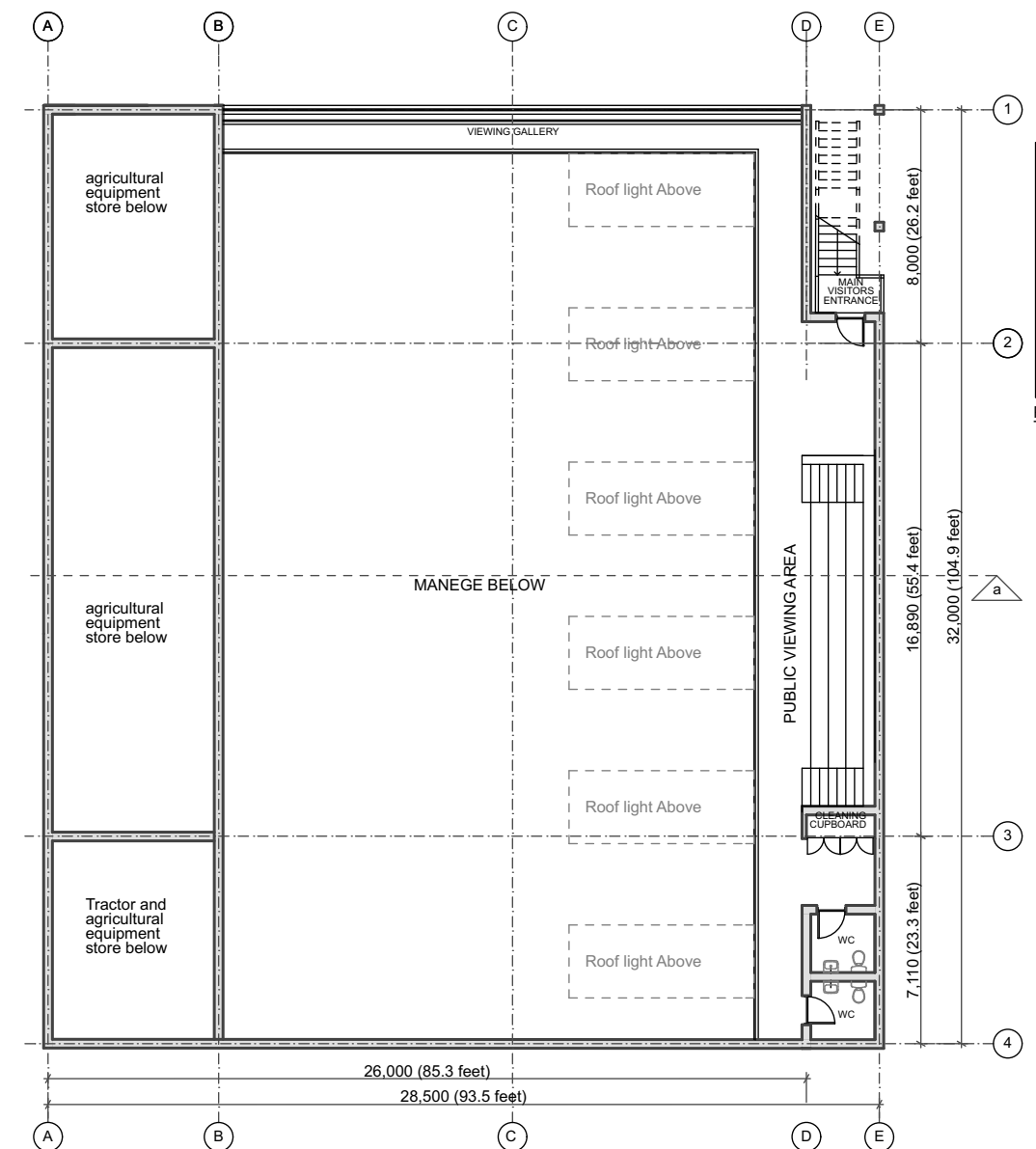
INTERNAL ELEVATION a-a



Typical interior treatment - Illustrative only



PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN



PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN

A Indoor Equine Training Facility & Learning Centre incorporating Tractor/Large Implement Shed

The provision of an indoor training facility, together with a larger ground floor classroom will therefore:

- Allow for practical skills to be imparted, as delegates / students are required to observe the tasks being demonstrated prior to undertaking the tasks themselves.
- Provide protection from the extremes of weather which can cause health and safety concerns, where students may become very cold or wet, hot and possibly dehydrated or struggle to hear instructions in high winds or heavy rain.
- Help manage the horse's behavior, which can also change due to weather conditions. For example in windy or wet conditions the horses may become unpredictable, which can prove to be a health and safety concern when completing tasks such as loading or handling.
- Mean that in the summer months, larger numbers of students can be taken onto our courses with both indoor and outdoor facilities being available, thus enabling us to better fulfil the demand.
- Provide a safe and secure environment for re-training rescue horses, which in turn will lead to increased successful rehoming.



A Indoor Equine Training Facility & Learning Centre incorporating Tractor/Large Implement Shed

The proposed lower “Education Room” will allow for larger groups to participate in lectures and instruction, which do not require the practical skills associated with the indoor arena.

The organisations that The Horse Trust trains are mainly practical people e.g. Fire and Rescue service, Highways Agency, RSPCA, and Police. A larger education room will provide opportunities for interactive activities and scenario based learning, which greatly enhances the learning capability for these organisations. The new education room will also be more accessible to disabled learners, with additional disabled car spaces and a smooth walkway provision from the new car park to the new building.

The Horse Trust has recently launched a regulated qualification with Lantra Awards that is aimed at enforcement and non-enforcement organisations dealing with welfare concerns and prosecutions; field officers attending welfare cases; boarding establishments taking in welfare cases and collating evidence for court cases. There is currently a waiting list of over 45 people waiting to sign up to achieve this qualification. With 20 in each application cohort, The Horse Trust therefore requires a larger space than we can currently provide. At present we cannot offer these much needed training courses on days we are also open to the public, as without this new facility and other associated improvements, we cannot accommodate the extra vehicles and the strain on our currently overstretched facilities.

In short, an indoor school coupled with a classroom facility will hugely benefit both the internal team at The Horse Trust, the local community and other organisations requiring training. This could only be delivered on site in a practical way, by engaging with the horses. It will also greatly enhance the experience and the learning of all the important organisations that require training to ensure effectiveness in their job roles and their personal and public safety.

Learning area



A Indoor Equine Training Facility & Learning Centre incorporating Tractor/Large Implement Shed

The proposed high level “Viewing Area” will allow students/ delegates to have a safe and comfortable place to watch practical demonstrations and better engage in learning. The Indoor arena will, of course, require some natural light, which will be delivered through roof lights on the inner roof slope or through high level lights in the NE gable end, neither of which will result in light pollution during the darker afternoons during the winter months.

The “lean-to” extension to this indoor training facility will allow for the secure covered storage of all the larger unsightly maintenance equipment, that is currently stored in the open within this otherwise exposed area. The chosen location for this multi functional building, as it will occupy a currently under-utilised area of the site, which is the open yard area where large maintenance machinery is stored. This machinery can then go under secure cover which will tidy up this area of the site. There are no other suitable locations within the confines of the operational site area and this will have the least visual impact as it will sit with our other barns of similar size and scale.

The view from the viewing area

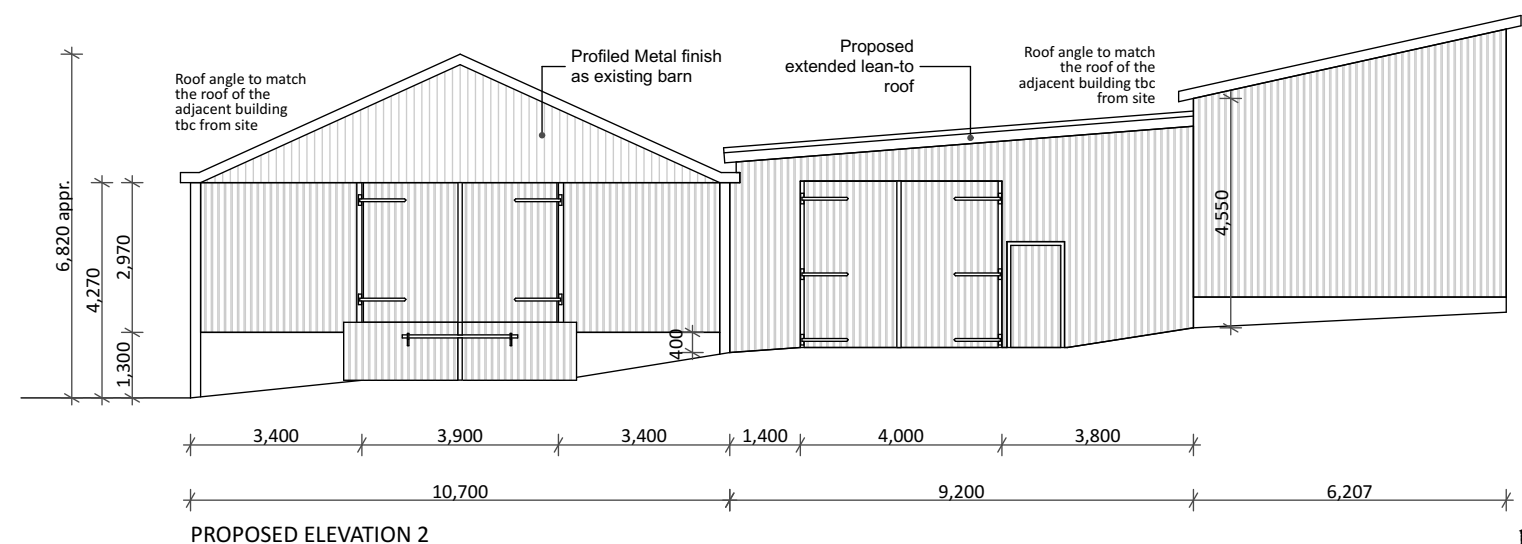
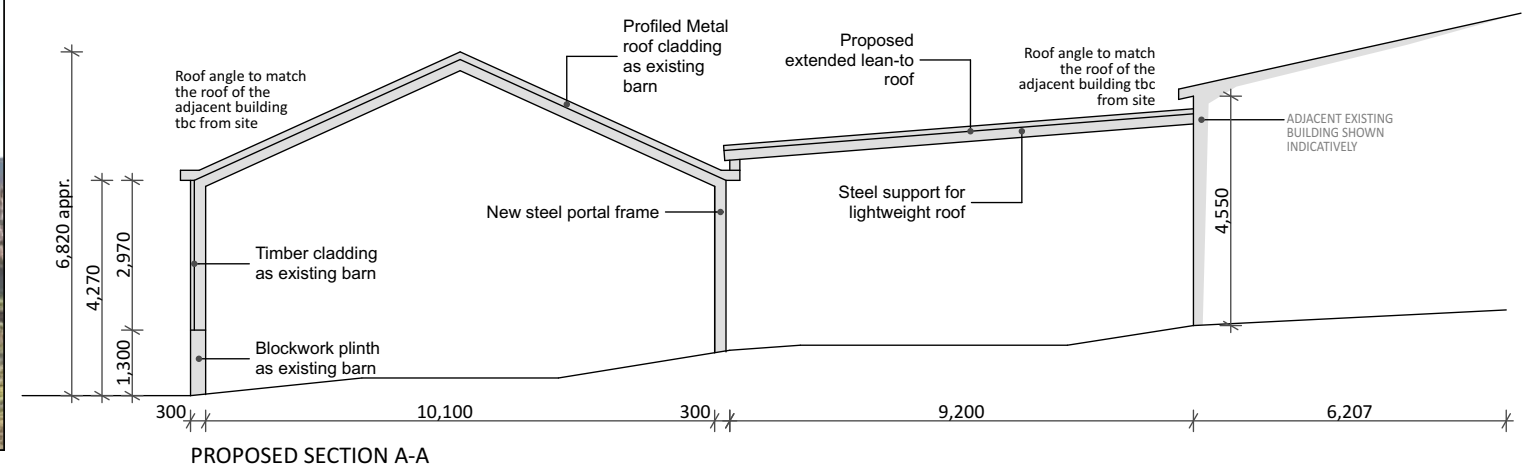
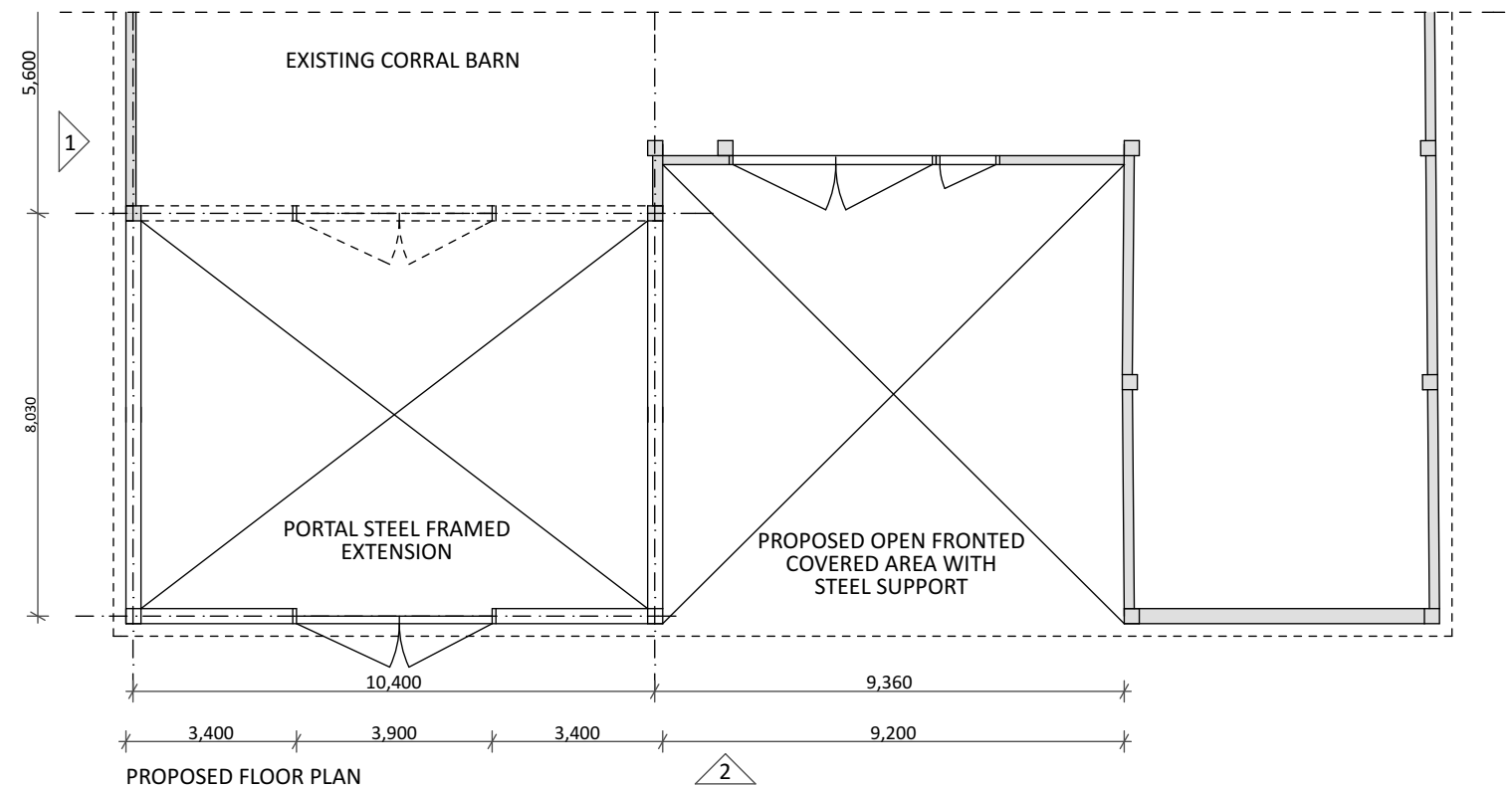
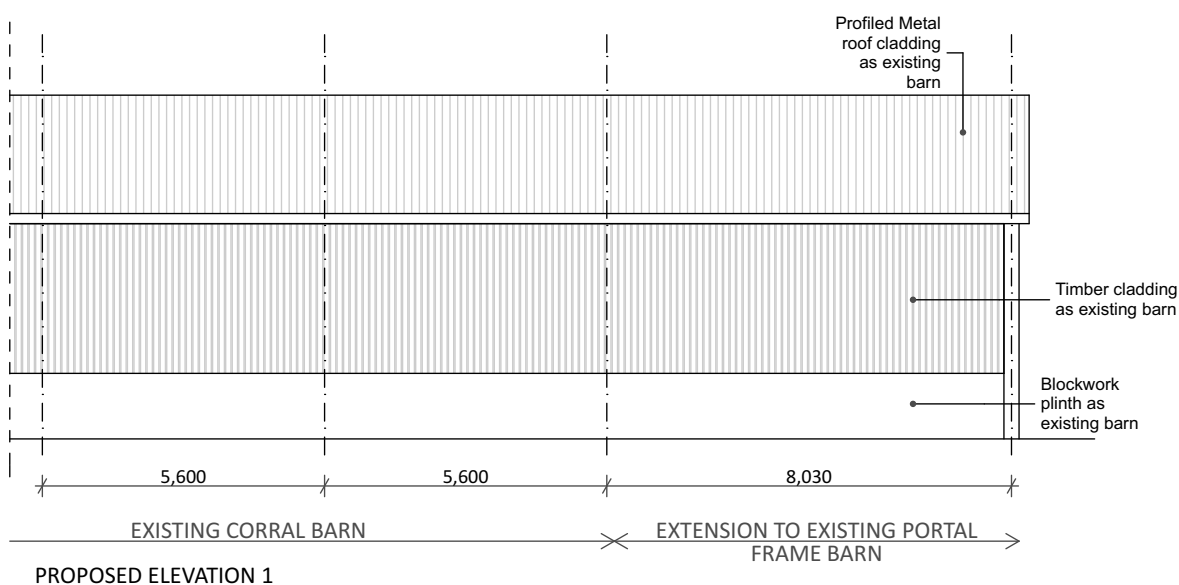


B Extension to Corral Barn & Covered Area

For the same reasons as outlined above, an extension to our existing corral will allow a further 2 horses or 3 ponies to be housed in the most appropriate manner for their health and wellbeing. Professor Josh Slater of The Royal Veterinary College will be writing in support of these proposals.

Adding a covered area between the existing mid-barn and an extension to the bottom barn will be a welcome addition, providing a safe, covered space for the farriers to work in, with horses properly and safely tied up to a wall. It will be undercover from adverse weather and be a quiet space for horses that our handlers require to be still on three legs, whilst having shoes fitted or feet trimmed. It will also provide an all-weather area for washing down horses. This can be clinically essential for a variety of reason including the treatment of diseases of the skin.

Existing Corral Barn

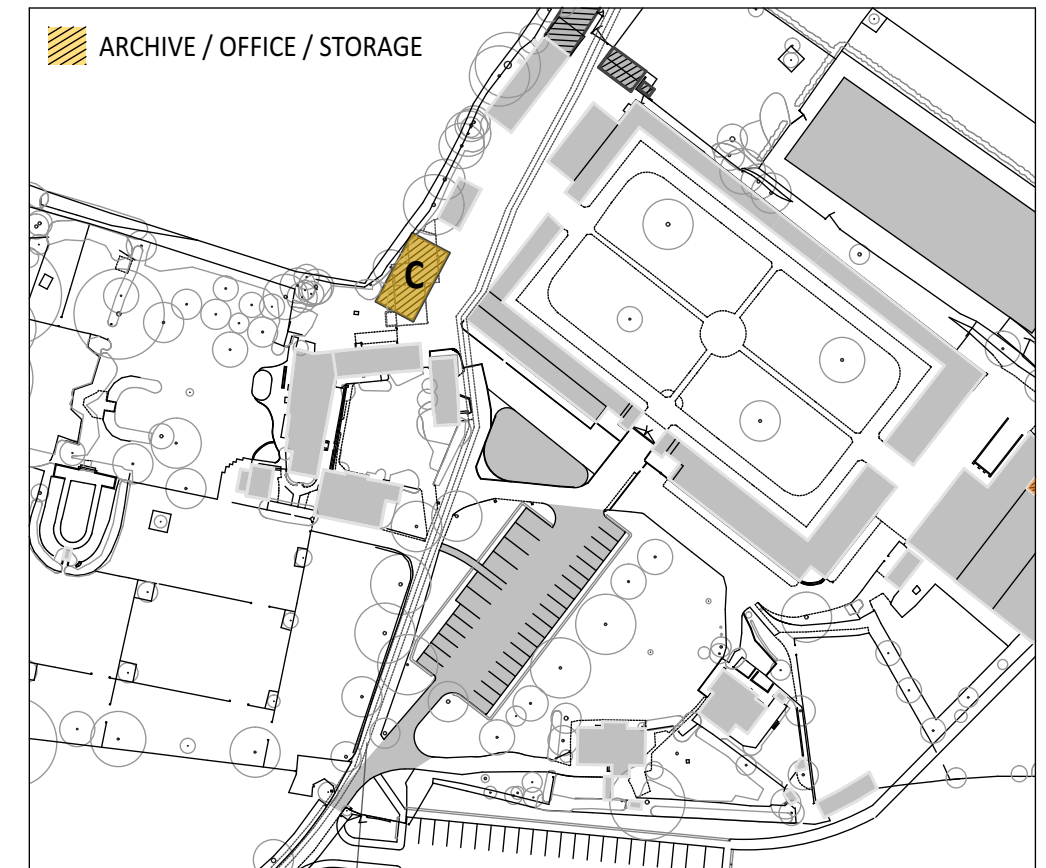


C Archive / Office / Storage

The existing archive and office storage is poorly constructed with minimal insulation; it is also damp and has a continuing problem with vermin damage. A nationally recognised military historian Dr. David Kenyon has looked through all of our archive documents and has confirmed their importance, as they contain historical data spread across our 130 year existence. They provide a real insight into the life of working horses over the decades in both peacetime and during the two World Wars, as well as the role, that horses played in London's Victorian times. Our historic archive assisted Dr. Kenyon in compiling the document 'Home of Rest for Horses and The Great War 1914-1918'.

It is therefore vital that these items are properly stored and protected for future generations to enjoy. Students who wish to research the historical evidence that we carry, often approach us for access to this historic material. A purpose built archive will address all of these problems as it will not only protect our historical items from damage due to damp, cold and vermin, but will enable any interested parties, students etc.. to have easy access to this historic material.

Our present archive and office storage is at maximum capacity, and the Trust must now seek permission for the demolition of the existing buildings that we currently use and replace these with a dry and well insulated, purpose built single storey structure. The new building can be sited in the same location as the existing, which is conveniently adjacent to the administrative office. The current buildings, which are of poor construction and are of no architectural merit, create a pinch point in the yard, which can be eased by carefully siting the new building.



Existing

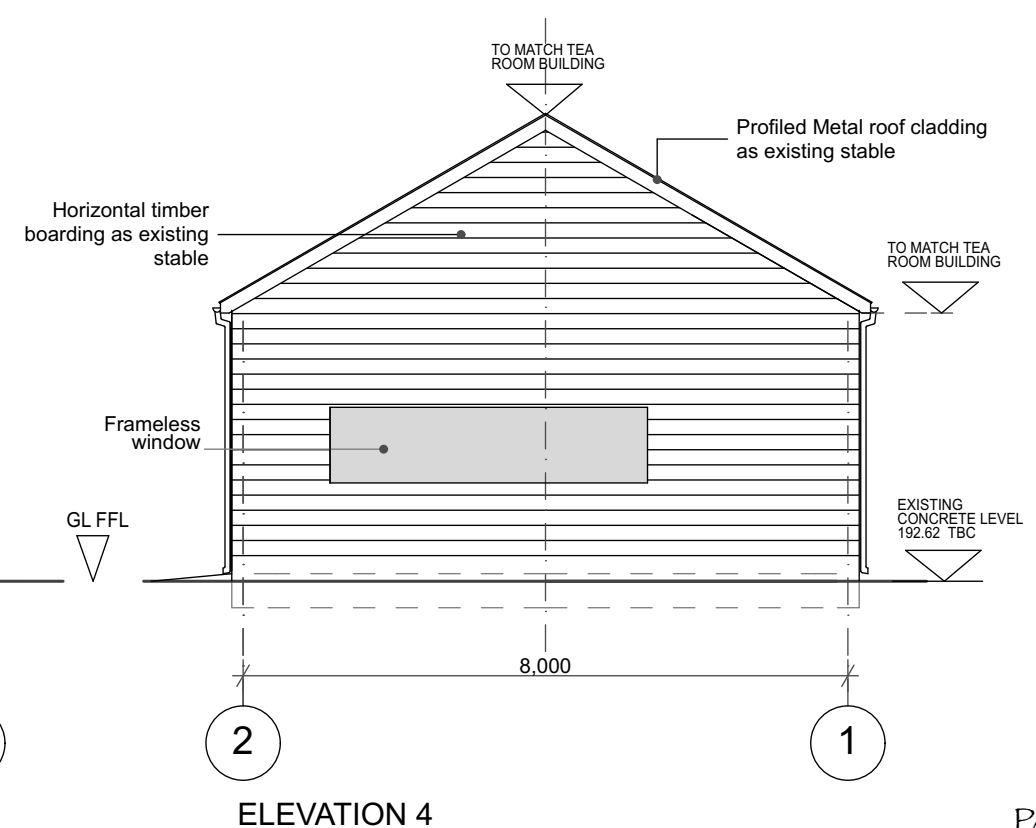
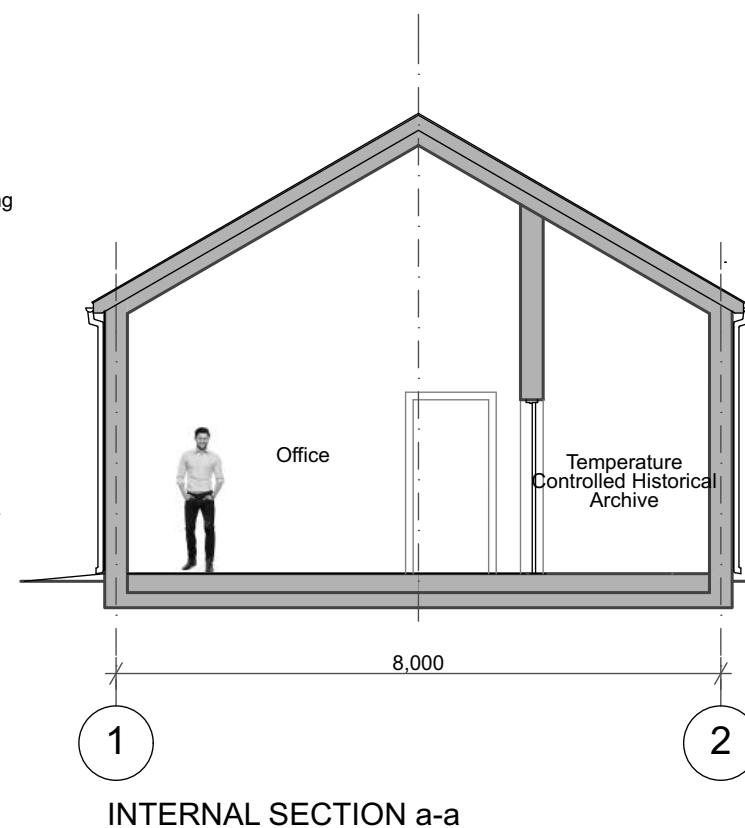
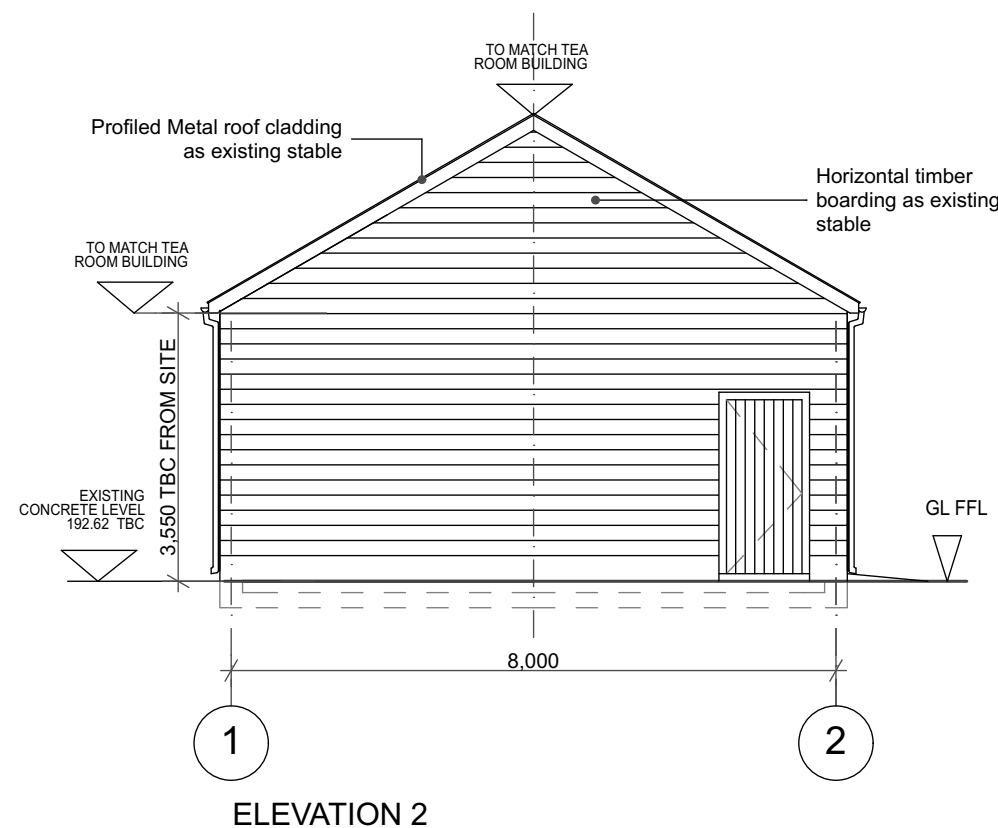
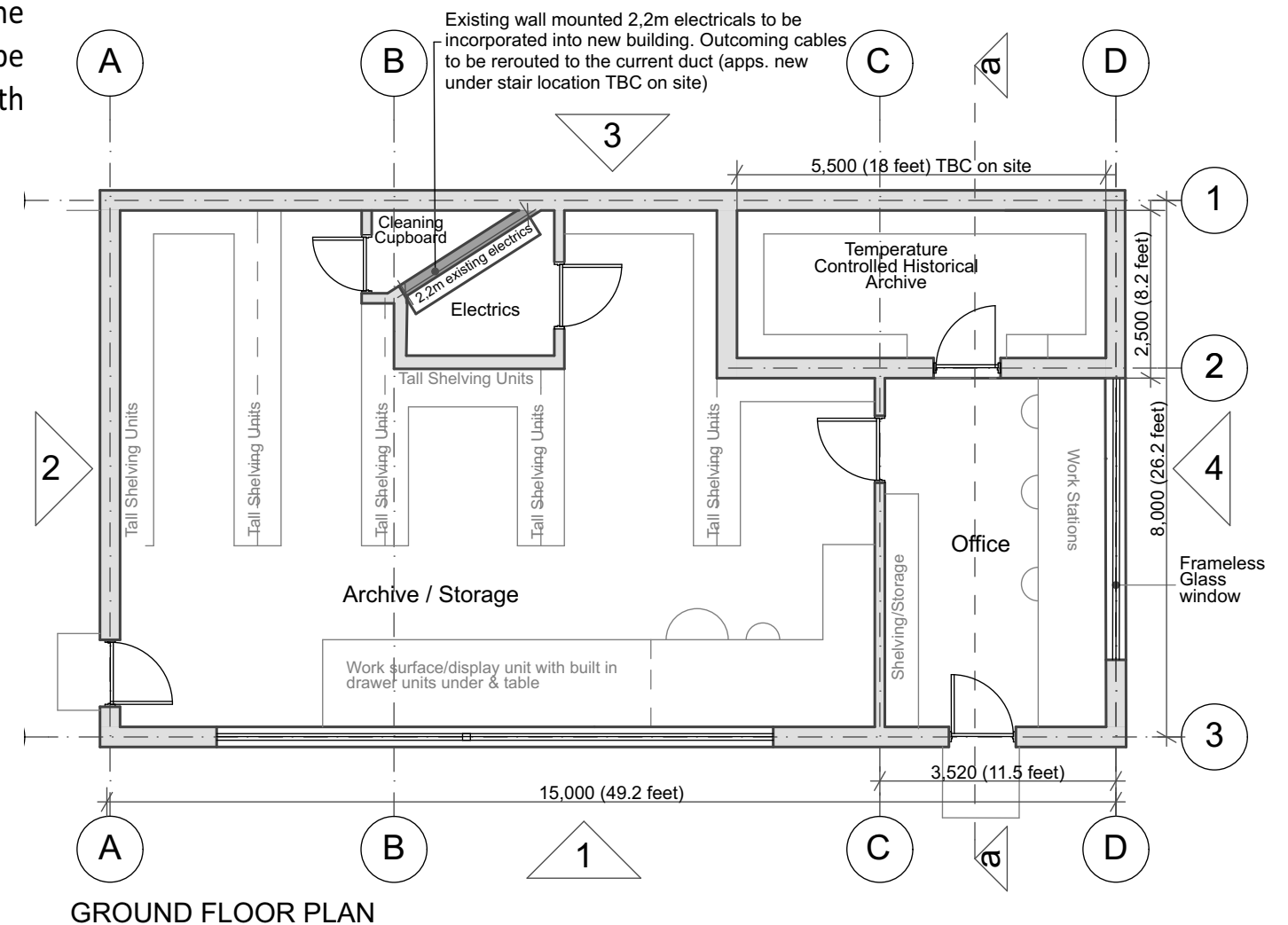
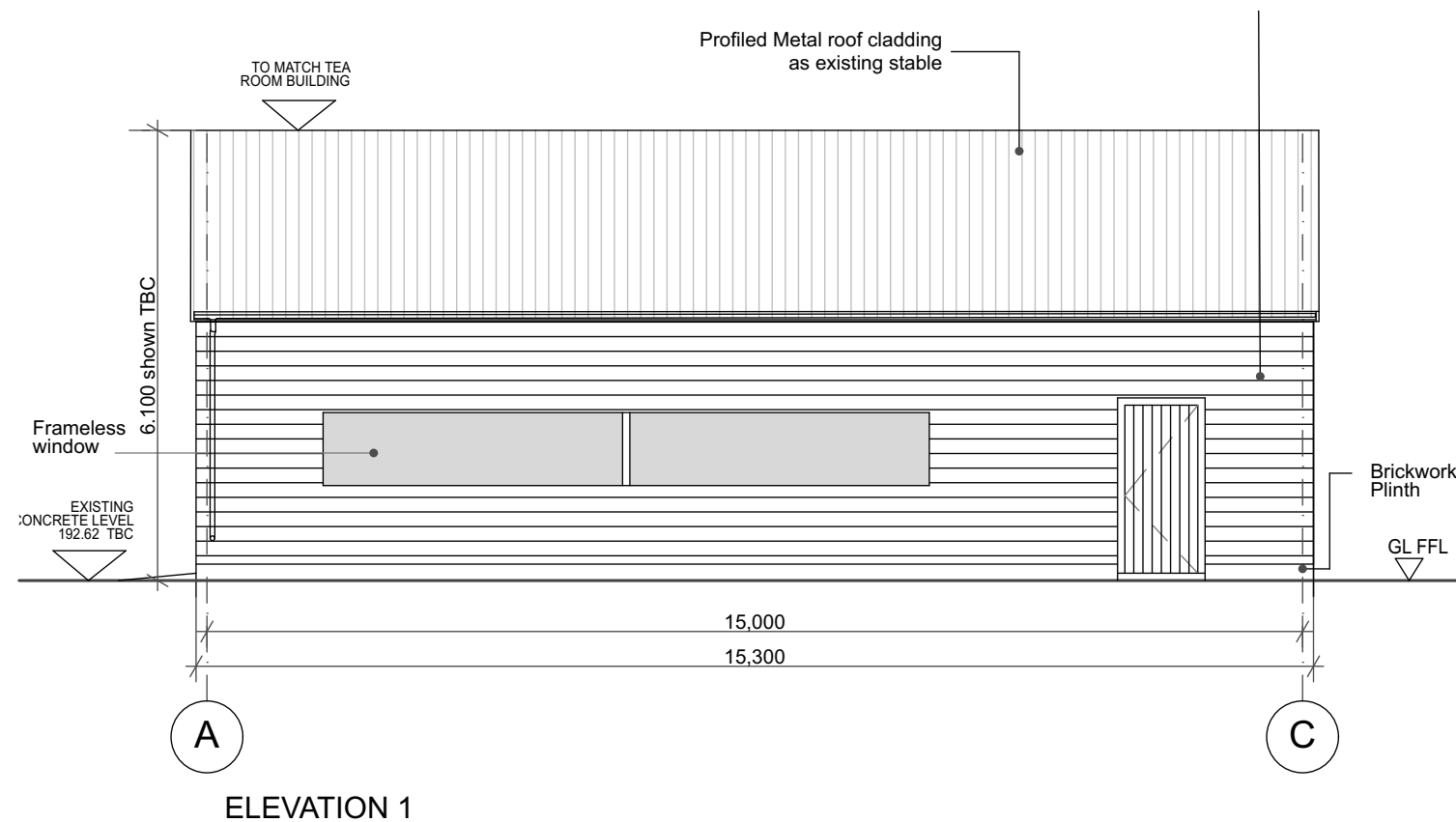


Proposed (photo montage)



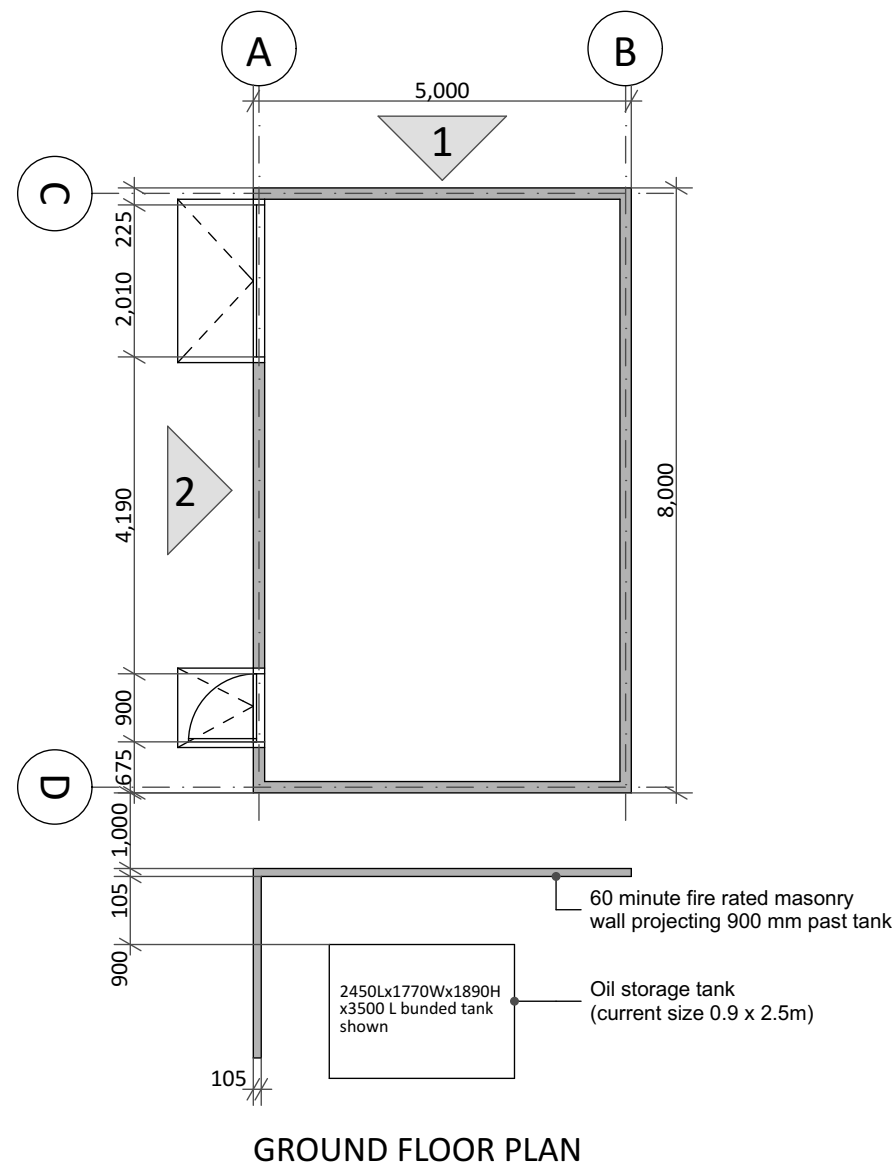
C Archive / Office / Storage

The new incoming electricity main service and distribution for the whole site is located within the building to be demolished. As the cost to remove and re-site this electrical equipment would be prohibitive, our Architect has therefore taken particular care to retain this equipment, together with the part of the wall to which it is attached and incorporate this in the new proposal.



D Maintenance Equipment Store

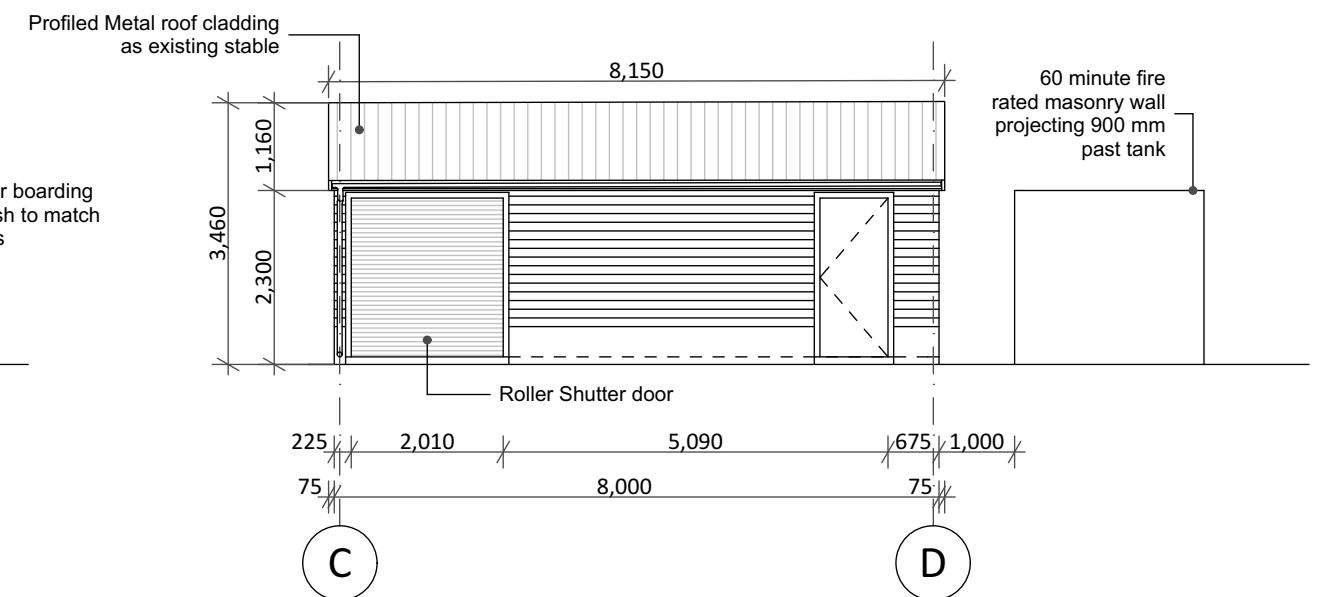
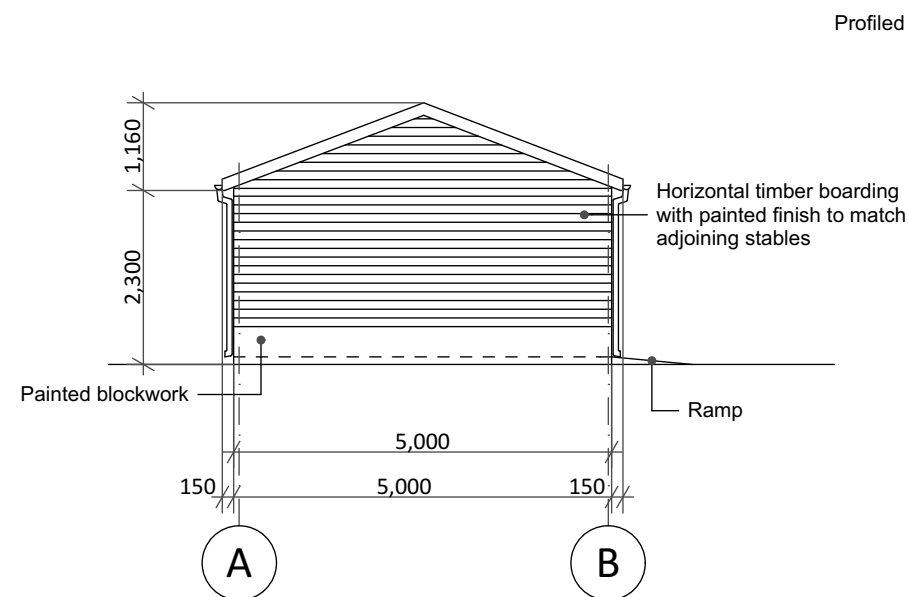
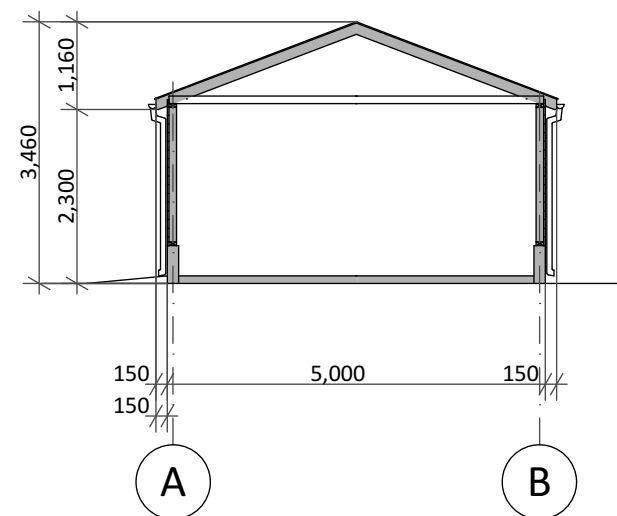
Again for security purposes, we require a secure small dedicated store for the smaller maintenance equipment that we must carry, which would be ideally located on the existing foundations of an earlier stable building, directly next to our open storage buildings. We do have a security concern with equipment currently being stored in the open barns as the public footpath runs through the site and the smaller valuable equipment, chain saws, strimmers, mowers etc... could quite easily be carried off and therefore these items need to be securely locked away out of sight, when not in use.



Existing



Proposed (photo montage)



E Equine Overnight Accommodation & Shelter

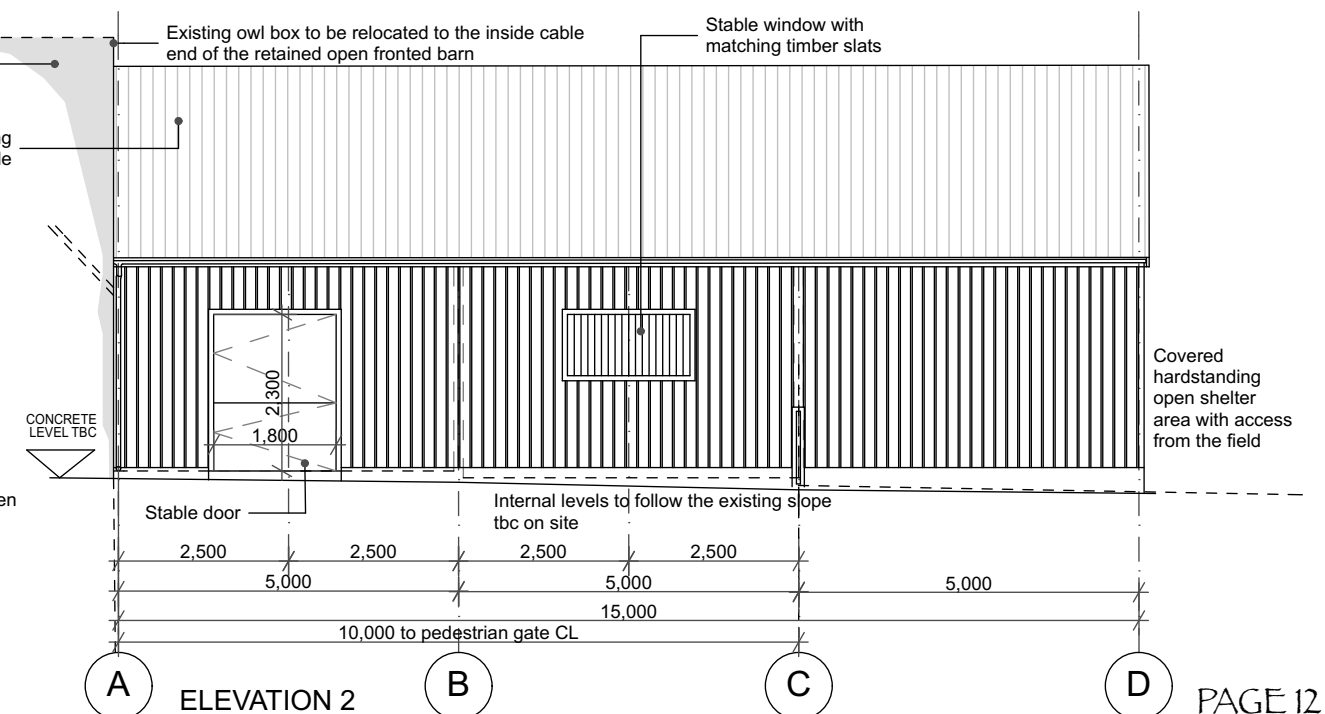
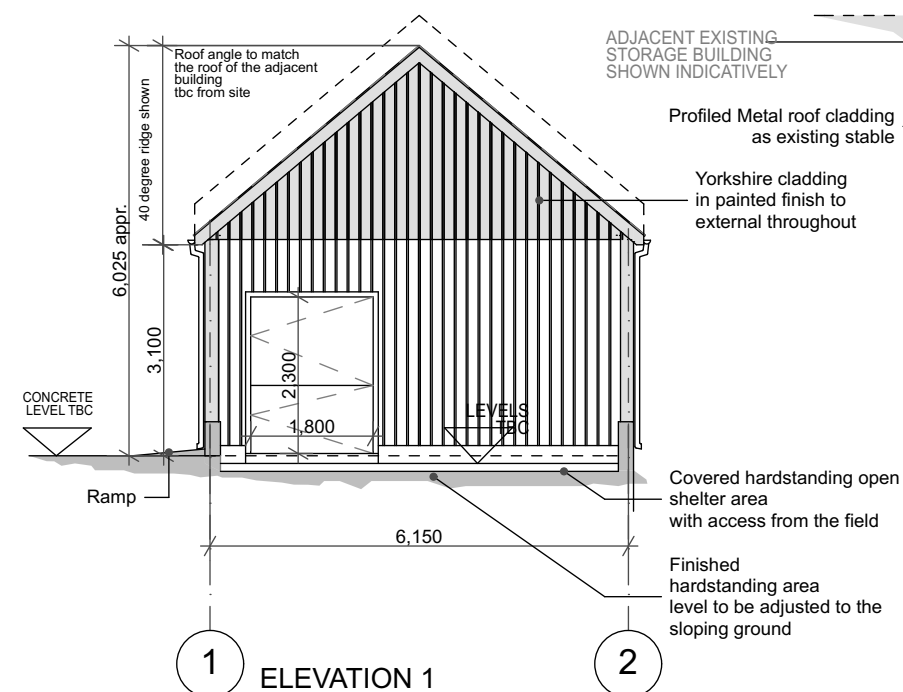
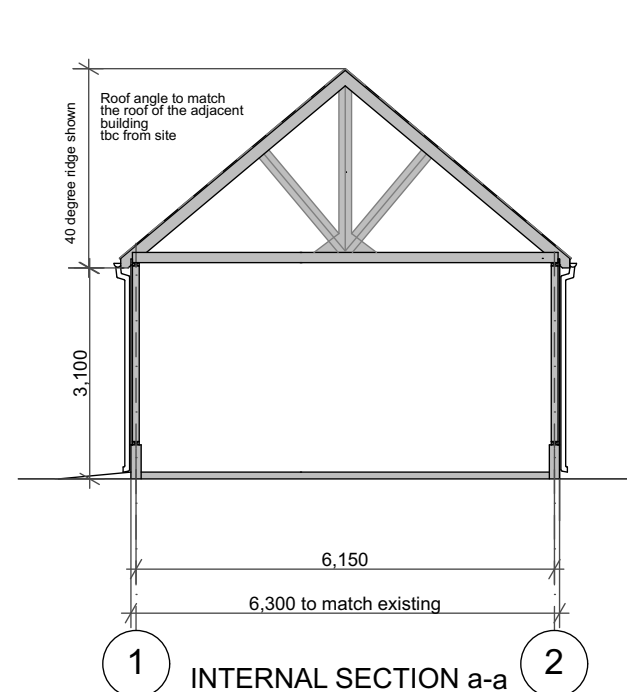
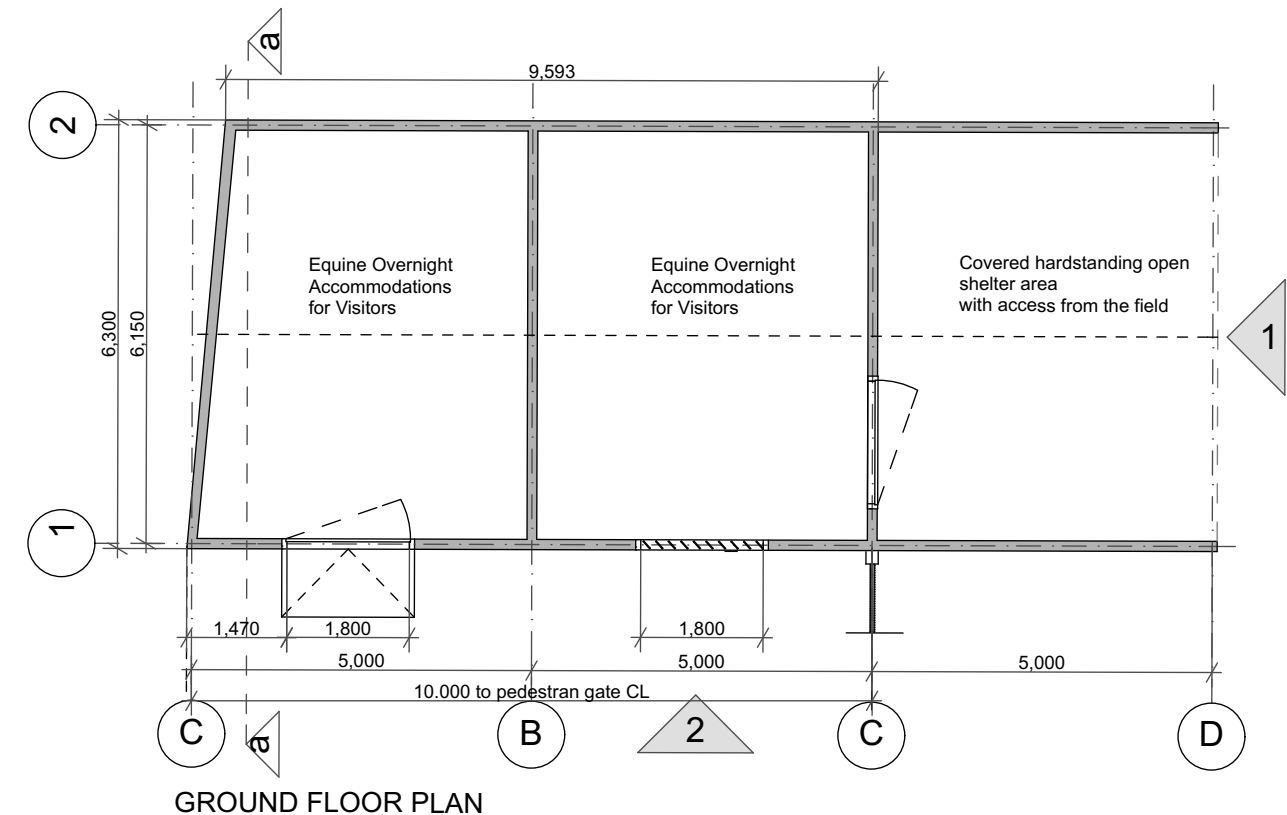
Our elderly horses are better housed in barns rather than individual stables, as this allow them to move around freely. This is beneficial when they are suffering from conditions such as arthritis. This additional barn will allow adequate winter housing for 4 of our largest retired service horses, or for 6 ponies.

In order to provide for this, it is proposed to demolish the end field shelter in the Northern corner of the site and replace with a larger, better designed building.

There is also an urgent requirement to increase the concrete hardstanding within this same area as it becomes churned up by the horses gathering in this part of the site, particularly in wet periods which creates horse management problems as well as a potential health and safety issue for walkers using the footpath that routes through this area.



Proposed (photo montage)



Public Footpath

The proposals do not affect the definitive route of the public footpath. The design has been undertaken following consultation and advice given by the County Rights of Way Officer. This involves the removal of an existing stile and its replacement by a footpath pedestrian gate specified by the County. The new field gate location and associated fencing will assist with separating walkers from the horses in the immediate vicinity of the new field gate.



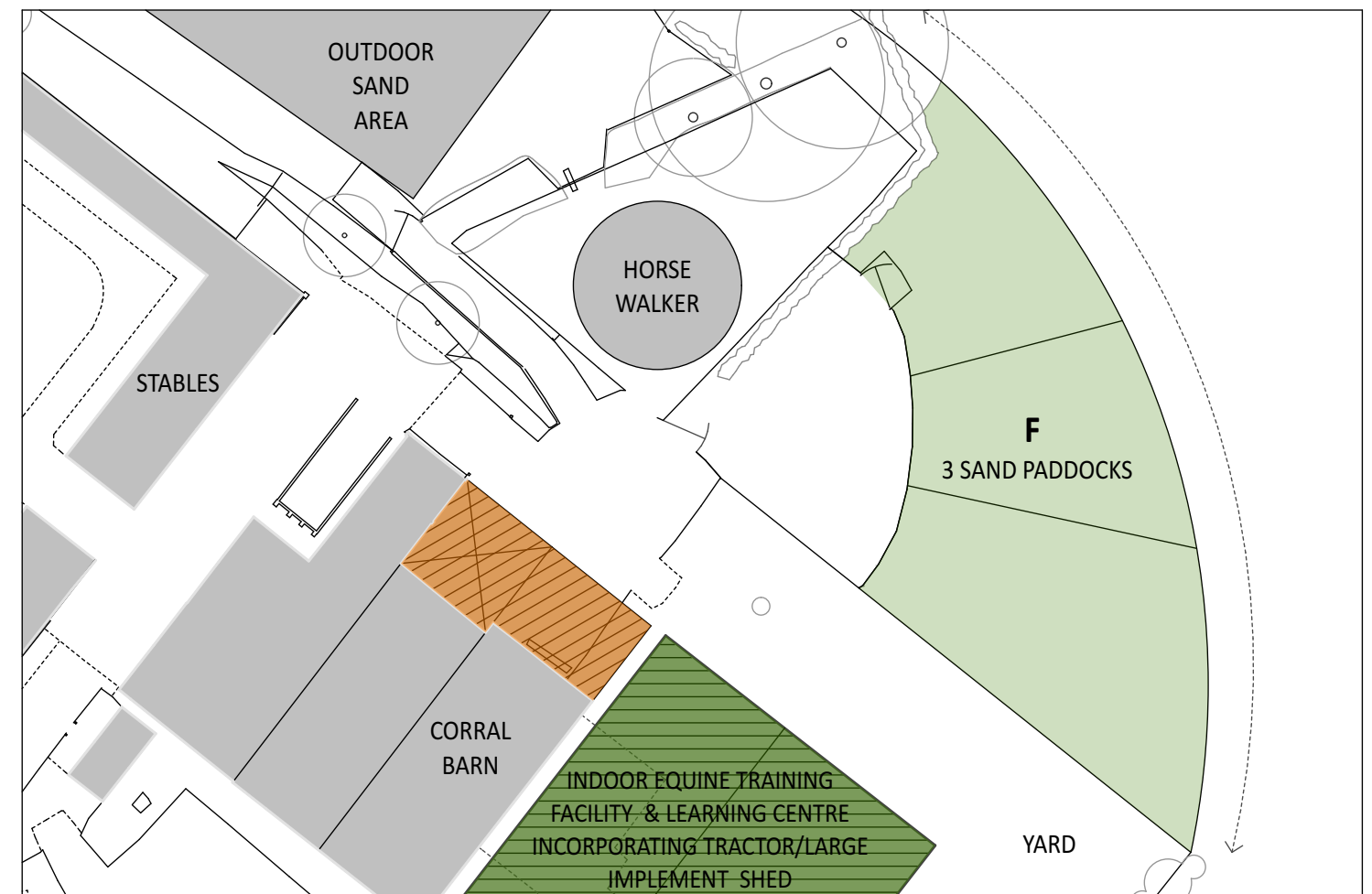
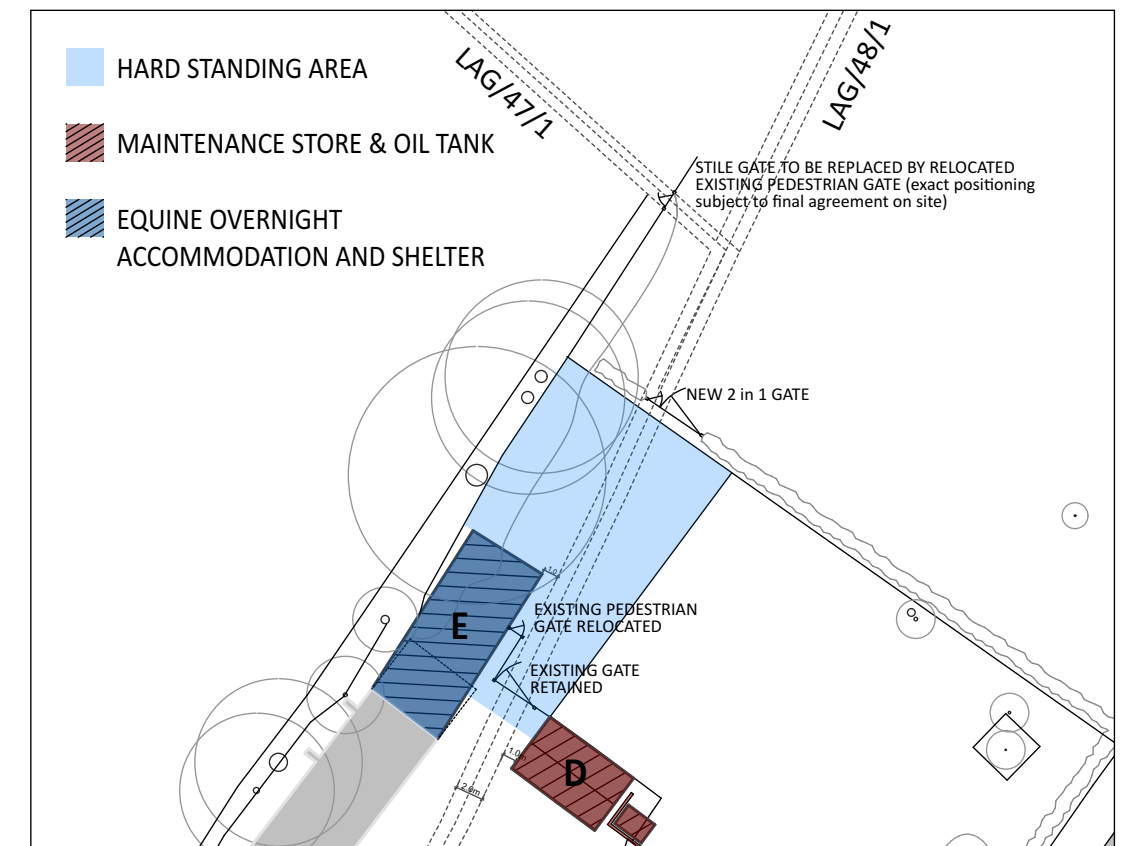
Typical pedestrian gate



Existing Manege showing surface material to be used in sand paddocks

F Three Small Sand Paddocks

On veterinary advice a second area of hardstanding, together with three segmented and fenced sand areas, are also required in the NE corner of the site, as this area is used for the management of horses recovering from injury or hoof problems where they cannot be turned out into the fields. Operationally, this is the best location for us in dealing with such cases as these animals also regularly use the adjacent corral barn, and the horse walker. These new areas will be fenced with post and rail fencing as well as some low level screen planting. However, the planting height is to be appropriately planned so that it does not interfere with the outstanding outward views from this part of the site or adversely affect the end of the Trust's "Valley View Walk". Although referred to as "sand paddocks" there areas will have the same dark surface material approved and used on the existing Manege.



G Additional Car Parking Facility

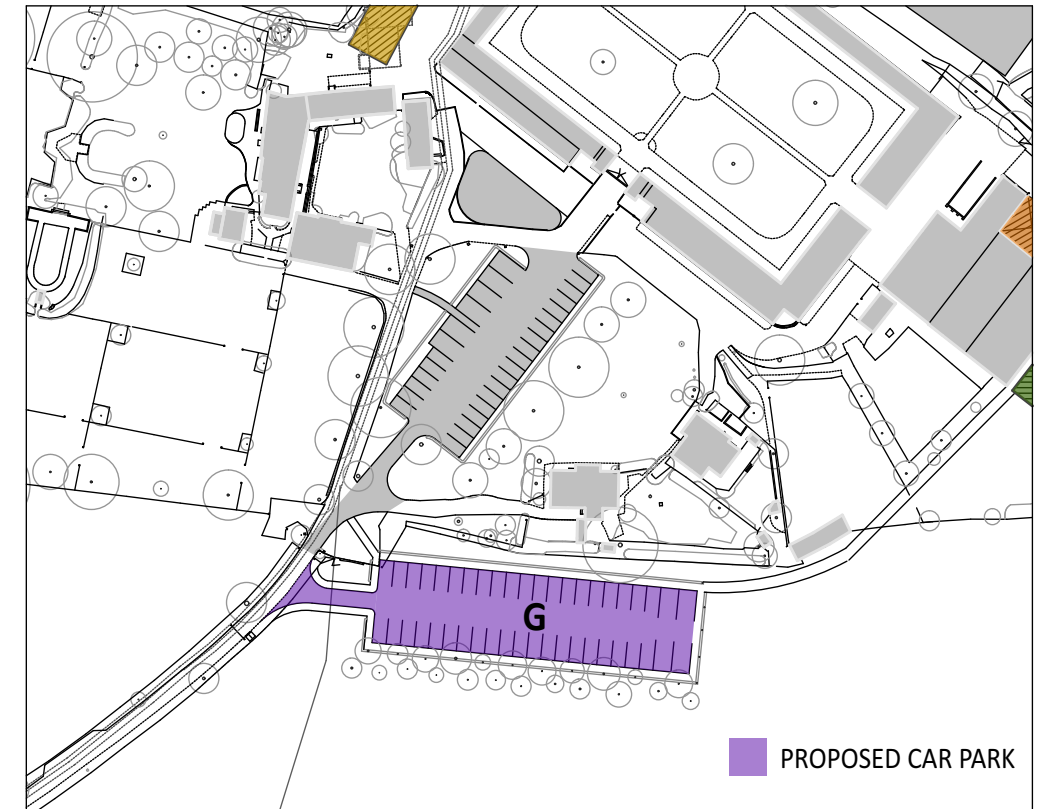
The existing car park (31 spaces, including 6 disabled) was upgraded and installed as part of the earlier proposals approved by your Council in 2013. Previously we had only a "6 space" car park and some "ad hoc" parking on the hardstanding in front of the stables area, the car movements from which gave us a safety concern because this was an area frequented by visiting children. The new 31 space car park was purposely placed in a position that significantly improved safety and accessibility, whilst allowing for the removal of unsightly concrete hardstanding. This former hardstanding has now been turned into an attractive enclosed grassed area, used as sitting out space for the new "tea room" to provide a safe play area for small children and compliments the setting of the existing Listed Buildings. The new car park has therefore proved to be a safe addition for visitors, including our regular disabled visitors, as it successfully separates the public activity around the nearest stables from car movements.

At the time we considered that this provision would be sufficient, but now the site is being used to its full potential and the number of staff has doubled from 20 to 40, the current car park is no longer adequate on our busiest days. The increased level of demand means that, on many occasions, there are just not enough parking spaces to accommodate the visiting public, staff, regular contractors and vets.

Our staff and regular visiting contractors now amount to 25 cars daily, some of which we can accommodate elsewhere on the site. However, during the last few months the average number of visitor cars on each opening day has been 39, when the existing car park struggles to cope.

In addition, training courses can now generate up to 20 cars per session, and if the function barn and our current classroom are also being utilised at the same time, this means there can easily be a need to accommodate an additional 44 cars on the site (including 4 disabled). The current parking is therefore inadequate and is therefore restricting us in our ability to accommodate paying visitors. This adversely affects the financial self-sufficiency of our Charitable Trust. With our Architects we have looked at all the options but, other than locating the new parking close to our Listed Barns, there are no other feasible locations on the site. Our plan to have a second purpose built car park in the proposed location will overcome all of these issues and will:

- Be located to avoid existing mature trees
- Be located close to the existing car park on relatively level ground
- Not sterilise or erode any of our existing smaller paddocks
- Not harm the setting of our Listed Buildings
- Be screened by adequate tree planting and landscaping together with natural hedging
- Ensure that staff can park safely
- Prevent paying visitors from leaving the site due to lack of parking, which adds to loss of income and unnecessary two way congestion on the access drive
- Create 4 additional disabled spaces at the far end of the car park which, together with a new pathway, will facilitate easy access to the proposed covered Arena and its new classroom facility
- Increase the number of training courses we can offer on days we are also open to the visiting public, or have functions, meetings or seminars in "Sefton Barn"



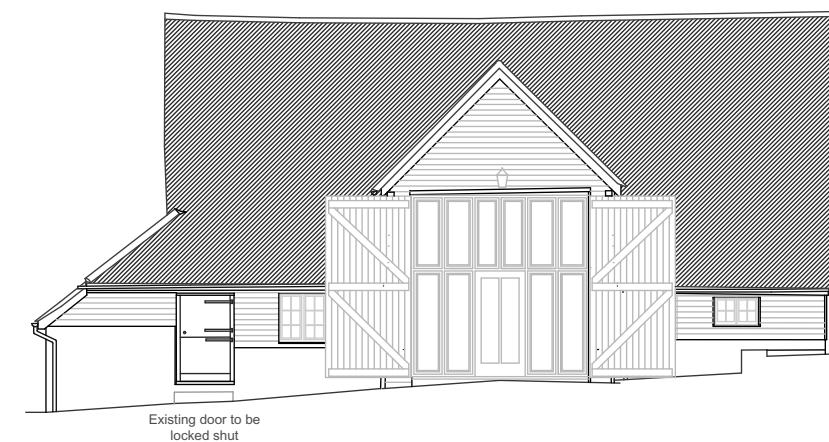
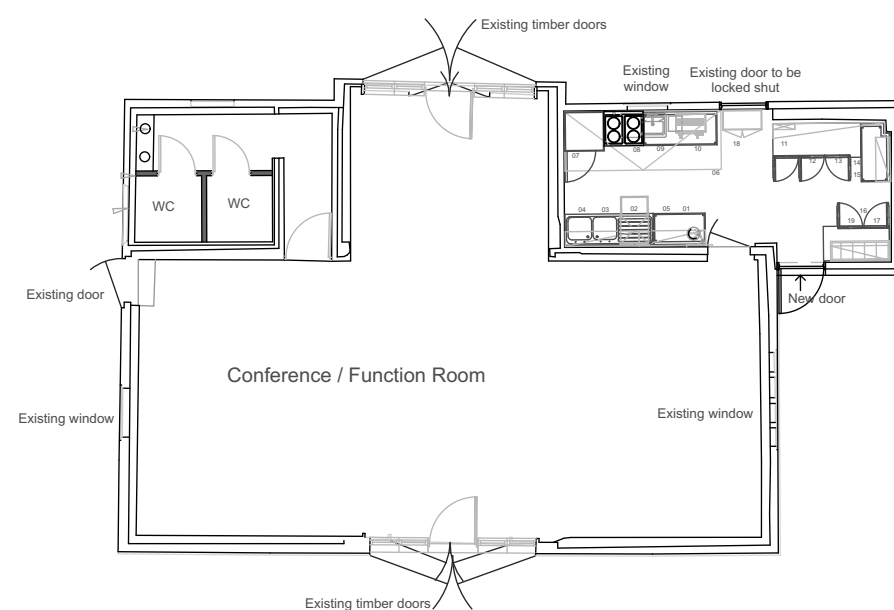
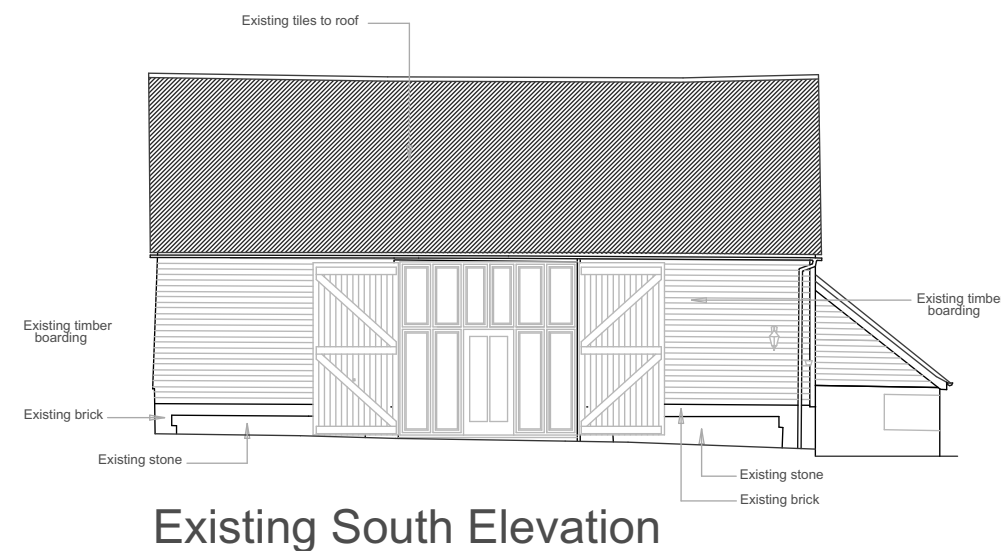
Original car park before Phase 1

H Sefton Function Barn (Grade II Listed Building) - Proposed New Kitchen Door

The new kitchen serving the function barn, which is housed in the single storey part of the barn, currently has its external doorway directly into the private amenity area of the Listed Cottage: this is difficult to manage when functions are being held. The CEO lives in the Farmhouse and has three dogs that use this area. The existing door is very low and there are steps up to the kitchen level because of the drop in levels over the site, making deliveries difficult.

It would therefore benefit all parties if a new full height door was introduced on the South elevation, which could be in the form of a stable door, where the top can be left open in hot weather for additional kitchen ventilation.

A new gravel pathway would be introduced to this new door opening, which would lead to the area and agreed catering and delivery vans park. The original door would be retained but would be locked shut and only used in emergencies. This was discussed with Martin Andrews your Council's Historic Buildings office, prior to his retirement and as this is the only matter directly affecting one of the Listed Buildings, a Heritage Asset Statement is not considered necessary.



Ground floor plan

North elevation

Essential training goes “hand in hand” with the availability of horses of all sizes and conditions that are required for practical demonstration. The Trust is uniquely placed to offer this comprehensive training service on site, which cannot be replicated elsewhere. All of the foregoing proposals are therefore deemed essential by the Trust Management and Veterinary Team. Collectively the additional facilities would greatly assist the Management and Staff in the smooth running of the Trust Site and improve the welfare of the horses and, staff and our trainees. It will also enhance and improve access and amenities for the many community groups and local statutory services that frequently rely on The Horse Trust for their specialist training. Following the positive pre-application advice received from Wycombe District Council, annexed to the rear of this Statement, The Horse Trust requests that your Council looks favourably on these proposals and grant the detailed planning permission that we now seek.

Jeanette Allen - CEO The Horse Trust

Horses Walking within the site



Highways England Training



Use

This is a well established equine welfare charitable use and these proposals, represent "operational development" and are all ancillary to that use.

In your planning officer's written advice note dated 26th September 2016 (Stephanie Penney) she stated:

'The existing use is a long established charitable equestrian activity. Whilst the development does not fit neatly within the categories of appropriate development, it is akin to outdoor recreation, where visitors use the facilities for a variety of activities. The proposed extensions and replacement buildings are considered to be appropriate development. In addition it has long been established that an equestrian use is considered acceptable in the Green Belt subject to all other material planning considerations.'

We have taken great care to limit the size of each new structure to its functional minimum and together with their relationship with the existing built form we believe that the purpose of the Green Belt will not be compromised. The car park, hardstandings and sand paddocks will be well screened by new landscaping and tree planting and although the surfaces will change, there will be no adverse affect on the character of the site.

Amount

The total site area, including all fields and paddocks is 39.96 Hectares (98.74 acres)

The gross external floor areas of the proposed buildings and other new areas are as follows:

• Indoor Arena and Machinery Store (Ground Floor 930.6 sq m) - (First Floor 156.3 sq m)	1,087 sq m
• Archive / Office Storage building	127.01 sq m
• Maintenance Equipment Store	40 sq m
• Horse Barn	25 sq m
• Extension to Corral Barn	85.9 sq m
• New Covered area	84 sq m
Total of new buildings	1,448.91 sq m

Area of buildings to be demolished:

• Archive / Office Storage	119.14 sq m
• Field Shelter	31.23 sq m
Total of demolished buildings	150.37 sq m

Other new areas:

• Sand Paddocks	1,081.56 sq m
• Hardstanding	289.0 sq m
• Car Park	1116.49 sq m

Layout

The layout of all the proposed new facilities respects and improves the existing general layout of the site. Each element of the proposals has been given considerable thought by the Horse Trust, the CEO, Vets, Trustees, and by ourselves as Planning and Architectural consultants. As far as is possible, we have limited the development to the established yard areas.

Landscaping

As with the earlier proposals, the Trust intends to plant new hedgerows and trees to assist with any essential screening for the site and its buildings, the details of which can be secured by the imposition of a suitable planning condition.

Scale and Appearance

There is already considerable built form on the site and, whilst new buildings are proposed, this is to be balanced against the demolition of the unwanted structures. The scale of each building has been carefully considered against each proposed use to which it is to be put, and we are satisfied that the scale is commensurate with both the proposed uses and the buildings already established on the site. As far as appearance is concerned, all of the proposed buildings respect the established architecture and, in all cases, will result in an overall visual improvement. External materials have been chosen to retain the architectural hierarchy and not compete with the traditional form of the three Listed Buildings.

Access & Parking

The main access into the site will remain unchanged and the proposed additional car parking has been designed and calculated to cope with current and future traffic movements by staff, the visiting public, and those attending training courses or a function. Access for the disabled will also be provided for by increasing disabled parking spaces from 6 to 10, as well as providing reasonably level access into all the proposed buildings. We would also point out that a significant amount of post and rail fencing will be removed to facilitate the new car park and that the new car park perimeter fencing will be screened by the proposed landscaping.

Sustainability

It is acknowledged that this site is in a remote location, which means that all staff, visitors and students etc., need to arrive by car (or cycle if very local).

The aims of the Horse Trust is to be a successful and sustainable Registered Charity. The proposed facilities will improve the efficiency of the Trust in carrying out its essential welfare for horses, ponies and donkeys, as well as training others including the emergency services in equine care and handling. Importantly, all of the new buildings will, through compliance with the current Building Regulations, improve the "green credentials" of the site. In this respect, it is envisaged that the new buildings will incorporate the following features:

- High quality highly insulated shell with lower permeability, other than where ventilation is required for the animals.
- Reduction in emissions through the careful selection of materials
- Use of materials with a low environmental impact over their life cycle
- Good daylighting, reducing the need for energy for lighting
- Use of low energy light fittings throughout
- High efficiency heating systems
- Use of water efficient appliances and fittings

Flood Risk Assessment

The Site is not within Flood Zones 2 or 3

The objectives of a site-specific flood risk assessment are to establish:

1. **whether a proposed development is likely to be affected by current or future flooding from any source;** *No, because this site sits on high ground surrounded by valleys and there are no water courses or ponds anywhere in the vicinity of the site.*
2. **whether it will increase flood risk elsewhere;** *No, because, as with the earlier approvals, surface water run off from new buildings and hard standings, can be dealt with by means of soakaways, the capacity of which will be calculated following local porosity tests.*
3. **whether the measures proposed to deal with these effects and risks are appropriate;** *Yes, because the means of dealing with storm-water drainage by means of adequately soakaways has been thoroughly tested on earlier phases in the development of this site.*
4. **the evidence for the local planning authority to apply (if necessary) the Sequential Test, and;**
5. **whether the development will be safe and pass the Exception Test, if applicable.** *4 & 5 are not applicable, as the site is not within Flood Zone 2 or 3 there are no new dwellings proposed and this specialist charity equine welfare proposal is ancillary to the main use and could not take place in any other location away from the already established main Horse Trust site.*

Ecology

As the proposal involves the demolition of existing buildings The Horse Trust commissioned James Johnson Ecology to carry out a survey on those buildings and his report is contained in Appendix 2.

Crime & Community Safety

The Trust fully aware of the risks associated with equine welfare, management and security. With electrically operated main gates, four residences and three dogs already on site, security is well covered. These proposals therefore raise no new issues in this respect.

Conclusion

Both we and The Trustees are confident that these proposals will provide much needed improvements for the welfare of horses, the staff and those who attend this Equine Centre of Excellence. We are also confident that this can be achieved without undermining longstanding local and National Policy geared to protect The Green Belt, The AONB and the Listed Buildings. Clearly all of the proposed changes will need to be considered in the context of the existing facilities. The Horse Trust needs to continue providing respite and retirement facilities for horses who, with the Army, have served our Country, as well as the Police in helping to protect our communities; in addition the ponies that have brought joy and confidence to the disabled, disadvantaged children and young people, as well as those animals that have suffered cruelty or neglect. The proposals will further improve the Horse Trust's special role in providing essential equine training for Local Authority staff, RSPCA Inspectors, the Police, the Fire Service and other rescue services, as well as its wider role as an education centre in equine welfare for owners and the general public.

Appendix 1

Enquiries to: Stephanie Penney
Email: Stephanie_Penney@wycombe.gov.uk
Direct line: 01494 421823
Our ref: SPENNE/PI16/01321/LEV3
Your ref:
Date: 26.09.2016

RECEIVED 28 SEP 2016



The Horse Trust
c/o Jeffrey Charles Emmet
Stable Court Studio
12A Bell Lane
Thame
OX9 3AL

FAO: Mr Jeff Emmett

Dear Mr Emmett

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

Proposal Proposed indoor training arena, new car park, archive/training building, tractor store, sand paddocks, extensions to barns and relocation of oil tank.

AT: The Horse Trust Slad Lane Speen Buckinghamshire

BY: The Horse Trust

This letter is a response to your letter of 19.07.2016 and our meeting on site on 22 September seeking the pre-application views of the Local Planning Authority. The relevant information is set out below. Please be aware of the disclaimer at the end of this letter. If you have any questions relating to the advice given, please contact the case officer.

Statement of Community Involvement – The consultation requirements set out in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (copy available on the Council web site <http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/planning-and-buildings/planning-policy/wycombe-development-framework/community-involvement.aspx>) and will need to be followed for a Tier 3 proposal development.

I would suggest that an appropriate level of engagement would be to inform the immediate neighbours and parish council of your proposals in advance of submitting a formal planning application.

Planning History – please see attached

Planning Constraints - please see attached

Planning and Sustainability – Penelope Tollitt, Head of Service
Wycombe District Council, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe, Bucks HP11 1BB
Tel: 01494 461000 DX 4411 High Wycombe -1 www.wycombe.gov.uk Twitter: @wycombedc

Planning Policies – The main policies will be (please note this is not an exhaustive list): -

Development Plan Policies and Guidance:

Adopted Wycombe District Local Plan (as saved, extended and partially replaced):

GB2 (Development in the Green Belt) G3 (General Design Policy), G10 (Landscaping), G11 (Trees and Hedgerows), RT17 (Horse Related Facilities), T2 (On-Site Parking and Servicing), CS20 (Transport and Infrastructure), L1 (The Chilterns AONB)

Core Strategy DPD (Adopted July 2008)

CS9 (Green Belt) CS7 (Rural Settlements and the Rural Areas), CS19 (Raising the Quality of Place-Shaping and Design)

Delivery and Site Allocations Plan

DM13 (Conservation and Enhancement of Sites, Habitats and Species of Biodiversity and Geodiversity Importance)

The Council has produced a Draft New Wycombe District Local Plan June 2016. The emerging policies may be referred to in this response. However, as this document has not been through Examination, the application of these draft policies holds limited weight.

Principle of development

The proposed development consists of the following:

- An indoor riding arena with storage
- A new car park
- Archive / training building
- Maintenance equipment store
- Additional sand paddocks
- Extensions to existing barn and covered area
- Relocation of tractor fuel tank
- Concrete hardstanding.

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the position that there are two potential harms in the Green Belt: 1) policy harm; and, 2) harm to openness.

Paragraph 87 states as with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 88 states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraph 89 of the NPPF states:

"A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- *provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;*

The existing use is a long established charitable equestrian activity. Whilst the development does not fit neatly within the categories of appropriate development it is akin to outdoor recreation given that visitors use the facilities for a variety of activities. The proposed extensions and replacement buildings are considered to be appropriate development. In addition it has long been established that an equestrian use is considered acceptable in the Green Belt subject to all other material planning considerations.

Impact on the character of the Green Belt and AONB

It is considered that the replacement buildings and extensions (namely the building hatched pink, orange, hatched blue) are acceptable. The buildings are within the existing site boundaries and will have limited impact on the character of the Green Belt and openness of the AONB. In addition, the higher quality buildings will be a visual improvement.

The proposed concrete hardstanding (hatched green) does not extend beyond the existing boundary and will have limited impact. However a public footpath runs through the proposed site. Accordingly this should be discussed with the County Rights of Way Officer.

The proposed sand surface (coloured yellow) and indoor riding arena (coloured blue) does extend beyond the existing boundary. The need for the facility was discussed at our meeting and the additional landscaping is noted. When submitting the application, the need should be justified and that the additional facilities cannot be accommodated elsewhere on site. It would have to be demonstrated that the use is exceptional and necessary on this site. A statement should also set out the functional requirements and long term operational requirements to justify the development proposed.

The proposal also includes an additional car park to accommodate 40 spaces. The proposed car park is outside of the existing boundaries and has the potential to harm the openness of the landscape. Again the need for this facility was discussed on site and it was also discussed why a larger car park was not considered during the previous application, which included an improved car park, ref 12/05162/FUL. When submitting the application, the need should be justified. It is recommended that parking surveys are submitted showing that the existing provision does not meet demand. It should also be demonstrated that the car park cannot be accommodated elsewhere on site. An alternative location was discussed nearer to the function barn, however it was agreed that this would potentially harm the setting of the listed buildings and erode the picnic area.

Landscaping is proposed to screen the proposed sand surface, indoor riding arena and car park. I look forward to seeing a more detailed landscaping plan to ensure that it achieves the screening required whilst enhancing the landscape.

The design and the materials of the multi-purpose building would respect the character and appearance of the AONB. I note the materials and design proposed for the indoor arena. Whilst I am aware there will be functional requirements for the structure and materials, I would refer to the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide to enable further consideration.

I look forward to working with you in the future as the supporting information progresses.

Draft Local Plan

I would also draw your attention to policies CP9 (Protecting the Green Belt), DM20 (Matters to be determined in accordance with the NPPF), DM31 (The Chilterns AONB), DM34 (Placemaking and Design Quality), DM37 (Managing Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage) and DM40 (Managing the Development in the Green Belt). This application of these policies holds limited weight at this stage, but may hold more weight depending on when this project comes to fruition.

Please note that this is my informal view based on the information available. It is given for your guidance only and a formal determination from the Council can only be given in response to a formal planning application, for which consultations would be carried out that may raise additional issues.

Yours Sincerely,

Stephanie Penney

Stephanie Penney
Principal Development Management Officer

Disclaimer

- The above advice is given for purposes relating to the Town and Country Planning Acts and for no other Council function.
- The advice is given without reference to statutory or other consultees, except where stated. The comments of such consultees may affect the advice given.
- The advice is given on the basis of the information that you have supplied. The Local Planning Authority will not be responsible for any errors resulting from inaccuracies in that information.
- The Local Planning Authority is required to perform within government targets with respect to processing planning applications. You are therefore advised to conclude your pre-application discussions before submitting a planning application.
- The advice given may subsequently be affected by external factors (e.g. new government guidance, local appeal decisions) which could result in a different view being subsequently put forward.
- Planning policies are periodically reviewed and updated. The advice given relates to the policy framework at the time the advice was given.
- The Local Planning Authority seeks to provide the best advice possible on any enquiry received. However, the advice given does not bind the authority to any particular decision on any planning application that may subsequently be submitted which will be the subject of publicity and consultation.

LOCAL LIST OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHICH MAY BE REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED TO VALIDATE AN APPLICATION

DOCUMENT	REQUIRED	RECEIVED
Ecology survey	Yes	
Photo montages showing the existing and proposed views	Yes	
Planning statement	Yes	
Heritage Asset Statement (including archaeology, conservation area, listed buildings, local list buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, registered park and garden)	Yes	

Planning applications should be **submitted electronically** via the planning portal website at www.planningportal.gov.uk. as all documentation automatically populates the back office

systems. If large applications are submitted electronically then 1 x hard copy of all documents/plans will be required together with CD's containing any documents that can not be submitted electronically.

If you are submitting documents in CD form or in electronic format to be loaded into the Public Access System on our website please note that

"In order to ensure complete compatibility with our online system, please ensure that all documents are under 10 MB in size, correctly oriented and are in either Adobe .pdf format or Microsoft Word .doc format"

Appendix 2

James Johnston Ecology

BSc MSc MIEEM CEnv
VAT 928 3295 00



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GARAGE, WORKSHOP AND FIELD SHELTER AT
'THE HORSE TRUST', SPEEN, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

INSPECTION FOR BAT ROOSTING EVIDENCE AND APPRAISAL
OF BAT ROOSTING POTENTIAL

24th January 2017

Bicknor Court, English Bicknor, Coleford, Glos. GL16 7PD
jjeecology@outlook.com

01594 862605 / 07734 171738

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This report has been prepared by *James Johnston Ecology (JJE)*, on behalf of the site owner (The Horse Trust). It provides the results of a site inspection for any bat roosting evidence, and including an assessment of any bat roosting potential, around the garage, workshop and field shelter buildings that would be impacted by proposals for their replacement. As part of the planning application the Local Council (Wycombe District) would expect this type of preliminary bat appraisal / inspection work to support the planning application.

All British bats and their roosts are protected from disturbance and harm under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and the Habitats Regulations 2010. The most recently published bat survey guidelines (BCT – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists, 2016), indicate that a daylight inspection for bat roost evidence can be a sufficient level of appraisal if it can be concluded that there is no evidence of bats and no potential (from the architecture) for a roost to have recently existed without leaving evidence. This is always the best ‘starting point’ for bat appraisal work, and can be followed up with dusk surveys if bat evidence is found, or there is potential for hidden bat roosts.

During the walkover survey, other potential ecology or fauna issues were also considered, by inspecting the habitats around the site, and in particular any potential bird nesting issues were considered.

The remainder of this report gives the appraisal Methods, Findings, Evaluation, and Conclusions. No plan of Habitats was considered necessary since the buildings and surrounding habitats are very simple, and can be well seen in the photos within the text, and no special habitat features required mapping.

2.0 METHODS

Personnel - The survey and assessment was undertaken by James Johnston (MCIEEM / CEnv), a ‘bat specialist’ Consultant Ecologist with 21 years habitat and bat survey experience, who holds current Natural England survey licences for bats, great crested newts, and barn owls (bat class licence CL15 and CL18), and is a Registered Consultant (permitted to use the new Bat Low Impact Licence system).

Weather – The weather during the surveys (undertaken on 31/08/16 and 24/01/17) was acceptable for a reliable inspection:

31/08/16 = a dry day of mixed sunshine and cloud (temperatures 24-13°C (max/min));

24/01/17 = a dry cold but sunny day (temperatures 5-0°C (max/min)).

Records – No formal records search was undertaken (since the scheme is so small and limited in extent), but the surveyor has significant local knowledge of bats and bat roosts (and the range of species active in the area), from ‘scores’ of bat surveys and ecological appraisals of sites within the nearby locale over the last 21 years, including two past dusk bat emergence surveys at directly adjacent buildings in the last five years.

Survey Technique – The survey technique involved closely inspecting the garage, workshop and field shelter buildings, internally and externally, looking for roost evidence such as bats themselves, bat droppings, oil stains from fur, polishing of crevice edges from bat fur, scratch marks in roof areas (from bats’ claws hanging on), and discarded moth wings beneath feeding roosts.

The inspection included looking for any potential external architectural crevices where a bat could potentially gain access or roost without leaving evidence (such as behind featherboards, soffits or barge boards). Where any such crevices are found

they are closely inspected internally, by shining bright torches in, or lifting lead flashing, and by using an endoscope, so that the inside of the architectural crevice can be searched for bat evidence. This survey technique included the employment of ladders and a bright (1 million candle power) torch, in order that the insides of any roof crevices (including beneath ridge tile gaps) could be well-illuminated during daylight. A photographic record of the survey was kept. The results are presented in Section 3 below.

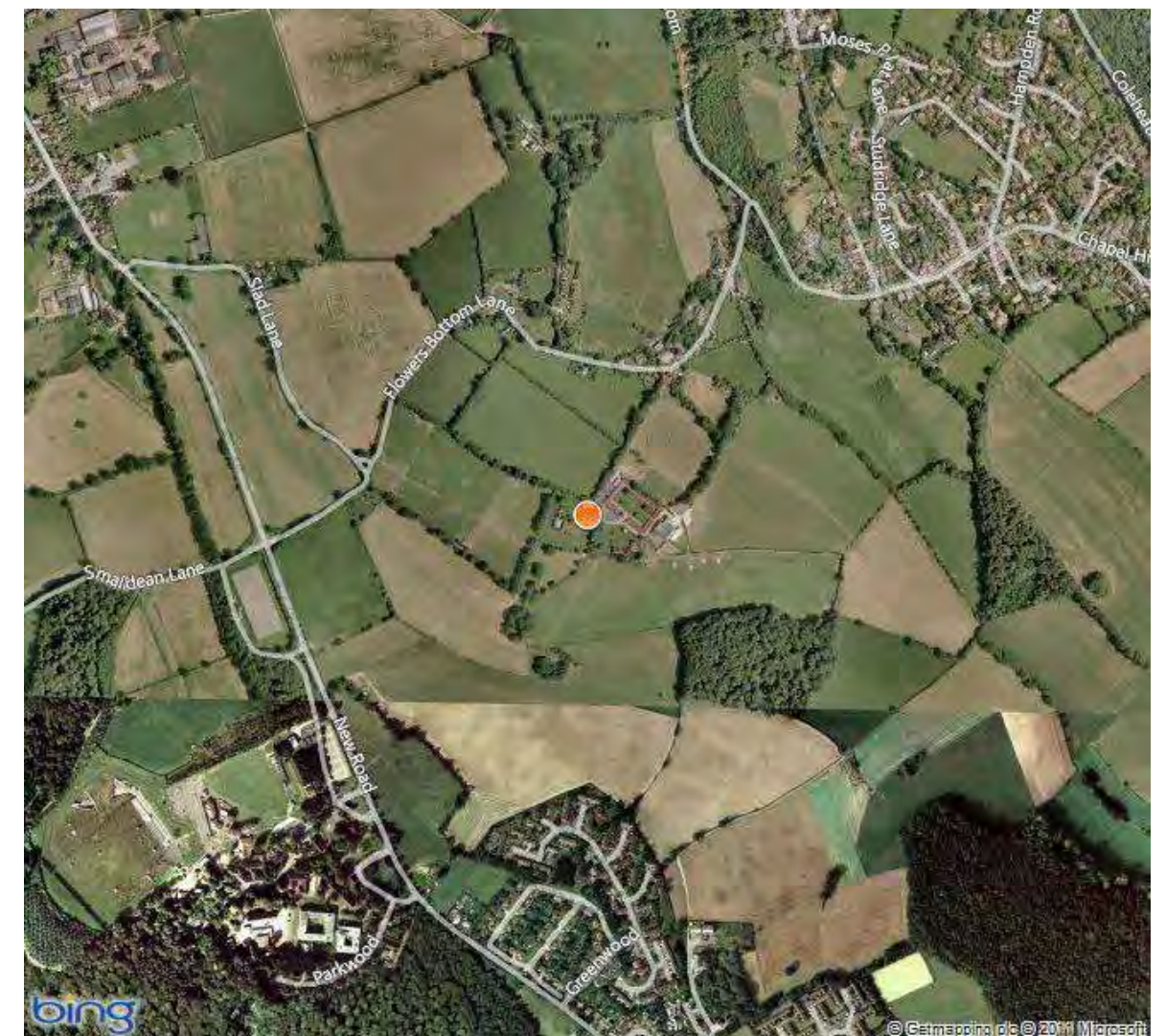
The habitat around the buildings was also assessed for its potential to support other ecology issues such as ponds with newt potential, or grassland with reptile potential.

Limitations - Ecology survey work can only present a 'snap-shot' of the ecology conditions at that time. Site conditions and fauna usage patterns can change over short timeframes and so new or altered ecology constraints in the near future can be different from the recent past. Detailed fauna surveys also only represent a sampling exercise, and so there is always an opportunity for some fauna usage to go unnoticed, particularly any rare or sporadic site usage by elusive fauna. Nevertheless, significant field experience and the use of accepted standard survey techniques and appraisal methods, together are recognised as allowing these limitations to be sufficiently reduced.

The character and condition of the surveyed buildings gave no specific or additional limitations to the reliability of the inspection, over-and-above the general limitations described above. All parts of the buildings were successfully accessed and any bat evidence at the site would have been expected to be readily visible.

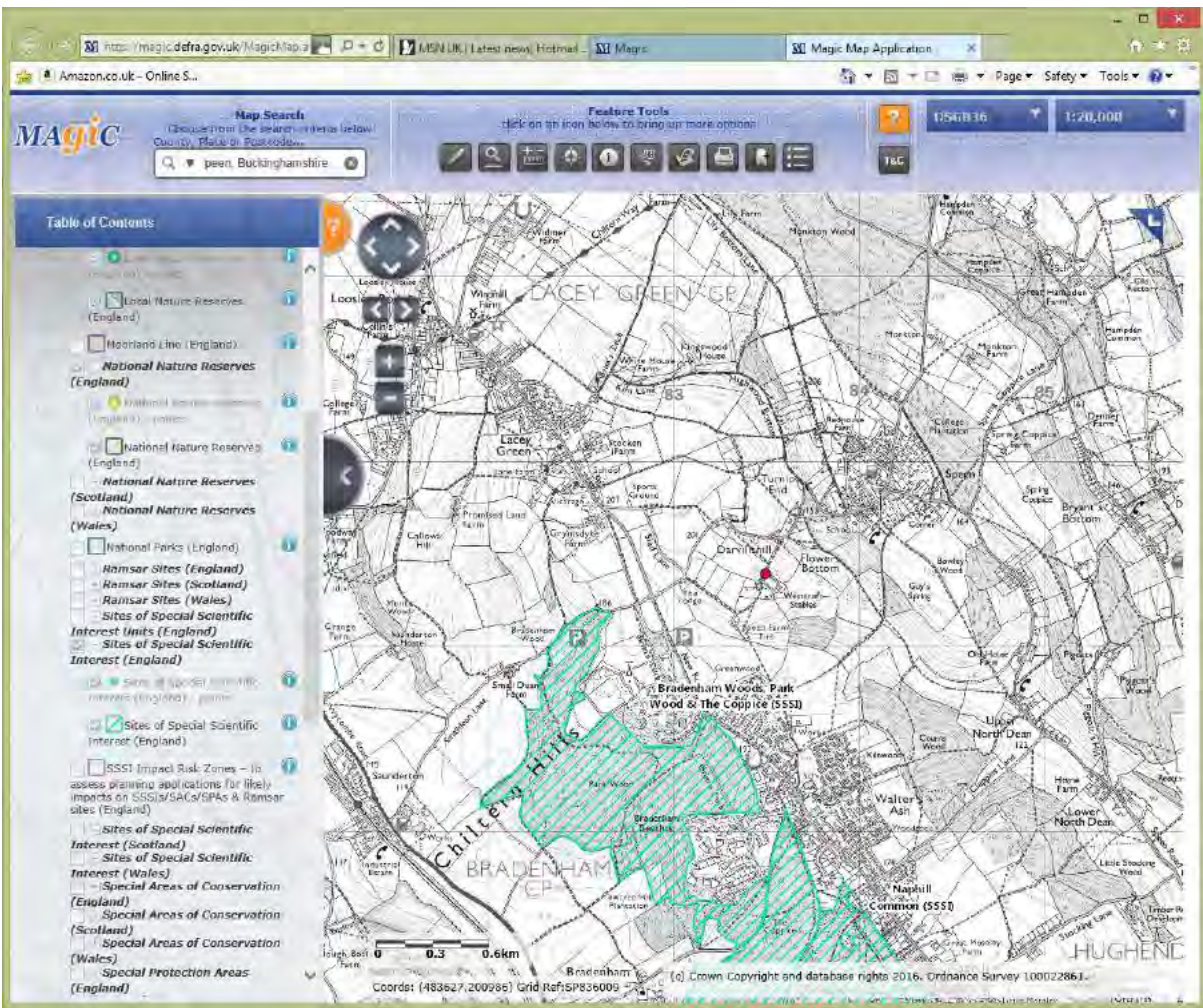
3.0 FINDINGS

Location / Landscape - The garage / workshop site is located within open countryside, in a landscape dominated by an even mix of arable and pasture land, with a relatively stout network of hedges/treebelts running through and with occasional woodland copses dotting the landscape. This would be considered a relatively wildlife 'friendly' landscape where a variety of notable fauna could be expected to reside, including a range of bat species.



Aerial photo courtesy of Bing maps (centred on application site)

Designations – No statutory nature conservation designation such as Local or National Nature Reserve, or SSSI, lies within or adjacent to the application site. The nearest SSSI is 1km away to the south-west (Bradenham Woods, Park Wood and The Coppice SSSI). This is designated for its ancient woodland, and the location is shown on the plan below (courtesy of www.DEFRA/MAGIC), with the application site at centre, marked with a red dot.



Statutory Designations within 2km of application site (which is marked with a red dot)

The Buildings

Garage - The application site’s building is in three joined parts. At the south end is a 3-bay garage with brick outer walls and low-angle roof of corrugated asbestos at the rear and a short roof of clay tiles at the front. The garage divisions are constructed with concrete panels. The front has ‘up-and-over’ doors to each bay.



3-bay garage



Garage interior

Workshop - Adjoining the north side of the garages is a tall workshop room, currently used as storage, but originally constructed to take a tall vehicle for maintenance purposes. There is a tall metal roll-up door on the front. The walls are brick. The roof is an apex type with clay tiles over bitumen felt. The roof structure is softwood rafters and ridge board. There is no separate attic space as the building is open from the floor up to the ridge. There is a plastic soffit board under the eaves.



Workshop



Workshop interior

Store Room – The northern-most part of the building is a storage room used for office archiving. This has brick and flint walls and a mono-slope asbestos roof. Inside, the room is well decorated (with plastered and painted walls and ceiling in good condition beneath the asbestos roof sheets).



Store room on right



Store room interior

Field Shelter – In the north of the site is an open-fronted field shelter built as a ‘lean-to’ onto the end of a taller and more substantial barn that is retained. The field shelter has side walls constructed with a softwood frame and clad in featherboards. The roof is mono-slope, low angle and comprises only corrugated asbestos sheets fixed straight onto softwood beams. There is no roof membrane or any roof void. There are no architectural crevices or mortise joints associated with the structure. The gable end of the retained adjacent barn was also closely inspected (from on top of the Field Shelter roof), as it recognised that the proposed replacement building will disturb that end wall and could block flight access to any bats roosting beneath the barge board of the retained barn.



Field shelter interior



Field shelter interior



Field shelter interior



Field shelter

Surrounding Habitat – To the front and sides of the workshop / garage building are large areas of tarmac hard-standing / parking areas, which can be seen clearly in the above (previous) photos. To the rear (western side) is a small area of mown garden lawn, with a few young planted willow trees around the edge. There is also a tall boundary hedgerow / treeline passing adjacent to the rear corner of the building, comprising hawthorn, ash, blackthorn and hazel.



Habitat to rear

At the Field Shelter there is the retained barn on the south side, tarmac on the east side, bare earth on the north side and a species poor tall hedge / treebelt) on the west side (hawthorn, ash, blackthorn).

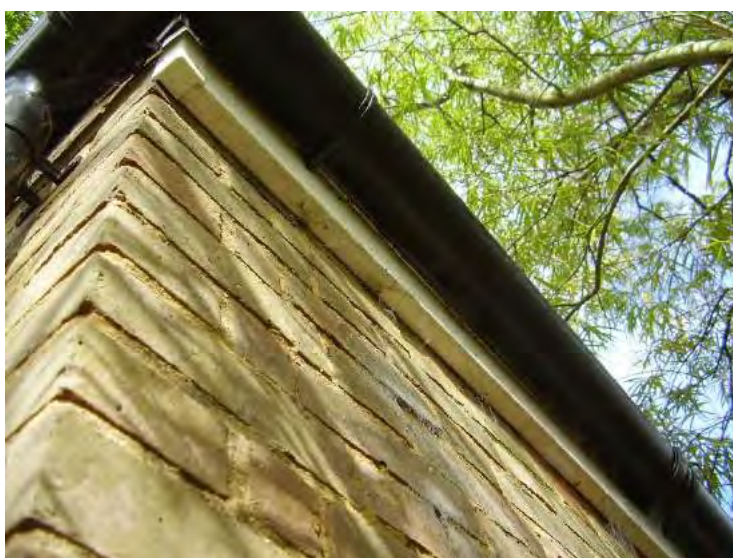
Bat Inspection – The inspection revealed no bat roosting evidence anywhere around the buildings, inside or outside. No bats or bat droppings were found inside any room of the buildings, and no droppings were seen on floors or stuck to internal or external walls, or on top of any of the stored boxes inside the store room. No moth wings were found on floors, indicating no feeding roosts. The roofs were found to be in good condition with no tile gaps, or gaps under ridge tiles. One internal gap was found behind a softwood beam supporting the asbestos roof sheets in the 3-bay garages, low down (at head-height), but this gap could readily be fully inspected and was seen to support no bat roosting evidence. The gable wall tops are in good condition with no missing mortar, and so no tile gaps or wall-top gaps exist. The garage / workshop buildings are evaluated as having no bat evidence and no potential for hidden bat roosts.



Small gap behind beam (no bat evidence), at garage



Well-sealed gable wall tops



Plastic soffit board



No ridge tile gaps

Field Shelter Bat Potential – At the Field Shelter this building was found to have no bat evidence and no bat roosting potential (no suitable architectural gaps for bat roosting). The adjacent retained barn was also closely inspected (in case there was any potential for a bat roost under gable top barge boards (which could be impacted by the linking of the replacement building to the retained barn), but it was concluded to have no potential for any bat roosting around those barge boards. The barge boards have a white plastic cover over them and they are constructed in a manner whereby the gap behind the barge board is only 1cm deep, and so could not provide any potential bat shelter.



Retained barn plastic barge board



No suitable roost gap behind barge board

Other Fauna – No bird nesting evidence was found around or inside the workshop or garage buildings or any part of them. The adjacent hedgerow at the rear is likely to support nests from small garden and hedgerow bird species during the March to August nesting season.

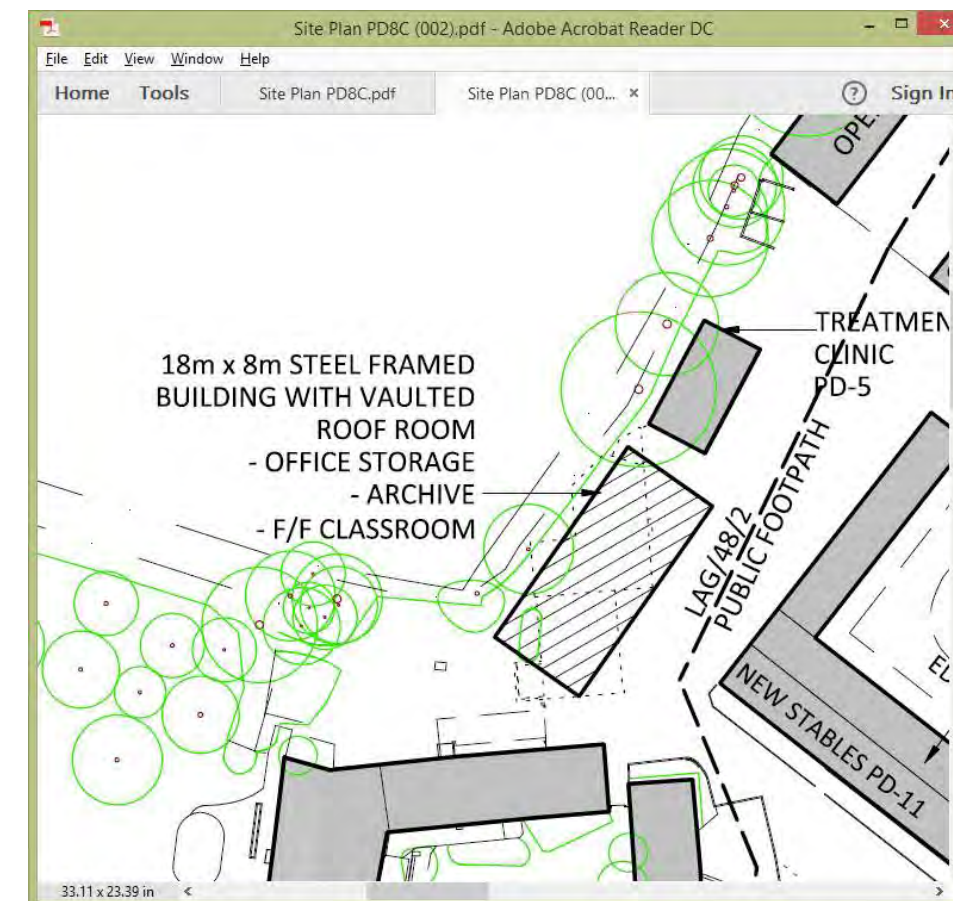
The Field Shelter has two old robin nests inside on top of beams. These may have been inactive for years, but equally there remains a reasonable chance of a new nest becoming active in any future spring period.

The owl box on the end of the retained barn, is old and damaged (its roof is missing), and so has not been used for any owl nesting activity. It will need to be removed / relocated to allow the replacement field shelter to be constructed.

No ponds exist close to the buildings (none within 250m - giving negligible chance of newts in the area), and the grassland of the lawn to the rear (which is regularly mown short as lawn) has no potential to support reptiles (due to lack of any of the grassland features that reptiles require – such as tussocks, ant hills, matted dead grass, etc).

4.0 EVALUATION

The scheme – The development scheme simple involves removing all three parts of the southern outbuildings (3-bay garage, tall workshop, and office storage room), to allow a rectangular replacement building to be constructed in the same location. The replacement building would have the same mixed uses, but would be built slightly taller and with a metal frame, brick walls and traditional tiled apex roof, incorporating an attic storage space. The proposed scheme is shown on the plan below, and this shows the existing building with dashed black line, beneath the cross-hatched replacement building.



Proposed scheme

In the north of the site it is proposed that the lean-to Field Shelter be replaced with a longer and taller field shelter barn, with an apex roof that will be just below the roof line of the adjacent retained barn.

Potential Impacts – There are no wildlife designations within or close to the application site, and so no potential for impacts to a designated site.

It is concluded from the inspection that there has been no historic or recent bat roosting around these buildings, and there is no potential for hidden roosts to exist without leaving evidence. There is consequently no potential for bat roosts to suffer any adverse impact from the building demolition work. Additionally, the gable end wall top of the retained barn in the north was found to have no bat roost evidence or any bat roost potential, and so the construction of the taller replacement field shelter has no potential for bat impacts. The survey concludes no potential for bat impacts and so there are no requirements for further detailed bat surveying or bat mitigation.

Regarding other potential ecology issues, there is slight potential for accidental damage to the hedgerow beside the rear of the buildings, during use of heavy machinery and demolition of the walls; and a corresponding risk of unlawful disturbance of birds nesting in that hedgerow, plus potential for nesting bird disturbance inside the Field Shelter (if a nest were constructed in the spring). However, these potential impacts are readily avoided via the precautionary mitigation outlined below. There is considered no potential for impacts to any other notable fauna, as the site has no suitable habitat for reptiles or amphibians.

Precautionary Mitigation and Recommendations – No bat or bat roost mitigation is required. However, if a bat were unexpectedly seen or found on site at any time, build works must temporarily stop while the Project Ecologist is contacted to review the evidence and give guidance in consultation with the Council and Natural England.

To avoid potential damage to the adjacent hedgerow and/or unlawful disturbance of nesting birds, the hedgerow that runs past the west of the buildings should be protected from physical impact from demolition machinery, through the prior erection of temporary Heras fencing between the buildings and the hedge. Demolition machinery must also operate from the eastern side of the site (working from on the hard-standing). In this way the hedgerow habitat will be protected, but also any bird nesting activity within the hedge would be protected since birds will already be used to heavy machinery working close to them (there are many large tractors constantly operating around this yard and workshop area). The temporary fencing should prevent machinery being able to work beneath the canopy spread, and this will protect the root system of the hedge.

For the Field Shelter demolition (to avoid any potential for nesting bird disturbance), the demolition should either avoid the March to August nesting season, or should only be conducted within that period if the Project Ecologist has first conducted an updated inspection at the time and confirmed no active nests.

It is recommended that as a minor enhancement measure the existing owl box (with missing roof), should be removed and re-located to inside the retained barn (fixing it onto the other side of the same wall, at the top of the wall), and at the same time replacing the missing roof of the owl box, using a sheet of plyboard. By replacing the roof of the owl box and moving it inside the open-fronted retained barn, the box will last for many years and will have much greater chance of attracting owls in future.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

No designated wildlife sites lie within or close to this application site, and so none would be at any risk of impact from this minor re-development scheme (garage, workshop and field shelter replacement). The ecology inspection concludes no potential for impacts to any bat roosts, and no potential for impacts to protected amphibians or reptiles.

Minor hedgerow damage and nesting bird disturbance could occur, but will be avoided by the practical measures within the mitigation described above. The lack of potential for residual or significant fauna impacts results in no requirement for further detailed fauna survey. The minor precautionary mitigation and enhancement recommendations can be guaranteed through use of a Planning Condition linked to this report. The scheme will therefore not be contrary to wildlife laws or Local Plan ecology policy.



Jeffrey Charles Emmett

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANCY