



Design and Access Statement

For
Change of Use to Equestrian Land, Outdoor Riding Arena and Horse Walker



Charlotte Agnew Eventing
At
Llan Farm, The Hendre, Monmouth NP25 5NX

April 2022



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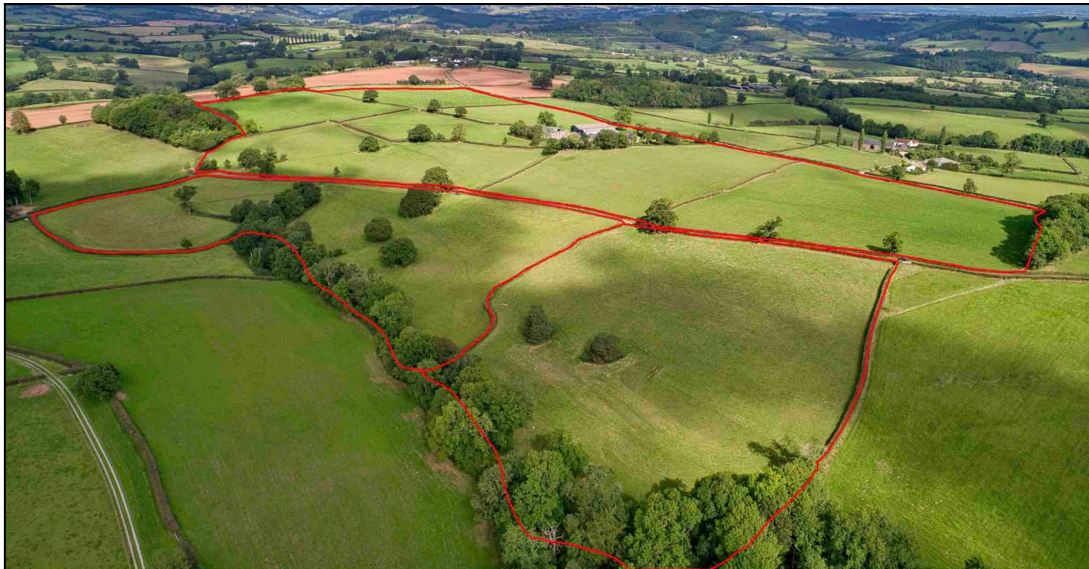
Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of the owner of the property in respect of the submission of a full planning application for private equestrian facilities at Llan Farm, The Hendre, Monmouth NP25 5NX

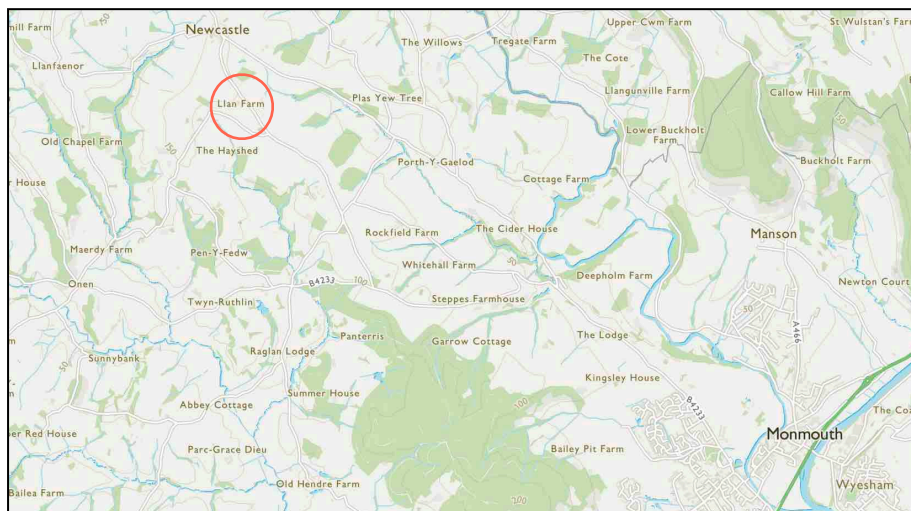
This statement will demonstrate that a reasoned and appropriate approach has been adopted in the preparation of this pre-planning proposal.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

A Pre-planning Application submission was submitted 20 January 2022 for the site for equestrian facilities at Llan Farm (DM/2022/00101). A response is yet to be received. The proposed arena and horse walker are included with this pre-application enquiry however, the facilities are necessary in connection with the immediate current use of the site, hence this full planning application submission for these elements.



Land ownership outlined in red



Background

The proposed application site is located some five miles from Monmouth, with B4347 to the north and B4233 to the South. It lies outside any settlement boundary and is considered to be within open countryside. Llan Farm is to the south side of the Hendre Lane, accessed via a private drive to the main farmhouse and outbuildings. An additional farm track access from the lane is located to the north of the buildings.

The property and land has been recently purchased by the applicant. The farm consists of a farmhouse, various agricultural outbuildings of various sizes and some 66 acres of agricultural grazing land. The farmstead is relatively large with some redundant agricultural structures falling into disrepair.

Charlotte Agnew is a very talented and accomplished young International Event Rider who has been recognised by the UK World Class Programme as a rider to support. She continues to represent Great Britain internationally. Moving from Scotland to England in 2010 and subsequently renting an equestrian property in Gloucestershire, Charlotte is now at a stage in her career that it is beneficial to own her own property and create a private equestrian facility suited to her needs for breeding, rearing and training event horses to the highest possible standards for success. Hence the recent purchase of Llan Farm, which has adequate land to achieve a quality private equestrian facility for foals to be produced, young horses to be trained, competition horses to reach their full potential and for Charlotte to develop her sporting potential even further.

Charlotte has a small breeding programme, producing a small number of quality foals bred specifically for the sport of eventing. Some of the foals are produced from recipient mares using embryo transfer from the existing competition mares. This is a usual method of producing high quality competition stock from competition mares, allowing the mares to continue to compete.

It is considered that the private quiet setting of Llan Farm would be highly beneficial for the horses and Charlotte's professional career. It will also negate the need to pay for renting a property elsewhere and allow the money saved to be invested into a property owned.

The proposal requires a rural location and is appropriate for a farm diversification. The farm will produce hay for feeding the horses and land within the ownership will be grazed by agricultural livestock.

Proposal

The applicant intends to use the proposed arena and horse walker facilities purely for her own private benefit and business as a professional event rider, therefore there will be no intended commercial use, such as a commercial livery yard, or riding school.

There are 17 horses under the management of Charlotte, excluding breeding mares, foals and youngsters. As well as owning horses which are in training for the highest level of competition the breeding programme in operation produces high quality British bred competition horses.

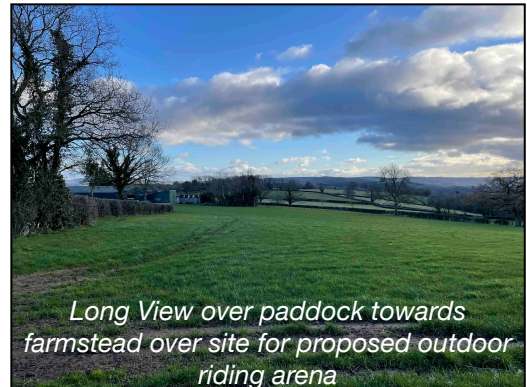
The schedule for getting the horses fit and maintaining fitness through the season is rigorous and providing good facilities ensures the best possible chance of success. Practice at home is essential and by having suitable training facilities the required fitness schedule of each of the horses will be achievable.

The proposed outdoor riding arena facility will be located within a paddock area to the west of the main dwelling and farm yard. The horse walker is within an adjacent paddock to the north of the existing farm buildings.

Competition horses require constant training and exercise practicing movements in dressage and over jumps which they would be unable to carry out on hard ground or a slippery, uneven surface. The specialist surface of the outdoor riding arena will allow for all of these movements to be carried out safely and effectively, for horse and rider.

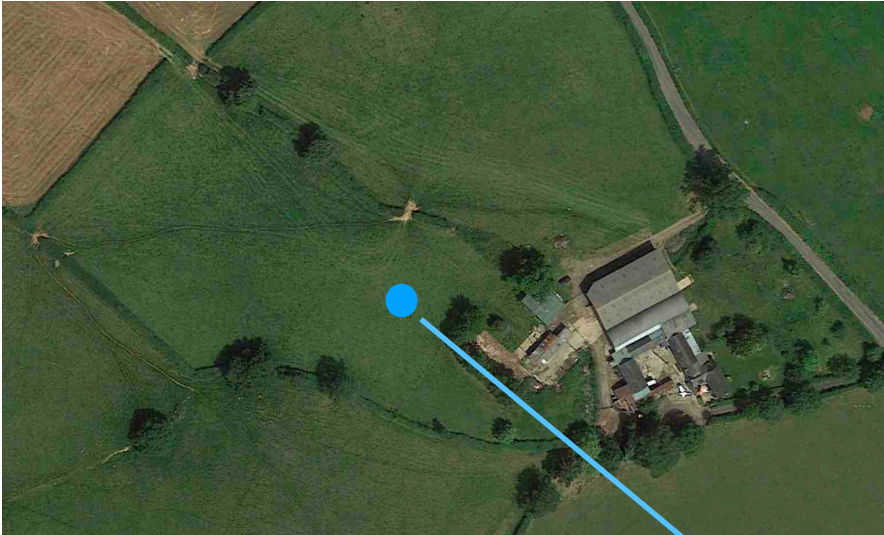
High level showjumping competitions are regularly held in arenas at a size of 100m x 80m. This is the standard FEI competition size and the size at which Charlotte regularly competes with her horses. The recommended size for all other competitions which involve showjumping is a minimum of 50m x 80m. Therefore, a proposal for an arena at a size of 70m x 40m is the minimum size required which will allow for training and adequate practice for Charlotte to produce and train horses for such high level competitions.

Site Photographs



Proposed Layout

The outdoor arena is proposed to be located within the field area adjacent and to the west of the farmstead. This will be set into the land formation to create a level area.



New Facilities and Functions

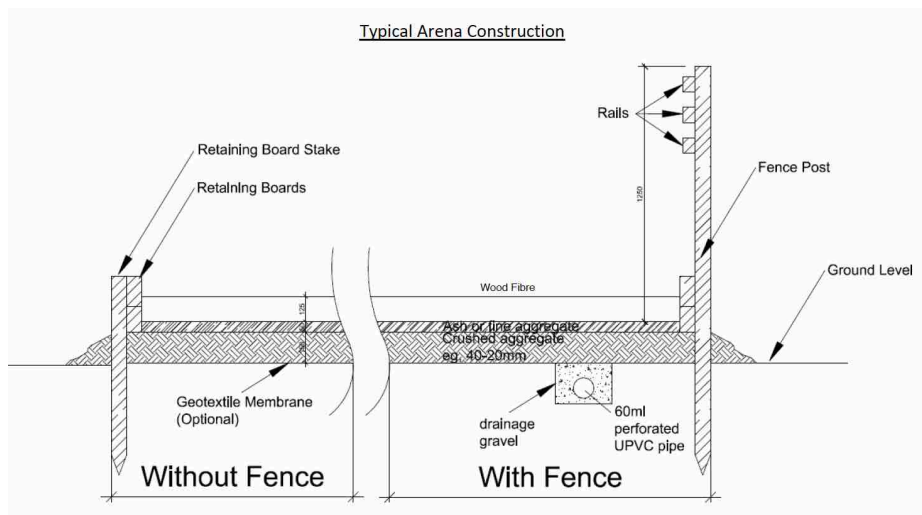
Outdoor Riding Arena

The size of the proposed outdoor arena is 70m x 40m. It provides a level, all weather outdoor training area for the horses. The surface is a specialist equine surface with a high quality, wax coated synthetic surface, made from washed and kiln dried industrial silica sand, reinforced with textile and polyurethane fibres and coated with wax to a depth of 125mm.

The size of the arena is governed by the area required to compete in showjumping, as regulated by the FEI. All competitions at the high level which Charlotte competes take place in arenas up to and over 100m x 80m, both indoor and outdoor. Therefore, the size of the proposed arena is required and beneficial for training at the standards required to compete. Jumping horses require room to turn and jump high fences without straining or injuring their legs. The proposed size of the arena, together with the specialist arena surface will allow the impact of movements, taking off and landing after jumping, to be absorbed thereby helping to prevent serious injury. Training the horses outside also enables them to get used to concentrating fully on what they are being asked to do and not to be easily distracted by situations around them which are outside of the rider's control. It allows the horses to be trained outside in all weathers which is not possible when the ground is slippery from being too wet or too hard.

No flood lighting is proposed to the outdoor riding arena.

The outdoor riding arena is to be located in close proximity to the existing farmstead buildings and will be set into the existing landform to create a level riding area. There is no fencing proposed for the arena.

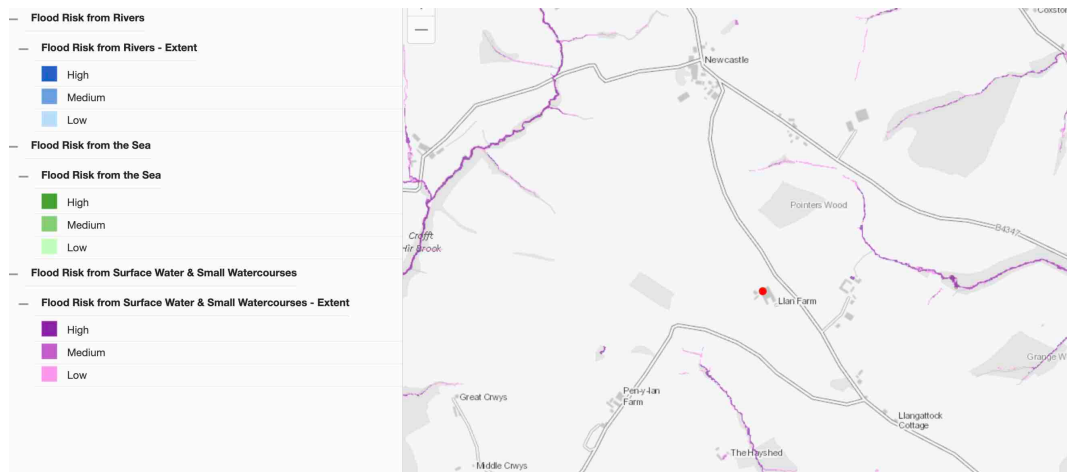


Horse Walker

A horse walker enables horses to be exercised automatically by leading them around in a circle. It allows for up to four to six horses to be exercised at the same time. Horse walkers can also be used for warming up a horse and cooling it down before and after exercise, keeping it moving and preventing muscles from seizing up until it has cooled down. It can also be used to help bring back a horse into training after injury.



Flood Risk



The site is not within a designated flood risk area.

Ecology

There are no trees or hedges that are to be affected by the proposed development. The land is currently grazed by livestock and topped in between. This type of grassland is devoid of potential refugia and hibernacula for herpetofauna and is generally classed as having a low ecological value.

The fact that the land is maintained grassland which is well used for grazing and hay production, gives limited potential for supporting amphibians.

There is no lighting proposed in relation to the outdoor arena or the horse walker.

Highways and Access

The proposed use of the facilities is solely private to the applicant who lives at the site. No commercial activity, such as a commercial livery yard, will take place. The commercial element is purely private to the applicant.

The existing access to the property dwelling will be used for access to the house. The existing access to the field for the proposed development will be used to access the arena and horse walker.

There will be no traffic movements connected with the use of the proposal as the applicant lives on site.

Therefore it is considered that the development would not have a detrimental impact on the highway network or highway safety.

Landscaping

The proposed arena is sited within a paddock which has a boundary of existing mature hedgerows and scattered trees to the north, east and west. The existing farmstead to the south east of the site area provides backdrop screening. However, the arena will be set into the landform at the lower levels of the paddock and will have no surrounding fence.

The development within the existing field pattern will have no impact on the existing hedges or trees and will be offset with protection and the provision of enhancement. Therefore, the development will not have a significant impact on the character of the landscape.

Residential Amenity

The nearest dwelling to the proposed facilities is that belonging to the applicant. Therefore, there will be no issues of loss of residential amenity.

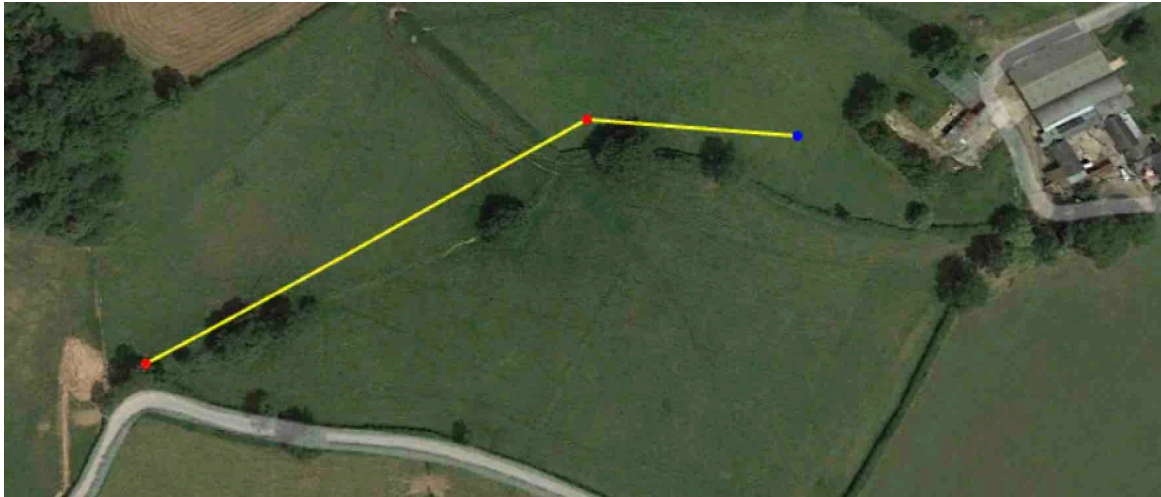
Drainage

The construction of the arena allows for permeation through all of the various level layers:

- The ground for the arena area is levelled with drainage channels at 200mm deep cut in
- A perimeter drainage channel will be provided around the outside of the arena consisting of a perforated drainage pipe of 100mm diameter within a 300mm x 300mm gravel trench
- The arena area is then covered in a permeable geo textile membrane
- Perforated pipes of 100mm are laid within the channels
- The pipes are laid and backfilled with clean stone
- Whole area is laid with stone and covered with a second permeable geo-textile membrane
- Finally the whole area is covered with the specialist equestrian sand base together with a specialist fibre mix surface of at least 125mm

All of the layers are completely permeable. The arena surface is also extremely porous. The area outside of the arena will be landscaped and reseeded as grass and soil as existing. The arena will not generate an increased run off or increase flood risk because any rain that falls on to it will

infiltrate through the permeable surface of the arena and through to the pipes and soil below where it will either dissipate into the surrounding soil or if the soil is saturated, continue through to the drainage pipes provided to take all storm water run off from the wider site development as proposed in the pre-planning application enquiry. A line of new 300mm twinwall pipe will run with a headwall at the end. A manhole will be provided at the change of direction. See below.



The plateau formed by the arena and its sub-surface permeable construction will have a small attenuation effect on the flow of water through the arena construction when compared with saturated ground on top of the existing soil. In extreme events when the ground and arena are saturated, there would be no increase in flood risk.

The drainage design and implementation is the most important thing to consider when constructing an all weather riding arena. The whole purpose is to provide somewhere for horses to be exercised on an even surface which can be used all year round. This surface is maintained by levelling periodically after use to prevent 'banking' of the surface around the outside track. The banking causes areas of the arena surface to become uneven and therefore this in turn becomes prone to problems which could include puddling of water after rain, as well as damage to the permeable membrane which prevents dirt getting into the drainage bed.

The perforated drainage pipes have a minimum gradient of 6mm per metre length, giving the total fall in drainage from one end of the 70m arena of about 0.42m. This will be in a westerly direction to assimilate existing ground fall.

The 'drainage bed' is made up of the drainage channels and 40mm at 6", clean stone layer acts as a reservoir for water falling in heavy downpours. It allows dispersal of water from the arena surface into the 'reservoir' layer which then slowly soaks away into the perforated pipes and eventually into the surrounding soil or surrounding drainage system.

The maintained levelled surface does not become water logged, does not freeze in the winter, nor dry out in the summer months and therefore can be used in all weathers. It is costly to create an all weather riding arena and therefore owners are keen to maintain a level surface to allow maximum benefits of its use. Arenas can and do last on average 25 years before they need drainage maintenance or re-surfacing.

The Landis Soilscales information outlines the area as being 'Soilscape 8 - *Slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage, which drains to stream network*'. Therefore, it is considered that drainage to a soakaway is not suitable for the arena development.

List of Drawings

- P001 Site Location and Block Plan - Rev A
- P005 Proposed Site Plan - Rev B
- P020 Existing and Proposed Site Sections
- P021 Proposed Site Plan 1:500
- P016 Proposed Outdoor Arena
- P012 Proposed Horse Walker

Equestrian Profile of Charlotte Agnew

Charlotte is one of the country's most promising Event riders; by the age of 25 she had produced three different horses to 5* level, and been recognised by the UK World Class Programme as a rider to support.

At 18 she finished 5th in her first CCI4* at Blair Castle, at 20 completed her first Badminton, and at 21 finished 4th individually and won team gold at the Young Rider European Championships with Little Beau. Having graduated from Edinburgh University in 2011 with a 2:1 in English Literature, Charlotte moved from her native Scotland to Gloucestershire, in order to have all the facilities, events and best possible training at her fingertips.

The move has paid off and Charlotte has been placed consistently on the International stage ever since. The family's homebred Out of Africa took the limelight initially, recording a number of 4* accolades before really proving himself to be world class finishing 5th and best of the British at Luhmuhlen CCI5* in 2012; the pair were selected as one of the reserves for the Senior Europeans later that year, and again in 2015. They completed a total of four 5* events until 'Zulu' was retired in 2016.

Since then Charlotte has made a name for herself educating quality young horses, these include Pavonita (2nd Hartpury CCI2* and 11th Houghton CCI3*), Dumbleton (1st Brand Hall CIC2*) and Longwood (7th CCI4*). The string has expanded over the years, and Charlotte has aspirations to take some of these talented youngsters up to the top level again. Cooley Carnival Lady is the most experienced of the team, and having successfully upgraded to Advanced level last year is working towards Blenheim 4* in September. Global Amaretto and Jarson are also preparing to make their International debuts this year, while Kariba (one of the homebred youngsters) is showing like he has a lot of potential for the future.

Charlotte also has an expanding role in the media. In 2010 she made her TV debut, co-presenting for the BBC at Blair Castle International Horse Trials, and on a journalistic note she has been a regular correspondent for *Horse and Hound* and *Eventing* magazines over the years.



Local and National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales - Edition 11 February 2021

This application has considered relevant Planning Policy Wales:
Paragraph 3.60 - Development in the Countryside
Paragraph 4.2.36 - Rural Enterprise Dwellings
Paragraph 5.6 - The Rural Economy
Paragraph 5.6.10 Rural Business Diversification

TAN 16 - Sport Recreation and Open Space and TAN 6 - Rural Economy.

The Importance of Sport and Recreation

Councils will generally support the provision of sport and recreational facilities where this is consistent with planning policy. Central Government guidance emphasises the importance of sport and recreation both to society and the economy and as contributors to individual health and sense of wellbeing and to civic and national pride. Councils aim to promote sport and recreation, encourage participation and the provision of a wide range of facilities for all sectors of the population.

Monmouthshire Council's Local Development Plan Feb 2014

- **LC5** - Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character
- **EP1** - Amenity and Environment Protection
- **DES1** - General Design Considerations
- **RE6** - Provision of Recreation/Tourism & Leisure Facilities in Open Countryside
- **NE1** - Nature Conservation
- **RE3** - Agricultural Diversification

Conclusion

- This proposal meets all national and local policies in terms of equestrian and rural development.
- It will provide a talented, young professional rider with the opportunity to train her own horses on premises that are owned by her, providing facilities necessary for training, breeding and rearing the horses for high level competition within a safe area.
- The proposal will support the needs of a private rural business and provide employment opportunities and create work for local trades people.
- The design and type of facilities proposed are typical the of requirements for necessary equestrian training at a professional level.
- The design and location has been carefully chosen to reflect the quality and design character of the local area and has been set within the landscape to minimise any impact.
- There are no highways implications associated with the proposal.