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**SUPPORTING INFORMATION
&
DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

**PROPOSED MENAGE,
HIGH HILL FARM,
HAYFIELD ROAD,
NEW MILLS,
SK22 4QH.**

March 2009

1. Introduction

The proposed ménage, or out door riding area, would be for the use of the applicant and her family only. The applicant has three horses and competes in dressage events and the ménage would be used for training and exercising the horses.

2. Policy Background

2.1. The proposed site is within the Green Belt and the relevant Local Plan policies are:

- Policy OC1 – Countryside Development including in the Green Belt.
- Policy OC2 - Green Belt Development. This policy sets out the overall approach to development in the Green Belt. Amongst the acceptable forms of development listed in the policy are “essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation”.
- OC4 – Landscape Character and Design.
- GD4 – Character, Form and Design

2.2. All the above policies have been taken into consideration when developing the proposal.

3. The Design Process

The starting point was to identify possible suitable sites for the ménage near the farm. Three suitable sites were identified – see Plan 1 in Appendix. A site meeting was then held with Miss Jane Colley from the Council’s Planning Service at which the different options were discussed. Of the three sites proposed it was agreed that the site (Option 1 on Plan 1 in the Appendix) was the preferred site. Options 2 and 3 were considered more visible and intrusive.

4. The Design Concept

The concept throughout the design process has been to respect the character and design of the landscape and to locate and design the ménage to minimise its visual impact.

5. Design

5.1. Location

The proposed site is the least intrusive of the three possible sites as it is located to the east of the farm buildings which would partially screen the ménage from views from the west and north-west. The site is a small field - next to the farm buildings - which slopes down to the farm and the ménage would be cut into the hillside lessening its impact.

5.2. Layout and Design.

The layout is a 40 x 20 metre rectangular all weather riding area fenced with a 1.2 metre high post and rail fence. The finished surface would consist of black rubber. The ménage would be created by a cut and fill operation on the slope – see cross-sections submitted with the application. Drainage would be to an existing field drain.

5.3. Landscape

A hawthorn hedge is proposed on the western side of the ménage and on part of the northern boundary to provide screening from views from the north and west.

5.4. Access

There is an existing field gate onto Hayfield Road and another into the farm yard. Construction traffic would use the Hayfield Road gate. Once construction is complete there would be no vehicular traffic. Horses would access the site from the farmyard. The ménage has been sited to allow access from Hayfield Road and from the farm yard into the field to the east via the existing gate.

6. The Case in Support of the Application.

- 6.1. Paragraph 1.6 of Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 (PPG2) states that Green Belts have a positive role to play providing opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation near urban areas. This proposal falls very much in this category. It is a small scale recreation facility which would be used for the personal use of the applicant and her family to exercise and train their horses. This is the applicant's hobby and recreation. The applicant has a five year old daughter who is learning to ride. The property is on a busy main road and the ménage will enable the daughter to learn in a safe environment away from the road.
- 6.2. The proposal would be in keeping with the landscape and location and would preserve the openness of the Green Belt. The ménage would be cut into the hillside and would be partly shielded by the farm buildings. These factors plus the black colour of the proposed ménage surface and the proposed landscaping would result in the ménage being unobtrusive in the landscape and the Green Belt.
- 6.3. Planning permission has been granted in recent years for at least three ménages nearby - at Tanpits Farm, Mellor Road; at Broadhurst Farm, Mellor Road; and at Weathercotes, Sitch Lane, Birch Vale. All three sites are in the Green Belt.
- 6.4. In summary, considerable care has been taken in the development of the proposal which, it is contended is in keeping with the countryside and Green Belt location and planning policies.