

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 18th MARCH 2024

Case No: 23/01135/FUL

Proposal: Change of use to equine use and grazing for personal use - Retrospective

Location: Offord Meadow Station Lane Offord Cluny

Applicant: Ms Sarah Medley-Johns

Grid Ref: 521864 267016

Date of Registration: 20.11.2023

Parish: OFFORD CLUNY AND OFFORD DARCY

RECOMMENDATION - APPROVE

This application is referred to the Development Management Committee (DMC) in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation as the Officer recommendation of approval is contrary to that of the Parish Council.

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

- 1.1 Planning permission is sought for the retrospective change of use to equine use and grazing for personal use at Offord Meadow, Station Lane, Offord Cluny.
- 1.2 The site is accessed off the southern side of Station Lane and comprises a roughly triangular size of agricultural land comprised of mainly grassland. A waterway runs from the southeast corner of the site along the eastern boundary which then runs centrally through the site. Also running east west through the site is a footway linking the site to Offord Sluce and a track runs north-south along the western boundary.
- 1.3 A trainline abuts the site on the eastern boundary and a footpath runs east-west through the site. The site is fronted by post and rail timber fencing with mature trees and hedges which also runs along the western side, separating the site from the River Great Ouse. Opposite the site are some commercial uses, open land and the continuation of River Great Ouse. The built-up village of Offord Cluny sits to the east on the other side of the trainline.
- 1.4 The application site falls within the Environment Agency's Flood Zone 3 as identified by Huntingdonshire District Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2017), which also locates the site within a 30-year extent for surface water flooding and over 75% chance of ground water flooding.

- 1.5 The designated Conservation Area of Offord Cluny is to the east of the site on the opposite side of the trainline which runs north/south on the eastern side of the site. However, the site is located outside of this designated heritage asset. All Saints Church, High Street, Offord Cluny which sits approximately 90 metres east of the site within the Offord Cluny Conservation Area is a Grade II* Listed Building.
- 1.6 No part of the site includes any legally protected trees, nor are any trees abutting the site legally protected.
- 1.7 The site is within the Great Ouse Valley Green Infrastructure Priority Area. The site is classified as Agricultural Land Grade 4.
- 1.8 The submitted Planning Statement notes that the proposal seeks to retrospectively change the use of the land to allow the siting of a maximum of 10 horses or ponies and that no changes would be made to the site boundaries, access roads, public footpath hedges or trees.
- 1.9 It is noted that a prior approval for change of use of the land from grazing only to equine use application for the same site edged in red was refused on the site in May 2023 as it did not meet criteria for a prior approval application, given change of use to equine purposes is a sui generis use which cannot be implemented through permitted development. Subsequently this application has come forward for the same change of use on the same site as a full planning application.
- 1.10 Members are made aware that there are some structures on site which are temporary in nature (tents, some timber stables and a caravan). While there is some reference to these 'removable non-permanent structures' in the submitted planning statement, these structures are not included in the description, nor are any elevational drawings or plans submitted showing these structures for planning approval. Subsequently, these buildings have not been considered as part of this application and therefore are not subject to approval. Any breach of planning resulting from long-term structures being evident on-site requiring planning permission could be referred to Huntingdon District Council's Planning Enforcement Team in the event of a breach occurring on site.

2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (19 December 2023) (NPPF 2023) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2023 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable

development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'

- 2.2 The NPPF 2023 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):
- * delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
 - * building a strong, competitive economy;
 - * achieving well-designed, beautiful and safe places;
 - * conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.
- 2.3 Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.

For full details visit the government website [National Guidance](#)

3. **PLANNING POLICIES**

3.1 Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019)

- LP1: Amount of Development
- LP2: Strategy for Development
- LP3: Green Infrastructure
- LP5: Flood Risk
- LP6: Waste Water Management
- LP10: The Countryside
- LP11: Design Context
- LP12: Design Implementation
- LP14: Amenity
- LP15: Surface Water
- LP16: Sustainable Travel
- LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
- LP23: Tourism and Recreation
- LP25: Housing Mix
- LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows

3.2 Neighbourhood Plans: None relevant.

For full details visit the government website [Local policies](#)

4. **PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 22/02546/P3MPA for Change of use of the land from grazing only to equine use, REFUSED dated 22.05.2023.

5. **CONSULTATIONS**

- 5.1 Offords Parish Council – OBJECTS to the proposals on flood-risk grounds. Full comments:

The Council has discussed the above application at length and recommends **REFUSAL** on the grounds of flood risk. The site is

on a high flood risk area and Offords suffered severe flooding in 2020/21 and as there is no detailed flood risk report attached to the application we cannot be confident that the very real possibility of flooding has been adequately addressed.

- 5.2 Lead Local Flood Authority - Object due to a lack of appropriate site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and surface water strategy.
- 5.3 Environmental Health Services - No objection and no recommended conditions.
- 5.4 Cambridgeshire County Rights of Way Officer – No objection but recommends an informative relating to Public Rights of Way.
- 5.5 Cambridgeshire County Highways - No objection and no recommended conditions.
- 5.6 Environment Agency - No objection, but recommend that mitigation measures are adhered to, alongside informatives and advice for the applicant to follow.
- 5.7 Network Rail – No objection but strongly recommend that the developer satisfy themselves that they have sufficient stock proof fencing in place to prevent their livestock from getting onto the railway, which could result in accidents to rail users and the animals themselves.

6. REPRESENTATIONS

- 6.1 No third-party representations were received during the course of the application at the time of writing this report.

7. ASSESSMENT

Design and Visual Amenity

- 7.1 When determining planning applications, it is necessary to establish what weight should be given to each plan's policies in order to come to a decision. The following legislation, government policy and guidance outline how this should be done.
- 7.2 As set out within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 38(6)) and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Section 70(2)) in dealing with planning applications the Local Planning Authority shall have regard to have provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. This is reiterated within paragraph 47 of the NPPF (2021). The development plan is defined in Section 38(3)(b) of the 2004 Act as "the development plan documents (taken as a whole) that have been adopted or approved in that area".

- 7.3 In Huntingdonshire the Development Plan consists of:
- o Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019)
 - o Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)
 - o St Neots Neighbourhood Plan (2016)
 - o Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan (2017)
 - o Houghton and Wyton Neighbourhood Plan (2018)
 - o Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan (2019)
 - o Bury Neighbourhood Plan (2021)
 - o Buckden Neighbourhood Plan (2021)
 - o Grafham and Ellington Neighbourhood Plan (2022)
 - o Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan (2023)
 - o The Stukeleys Neighbourhood Plan (2023)
 - o Sawtry Neighbourhood Plan (2023)
- 7.4 The statutory term 'material considerations' has been broadly construed to include any consideration relevant in the circumstances which bears on the use or development of the land: *Cala Homes (South) Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & Anor* [2011] EWHC 97 (Admin); [2011] 1 P. & C.R. 22, per Lindblom J. Whilst accepting that the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the Development Plan, paragraph 2 confirms that it is a material consideration and significant weight is given to this in determining applications.
- 7.5 The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- The Principle of Development
 - Flood Risk, Surface Water and Drainage
 - Design and Visual Amenity
 - Impact upon Heritage Assets
 - Amenity
 - Highway Safety, Parking Provision and Access
 - Biodiversity and Trees
 - Other Matters

The Principle of Development

- 7.6 The site covers approximately 3.24 hectares of Grade 4 agricultural land located outside of the defined built-up area comprising the settlement of Offord Cluny and is therefore classified as countryside land.
- 7.7 As such, Policy LP10 (The Countryside) of the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 is considered relevant. This policy states:

“All development in the countryside must:

a. seek to use land of lower agricultural value in preference to land of higher agricultural value:

i. avoiding the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1 to 3a) where possible, and

ii. avoiding Grade 1 agricultural land unless there are exceptional circumstances where the benefits of the proposal significantly outweigh the loss of land;

b. recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; and

c. not give rise to noise, odour, obtrusive light or other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others.”

7.8 In terms of part a(i), it is recognised that the proposed site is Grade 4 agricultural land, which is the lowest classification and does not qualify for assessment under Local Plan Policy LP10. Nevertheless, it is considered that given that the proposal is to change the use of the land only to personal equestrian use and that the open character and verdant nature of the site would remain and could easily be converted back to agricultural land, the proposal would not cause an irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land, so is considered to meet criteria a of LP10 in this instance.

7.9 Similarly, the continuation of an open site with grazing horses would not be contrary to parts b and c of Local Plan Policy LP10. The site would remain countryside in character and would not cause a significant rise in impacts that would considerably adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others.

7.10 Policy LP10 also states that development in the countryside will be restricted to the limited and specific opportunities as provided for in other policies of this plan. In this case LP23 (Tourism and Recreation) is particularly relevant and is considered to provide an opportunity for development within a countryside location.

7.11 Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy LP23 states that a proposal for a new or expanded tourism, sport or leisure use in the countryside will be supported where it can demonstrate the following:

(a) it is well-related to a defined settlement unless there are robust operational or sustainability reasons why it needs to be located elsewhere;

(b) it does not cause harm to, and where appropriate, enhances the ecological, landscape and heritage significance of the proposed location;

- (c) the impact of the scale, character and location of the development on both its immediate surroundings and the wider landscape are minimised as far as possible;*
- (d) adequate servicing can be provided, including water supply, electricity and for sewage and waste disposal;*
- (e) it will not have an adverse impact on any internationally or nationally designated wildlife site through increased visitor pressure.*

- 7.12 In terms of criterion a of Local Plan Policy LP23, it is acknowledged that the site is separated from the built-up area (BUA) of Offord Cluny by a trainline and is open on its southern, western and part-northern boundary (The Greenewable Park lies partially to the north) so the proposal could be considered detached from, but well-related to the BUA. Given the use and nature of the site as current open land and the proposal being for private equine use which is more suited to a site in the countryside, the Local Planning Authority are satisfied that for operational reasons, the proposal meets criteria (a) of Policy LP23 of the adopted Local Plan.
- 7.13 In relation to criterion b and c of Local Plan Policy LP23, it is acknowledged that the proposal is for a change of use only with no built development on the site so would have a neutral impact to ecological, landscape and heritage significance, as discussed in following sections of this report. Furthermore, subject to the imposition of conditions on any planning permission granted to secure biodiversity enhancement measures, the Local Planning Authority are satisfied that the proposal has the capacity to criteria (b) and (c) of Policy LP23 of the adopted Local Plan.
- 7.14 In terms of part d, it is considered that as a change of use to allow up to 10 horses and grazing land, there would be minimal servicing requirements for the development. The site has a vehicular access from Station Lane and so is considered servicing requirements would be appropriate to the scale and nature of the proposed development.
- 7.15 Part e is also considered to be satisfied, given that the proposal seeks approval for the site to be used for private equestrian use, the site would not result in a significant increase in visitors and therefore would satisfy criteria (e) of Policy LP23 of the adopted Local Plan.
- 7.16 The site is within the Great Ouse Valley Green Infrastructure Priority Area as referred to in policy LP3 which states that development proposals within this area where they contribute to the landscape, wildlife, cultural and historical value of the area will be supported. Given the proposal is for a change of use with the retention of open green space, the proposal is considered to not significantly detrimentally impact any green infrastructure. It

is therefore considered that the proposed development complies with LP3 and is acceptable in this instance.

- 7.17 Overall, given the nature of the proposal as private equestrian land and close proximity to the defined built up area of Offord Cluny, the Local Planning Authority are satisfied that subject to condition limiting the amount of horses and ponies on site and a biodiversity enhancement condition, the proposal would be in accordance with Policies LP3, LP10 and LP23 of the adopted Local Plan and subject to other material planning considerations within the remaining sections of this report is acceptable in principle.

Flood Risk, Surface Water and Drainage

- 7.18 National guidance and Policy LP5 of the Local Plan to 2036 seek to steer new developments to areas at lowest risk of flooding and advises this should be done through application of the Sequential Test, and if appropriate the Exceptions Test (as set out in paragraphs 165-175 of the NPPF (2023)).
- 7.19 The application site is situated in Flood Zone 3 based on the Environment Agency Floods Maps and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2017), which also locates the site within a 30-year extent for surface water flooding and over 75% chance of ground water flooding.
- 7.20 The application form anticipates that surface water will be disposed of by soakaway onto an existing watercourse and the submitted Flood Risk Assessment recommends an evacuation plan and alternative location to be provided in the event of extreme flooding for the horses and regular clearance of the dyke a ditches to lower the flood risk on site.
- 7.21 It is national and local policy to steer development to areas of lowest flood risk using the sequential approach to identify potentially more suitable sites which could accommodate the type and scale of development at a lower risk of flooding. The site is in Flood Zone 3 (high risk of flooding and is susceptible to ground water and surface water flooding).
- 7.22 National Guidance states that the sequential test should consider all types of flooding in assessing whether there may be sequentially preferable sites for proposed development. Section 4 of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD states the search area for the sequential test is usually over the entire LPA area and may only be reduced in discussion with the LPA because of the functional requirements and objectives of the proposed development. The proposal is a change of use which is not considered within government guidance to require a sequential test to be carried out as part of the proposal. The sequential test is therefore passed.

- 7.23 The site is currently in agricultural use but is not used for agricultural purposes and the proposal would change the use of the land to equestrian land. Officers note Equestrian use is not explicitly identified within Annex 3 of the NPPF as to its Flood Risk Vulnerability classification. In considering the nature of the use and drawing comparisons to other uses that are listed within the classification, officers consider it is most comparative to agricultural uses, in light of the keeping of animals and the relatively small-scale amount of storage needed in association with the operation of the site. The proposed use is therefore considered to remain within the 'Less Vulnerable' category.
- 7.24 Concerns raised by Offord Parish Council regarding the lack of flooding information within the application, flood risk on site and historic flooding are acknowledged and noted. However, considering the existing and proposed use where the site would remain open and free of permanent structures, it is not considered that the change of use would create any significant greater risk to flooding than the current agricultural use and it would be unreasonable to refuse the application on the basis of flood risk increase. An evacuation plan can be conditioned to safeguard animals on site in the event of a flooding event.
- 7.25 The Environment Agency were consulted on the application and raise no objection to the proposed development, subject to a number of informatives, which could be added to any consent given to the application.
- 7.26 The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) were also consulted on the application, raising an objection due to the omission in the application for a site-specific surface water strategy. The LLFA do recommend a number of informatives in the event of an approval decision being made on the application, which again are recommended to be added to any consent given to the application.
- 7.27 Overall, it is considered that given the low vulnerability of use at the site which would not change through development which would be used only for horses and grazing land, it would be unreasonable to require a surface water strategy given that the proposal seeks a change of use only and is unlikely to increase flood risk either on or off the site. Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposals, alongside the recommendation of conditions and informatives, it is considered that the proposal is on the whole acceptable from a flood risk and drainage perspective in accordance with Policies LP5 and LP15 of the Local Plan and the guidance of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD.

Design and Visual Amenity

- 7.28 Policy LP11 of the Local Plan states that a proposal will be supported where it is demonstrated that it responds positively to its context. Policy LP12 states that new development will be expected to be well designed and that a proposal will be supported where it can be demonstrated that it contributes positively to the area's character and identity and successfully integrates with adjoining buildings and landscape. This is also reflected in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 7.29 The proposed use of the parcel of land for the keeping of animals with no permanent built development proposed, would in terms of visual amenity, align with the current agricultural character of the site and wider area and would not significantly harm landscape views across the site. As the proposal would result in a neutral development in terms of visual amenity, officers consider that the proposal would not cause significant harm to the character of the area, so would accord with policy LP10 (b) of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.
- 7.30 The site is well separated from the nearest residential properties (approximately 135 metres to the west) and the proposed development is of a type and scale which is not considered to give rise to any adverse amenity impacts which would affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others in accordance with part c.
- 7.31 Therefore, the proposal is considered to be appropriate in terms of scale, design and materials and would not cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area and would preserve the countryside distinctiveness of the area, in accordance with Policies LP10, LP11 and LP12 of the Local Plan and the NPPF 2023 in this regard.

Impact upon Heritage Assets

- 7.32 The proposal is outside of the Offord Cluny Conservation Area, the boundary of which abuts the trainline which separates the site from the village of Offord Cluny to the east. The proposal is also approximately 90 metres west of All Saints Church, High Street, Offord Cluny which is a Grade II* Listed Building.
- 7.33 Section 72 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
- 7.34 Section 66 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

- 7.35 Paras 195 - 208 of the 2023 NPPF provide advice on proposals affecting heritage assets and how to consider different levels of harm. Para. 205 states 'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification'. Local Plan policies LP34 align with the statutory provisions and NPPF advice.
- 7.36 Separating the site from the conservation area to the east is a raised trainline and sporadic trees and hedging which is considered to visually and functionally separate the site from the designated heritage assets. Subsequently, the proposal is considered to cause no significant detriment to either the wider conservation area or the setting of the listed building that would warrant a refusal of the application on impact to heritage assets alone. Notwithstanding this, the site is proposed to change its use only from agricultural land to equine grazing land with horses and would retain the open nature of the site with no built development proposed that would adversely impact the setting of either asset. Any proposal for built development would be subject to its own consideration upon these assets.
- 7.37 Therefore, it is considered that due to the distance from the Conservation Area boundary and the modest nature and scale of the proposal, the development would not give rise to any harmful impact on the identified heritage assets and is compliant with the provisions of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990, the NPPF and Local Plan policy LP 34.

Amenity

Residential Amenity

- 7.38 Policy LP14 of the Local Plan to 2036 states a proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of the proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings.
- 7.39 Given the nature of the proposed use and the distance to the closest neighbouring residential properties (No. 28 Station Lane is approximately 64 metres from the western boundary with further dwellings on the western side of the High Street approximately 135m from the site), the Local Planning Authority are satisfied that the proposal, would not result in any detrimental impacts on any neighbouring residential property. Furthermore, given the private nature of the proposed use, the proposal is not considered to result in a significant increase in comings and goings from the site that would cause significant noise or disturbance and the provision for up to ten horses would not cause a significant detrimental degree of environmental issues

that would result in an unacceptable level of environmental impacts. Huntingdonshire District Council's Environmental Health Officer has reviewed the submitted application and raises no concerns from a residential amenity perspective and does not recommend any conditions or informatives relating to environmental health matters.

Amenity for users of the Public Right of Way

- 7.40 Public Footpath No. 2, Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy runs through the site in an east-west direction approximately half way through the site.
- 7.41 In response to a formal consultation, The Cambridgeshire County Council's Definitive Maps team raises no objections to the proposal, noting that the applicant should be made aware of the presence of the public footpath, its legal alignment and width and that the public footpath must remain open and unobstructed at all times, recommending informatives relating the safe and continued use of the public right of way ensuring its future amenity for users of the footway. These informatives are recommended to be attached to any consent given to maintain the same level of amenity that is currently used on the site.
- 7.42 Overall, it is considered that a high standard of amenity would be provided for all users of the development and maintained for neighbours. The development is considered acceptable in terms of overshadowing, overlooking, overbearing impact, loss of privacy, loss of light and would not have a significant detrimental impact upon residential and public right of way amenity. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy LP14 of the Local Plan to 2036 and paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF (2023).

Highway Safety, Parking Provision and Access

- 7.43 Policy LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036 seeks to ensure that new development incorporates appropriate space for vehicle movements, facilitates access for emergency vehicles and service vehicles and incorporates adequate parking for vehicles and cycles. Paragraph 115 of the NPPF (2023) states that development should only be prevented or refused on Highway Safety Grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 7.44 There is a vehicular access to the site via Station Lane to the north which already features a dropped kerb and acceptable visibility splays. No part of the submission indicates that there would be a change to any access, driveway or footpath on the site. Given the large area of the site and that the proposal is for personal use only (which can be secured by condition), it is

considered that there is ample space for vehicles, including servicing vehicles to park on-site and that all vehicles leaving the site can do in forward gear.

- 7.45 Cambridgeshire County Council as the Local Highways Authority have reviewed the proposals and notes that the use of the site is already indicated as grazing and that proposed is not indicated for commercial use but is indicated as for private use. Therefore, the movements should not be materially different for caring for horses as opposed to any other grazing animal. Subsequently, the Highways Officer concludes that following a careful review of the documents provided to the Highway Authority as part of the above planning application, no significant adverse effect upon the Public Highway should result from this proposal, should it gain benefit of Planning Permission. No conditions or informatives have been recommended by Highways Officer.
- 7.46 Having regard to the above, it is considered that, subject to a condition restricting the use of the site as personal use only, a safe means of access could be achieved and that the traffic generated by the proposal would not have a severe impact upon the highway network. Therefore, in accordance with the NPPF (2023), the development should not be refused on transport grounds and the proposal is considered to comply with policies LP16 and LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036 (2019).

Biodiversity and Trees

- 7.47 Paragraph 180 of the NPPF states Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Policy LP30 of the Local Plan to 2036 states that development proposals should demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity have been investigated. Any proposal that is likely to have an impact, directly or indirectly on biodiversity will need to be accompanied by an appropriate appraisal, such as a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA). LP30 also states that all proposals must also demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity where possible, through the planned retention, enhancement and creation of habitats and wildlife features, appropriate to the scale, type, and location of development.
- 7.48 It is acknowledged that a former agricultural field which is now used for grazing of horses offers a negligible loss in biodiversity to that which was experienced when the site was last used for agricultural purposes. Given that the site would remain open and verdant in nature with no significant impact to nearby hedges and trees, it is not considered that the proposed development would require provision of formal ecological enhancements to make the development acceptable in this respect given the small-scale changes within the proposal.

- 7.49 Policy LP31 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals to demonstrate that the potential for adverse impacts on trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows has been investigated and that a proposal will only be supported where it seeks to conserve and enhance any existing tree, woodland, hedge or hedgerow of value that would be affected by the proposed development.
- 7.50 The proposed change of use is considered to be of sufficient separation from any adjacent trees and hedgerows that there would be no significant impacts. The trees and hedgerows have no formal protection in terms of planning control and are not considered to be of significant quality such that precautionary protection measures are not considered necessary.
- 7.51 Overall, it is considered the proposed development accords with Policy LP30 of the Local Plan and paragraph 180 d) of the NPPF 2023 and that a net gain in biodiversity will be achieved. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable and in accordance with the aims and objectives of Policy LP30 of the Local Plan to 2036 and the NPPF 2023.

Other Matters

- 7.52 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

The development will be CIL liable in accordance with the Council's adopted charging schedule; CIL payments will cover footpaths and access, health, community facilities, libraries and lifelong learning and education.

- 7.53 There are no other material planning considerations which have a significant bearing on the determination of this application.

Conclusion and Planning Balance

- 7.54 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.55 The main drawback of the site is that it is located within Flood Zone 3 with a high risk of surface and ground water flooding. However, the proposal is for a change of use of the land only and would introduce up to ten horses/ponies on site for private recreational use. While the flood risk on the site is a material consideration in the assessment of this scheme, taking into account that the addition of animals and lack of built form would not increase flood risk on or adjacent to the site, it is considered unreasonable to require that the applicant submit a surface water drainage scheme or refuse the application on insufficient information.

- 7.56 The proposal is sited outside of, but well-related to the village of Offord Cluny and pertains to a leisure change of use that is appropriate to its countryside and rural landscape location with no significant changes that result in a detrimental impact to amenity, heritage assets, highway safety, trees, hedgerows, the character and appearance of the site or wider area or prevents its re-conversion into agricultural use. Given the nature of the development, it is not considered that an enhancement of biodiversity is required.
- 7.57 Overall, therefore, when taken as a whole, it is considered that subject to conditions and informatives the proposal meets local and national policy which broadly seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment and achieve well-designed places which respond positively to their context.
- 7.58 Taking national and local planning policies into account, and having regard for all relevant material considerations, it is concluded that the proposed development is acceptable and that there are no overriding material considerations that indicate that permission should not be granted in this instance. Therefore, it is recommended that the application be approved with conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION - APPROVAL subject to conditions to include the following

- Time limit
- Approved plans
- Materials to match existing
- Evacuation of animals in Flood Risk Events
- Limit use to ten equine animals
- Limit to personal use

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CONTACT OFFICER:

Enquiries about this report to Marie Roseaman, Senior Development Management Officer – marie.roseaman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

From: Deputy Clerk [REDACTED]
Sent: 17 February 2023 07:54
To: Control, Development (Planning); DMAAdmin; [REDACTED]
Subject: Godmanchester Town Council's Planning Decisions

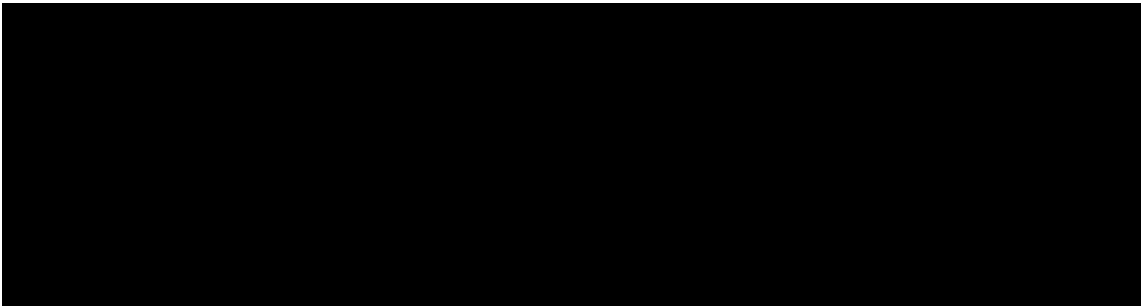
Categories: [REDACTED]

Good Morning

Following last night's Town Council meeting, please see the following decisions:



Planning Application: 3/00135/LBC
Location: 3 - 4 The Causeway Godmanchester PE29 2HA
Work requested: Removal of modern garage structure within rear courtyard and locally repair wall where required.
Recommendation: **Recommend – Approval**



Kind regards

[REDACTED] Deputy Town Clerk
 Godmanchester Town Council | Town Hall | 1 Post Street | Godmanchester | PE29 2NB



(Please note my days of work are Monday, Wednesday-Friday 8.30am – 1:30pm)



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Development Management Committee



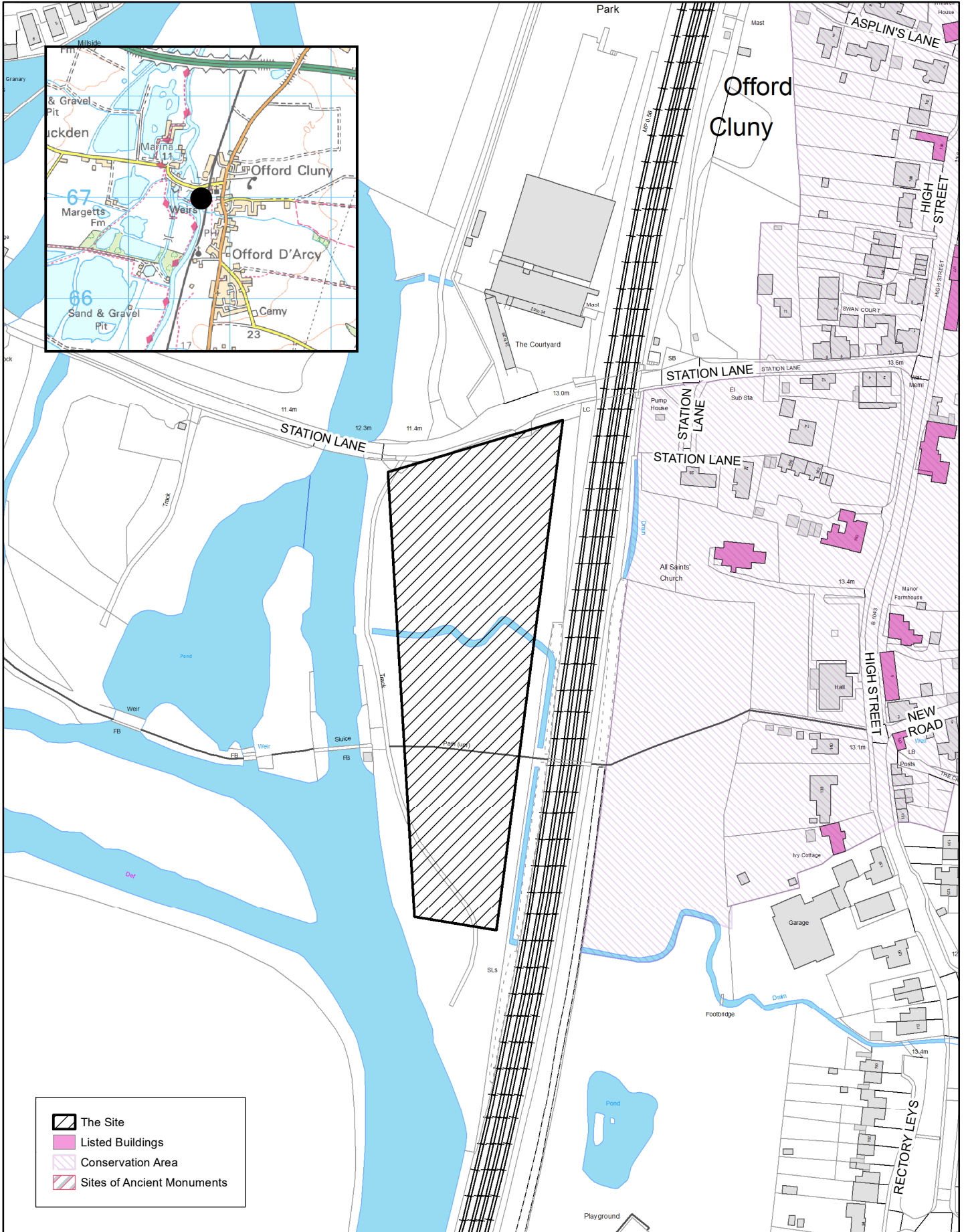
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Application Ref:23/01135/FUL

Date Created: 05/03/2024

Location: The Offords

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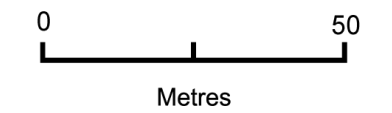


Date Produced: 21-Jun-2023

Scale: 1:1250 @A3



Planning Portal Reference: PP-12254197v1

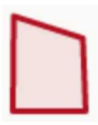
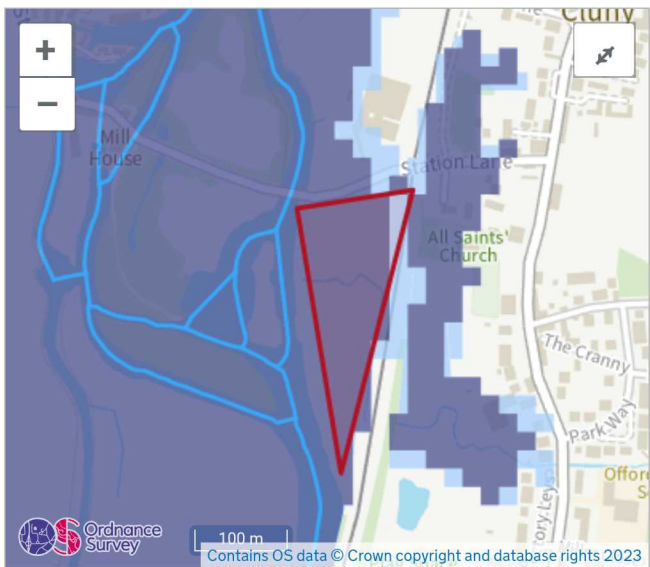


Flood map showing the flood zone your site is in

The map shows the flood risk to your site and the surrounding area.

Map

[View map key.](#)



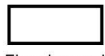
Your site boundary



Flood zone 3



Flood zone 2



Flood zone 1



Flood defence



Main river



Water storage area



Flood Risk Assessment Report Template

The meadows
Station lane
Offord cluny
Pe19 5za / 1 Sep 2023 / Sarah
Medley-Johns

Complete

Score	15 / 25 (60%)	Flagged items	0	Actions	0
Client / Site	The meadows Station lane Offord cluny Pe19 5za				
Location	River Great Ouse, Saint Neots PE19 5RX, UK (52.2871741, -0.21784)				
Conducted on	1 Sep 2023 10:31 BST				
Prepared by	Sarah Medley-Johns				

Audit

15 / 25 (60%)

FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

General Information

What is the flood zone of the site being assessed?

Zone 3

Flood level

Low

Is the site protected by flood defences?

Yes

Duke system and wears.

Fluvial

1 / 3 (33.33%)

Description

Excessive rain collects on the paddock closest to station lane. Runs off I to the river system.

Risk Rating

Medium

Coastal/Tidal

3 / 3 (100%)

Description

None costal tides

Risk Rating

None

Canals

1 / 3 (33.33%)

Description

Cannel system located within a mile of site

Risk Rating

Medium

Groundwater

1 / 3 (33.33%)

Description

Only with excessive rain fall.

Risk Rating

Medium

Reservoirs and Waterbodies

1 / 3 (33.33%)

Description

Only standing water collects in the paddock closest to station lane. Other two paddocks are on higher ground. Dike also channel the water into the river, and had been recently cleared.

Risk Rating

Medium

Pluvial runoff

1 / 3 (33.33%)

Description

Run off occurs from station lane onto the first paddock, as this is that Lowest point.

Risk Rating

Medium

Sewers

3 / 3 (100%)

Description

No open sewers

Risk Rating

None

Effect of Development on Wider Catchment

3 / 3 (100%)

Description

Risk Rating

None

COMPLETION

1 / 1 (100%)

Overall Risk Rating

Safe

Recommendations

To have an evacuation plan and alternative location on the event of extreme flooding for the horses on site. Regular clearance of the dike and ditches.

Full Name and Signature of Inspector

Sarah Medley-Johns
3 Nov 2023 10:51 GMT

[Back](#)

This location is in flood zone 3

What flood zone 3 means

Land within flood zone 3 has a high probability of flooding from rivers and the sea.

You need to carry out a flood risk assessment (FRA) as part of the planning application for this development.

Find out more about [flood zones and what they mean](#).

To find out about other factors that might affect the flood risk of this location, you should also check:

- [surface water, groundwater and reservoir flood risk](#)
- Huntingdonshire planning authority's strategic flood risk assessment (SFRA), which includes future flood risk

Flood map showing the flood zone your site is in

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