

# BONDSTONES<sup>®</sup>



## PLANNING STATEMENT DINGHURST COTTAGE – EQUESTRIAN ARENA

CLIENT:  
JACALYN AND JOHN MURPHY  
DINGHURST COTTAGE  
THE BATCH  
CHURCHILL  
WINSCOMBE  
BS25 5PP

PROJECT REF: EA091614

Prepared by:  
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## DOCUMENT HISTORY

REV	PURPOSE	MODIFIED BY	CHECKED BY	DATE
-	FIRST EDITION	SH / AP	LR	26/03/24

## STATEMENT OVERVIEW

This statement has been produced to satisfy the requirements of current Planning Legislation and is intended to summarise the details of the proposal and the findings / recommendations of any third parties that have contributed to the project to date.

The application to which this document is appended has been prepared with National and Local Planning Policy and associated guidance in mind from the outset. In addition, the Local Planning Authority's 'Validation Checklist' has been consulted to ensure that necessary information has been collated and provided to enable swift validation and efficient determination by the planning authority.

The report is designed to assist the case officer and stakeholders by providing an analysis of the site and its context, a description of the proposal and the needs of the applicant together with an assessment of the application against planning policy. The report is intended to be considered in association with plans and supplementary documents - submitted in parallel - and which are referenced accordingly.

## SITE ACCESS & CONTACT INFORMATION

For the purposes of this application Bondstones' project lead (the Applicant's Agent) and primary point of contact to arrange access is:

**Lisa Rasch**

*Senior Planning Consultant*

DD: 01823 210 610 ext 105

Lisa.rasch@bondstones.co.uk

## SITE LOCATION:

Address: Dinghurst Cottage, The Batch, Churchill, Winscombe, BS25 5PP

W3W: <https://what3words.com/mixes.reclusive.emotional>

Site OS Grid reference: ST 44488 59400

**NB: For health and safety purposes the site is closed and must not be accessed without prior agreement (allowing at least two working days' notice). Please contact the above if access into the site is required.**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The applicant – Jacalyn and John Murphy - wish to create an equestrian manège at Dinghurst Cottage which will be used for private enjoyment / personal recreational use.

Equestrian activities are a typical pastime in rural locations such as this; the proposed manège is a wholly appropriate use of land in this location.

The location, siting, and orientation of the ménage has been considered with the local environs in mind from the outset. The proposal is consequently compliant with the limited relevant policies which can be applied in this instance, particularly national and local policy concerning achieving well-designed places.

Therefore the proposal is wholly appropriate within this countryside location and can be accommodated without adverse landscape or amenity impacts.

If necessary, the applicant is happy to accept a suitably worded planning condition regards the use of the manège, limiting it solely to private recreational use.

The applicant and the Bondstones team look forward to working with the planning authority and other stakeholders to deliver this exciting project.





## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. BONDSTONES' APPROACH

1.1.1. This statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application to North Somerset Council in order to seek planning consent for a manège for private equestrian use.

### 1.2. PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

- Client: Jacalyn & John Murphy
- Planning Consultant: Bondstones
- Architect: Bondstones
- Planning Authority: North Somerset Council

### 1.3. OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

1.3.1. Key neighbourhood consultees to date are / have been:

- Parish Council: Churchill Parish Council  
<https://www.churchillpc.org.uk/>  
Clerk: Sally Diaz  
T: 07399 523961

### 1.4. DATA SOURCES

1.4.1. This statement and accompanying documents have been compiled by members of the Bondstones professional services team and, where required, have drawn upon technical input from specialist suppliers (noted above). Where precis extracts are incorporated within this document, original participants' reports are available on request and / or appended with the application for reference where appropriate.

1.4.2. Site analysis and related data collection / analysis is sourced from various public and private suppliers including (but not limited to):

- HM Government
- DEFRA / Natural England
- The Environment Agency
- Historic England
- HM Land Registry
- Ordnance Survey (under MasterMap licence no.)
- Local Authority Websites

### 1.5. ERRORS OR OMISSIONS

1.5.1. Where possible, all information included with this application has been verified during the project delivery process and as such, all information provided for the purposes of seeking planning consent is offered in good faith. However, Bondstones cannot be held responsible for inaccurate or potentially misleading information that may have been provided.

1.5.2. Any errors or omissions (no matter how minor) MUST be reported to the author at the earliest possible opportunity so that corrections and / or revisions may be made in good time.

### 1.6. CDM REGULATIONS 2015

1.6.1. In respect of the Construction Design Management Regulations 2015 Bondstones is appointed as Principal Designer in this project. However, note that this document is not intended nor provided as a CDM statement - and no part should be relied upon for CDM purposes unless expressly stated.

### 1.7. COPYRIGHT, CAVEATS & LIMITATIONS

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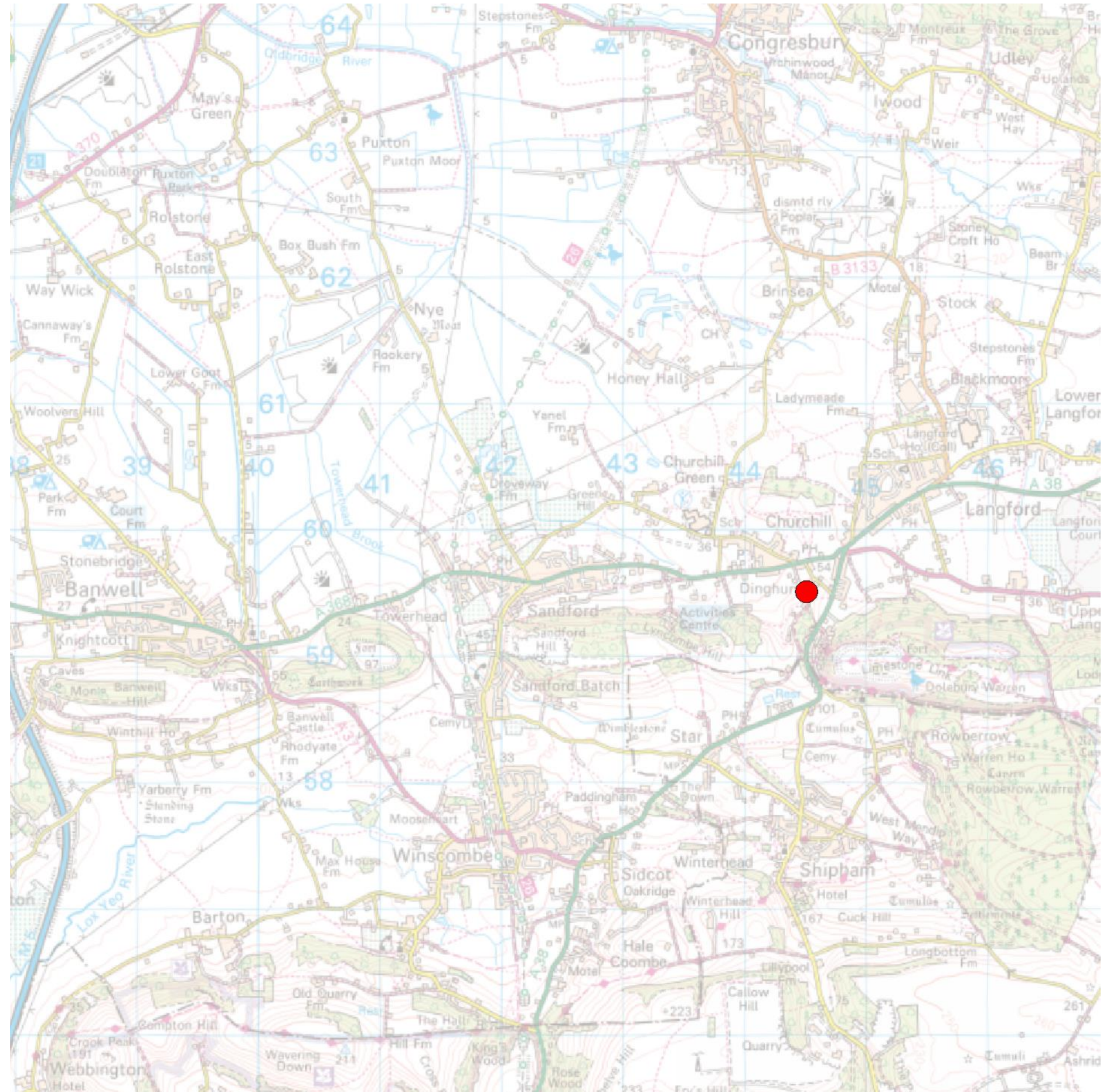
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## 2. SITE & LOCAL CONTEXT

### 2.1. SITE LOCATION

- 2.1.1. The site is located within Churchill Parish, in close proximity to the local villages of Churchill, Winscombe and Banwell.
- 2.1.2. The site is currently improved grass, of limited ecological value.
- 2.1.3. Glimpses of views of the Mendip Hills National Landscape can be appreciated from the site.
- 2.1.4. Conveniently accessible via the local road network, the site enjoys ease of access, ensuring seamless connectivity and facilitating transportation to and from the surrounding areas, contributing to its practicality and accessibility.





### 3. LOCAL DESIGNATIONS

#### 3.1. OVERVIEW

- 3.1.1. This section addresses local designations and features that may have a bearing on the proposal.

#### 3.2. MENDIP HILLS NATIONAL LANDSCAPE

##### THE PURPOSE OF NATIONAL LANDSCAPE DESIGNATION

- 3.2.1. Natural England describes the purpose of National Landscape designation as:

National Landscapes are designated solely for their landscape qualities, for the purpose of conserving and enhancing their natural beauty (which includes landform and geology, plants and animals, landscape features and the rich history of human settlement over the centuries).

- 3.2.2. It is important to note from this definition that human settlement within designated landscapes is considered an integral component of their natural beauty and that the reason for designation relates to the *enhancement* as well as the conservation of the area's beauty.
- 3.2.3. Equally important is the fact that designation also refers to the ecology of an area, which in this case, shall be substantially enhanced in terms of the proposed development.
- 3.2.4. Natural England advised that 14% of England (a significant proportion), is designated as an National Landscape.
- 3.2.5. Landscapes for Life is the National Association of National Landscapes and they take the view that:

Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment.

##### THE MENDIP HILLS NATIONAL LANDSCAPE OVERVIEW

- 3.2.6. The limestone Mendip Hills with the lakes of the Chew Valley is a stunning landscape of steep slopes and undulating plateau punctuated by spectacular gorges and rocky outcrops. On the hilltops there are hundreds of ancient monuments, whilst on steeper slopes flower rich grasslands and wooded combs offer varied habitats for a wide variety of wildlife.

##### MENDIP HILLS NATIONAL LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 3.2.7. <https://mendiphills-nl.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/FINAL-Mendip-Hills-AONB-Management-Plan-Review-2019-v1-1.pdf>
- 3.2.8. The Mendip Hills National Landscape Management Plan is a material planning consideration.
- 3.2.9. The plan outlines visions and strategies for the Mendip Hills National Landscape.

#### 3.3. NEARBY LISTED BUILDINGS

- 3.3.1. No listed buildings or heritage assets are likely to be affected by this proposal.

#### 3.4. SAC / RAMSAR PROTECTED SITES

- 3.4.1. For the avoidance of doubt, the proposal site is NOT located within a European Designated site nor a catchment area that may be affected by the proposed development.

#### 3.5. SSSI'S

- 3.5.1. The site is not located within a SSSI.

#### 3.6. SAM / SMR

- 3.6.1. The site is not located near any SAM or SMR.

#### 3.7. ANCIENT WOODLAND

- 3.7.1. There is no ancient woodland on site.

#### 3.8. ARCHAEOLOGY

- 3.8.1. The site is not likely to contain any archaeological interest. Seek archaeologist report.

#### 3.9. COMMON LAND

- 3.9.1. There is no common land in or around the site.

#### 3.10. EXTANT S.106 AGREEMENTS

- 3.10.1. There are no extant S.106 Agreements on site.

#### 3.11. LOCAL ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS

- 3.11.1. There are no Local Article 4 Directions on site.

#### 3.12. SITE COVENANTS / RESTRICTIONS

- 3.12.1. There are no known covenants or restrictions on site.

## 4. THE PROPOSAL

### 4.1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

- 4.1.1. The proposed project involves the construction of a *ménage*, a designated space for equestrian training and riding, adjacent Dinghurst Cottage. The aim is to provide a dedicated area for equine activities. The *manège* will complement the existing stabling facilities at the site.
- 4.1.2. The proposed location for the proposed *manège* is adjacent to the dwelling so as to allow for efficient access. This placement ensures an optimal utilisation of the space available while maintaining a cohesive layout for the equestrian activities at the site.
- 4.1.3. Our application is aligned with local planning policies to support the establishment of the *manège*.

### 4.2. THE APPLICANT

- 4.2.1. The applicant, Jacalyn and John Murphy, have recently purchased Dinghurst Cottage.
- 4.2.2. They are keen to expand the existing private recreational equine facilities at the property; consequently, the *manège* will provide a controlled space for training.

### 4.3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.3.1. Site planning history has been ascertained by way of a manual search of the LPA's web search facility and from the applicants own knowledge of the site. Results from these investigations have provided the following case details:

15/P/0354/F – PROPOSED TWO STOREY AND SINGLE STOREY EXTENSIONS AND PART DEMOLITION - APPROVED

23/P/1660/FUH – RETROSPECTIVE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OF AGRICULTURAL AND TO RESIDENTIAL GARDEN LAND AND THE RETENTION OF THE TIMBER BUILDING (STABLE 2) AND FOR STABLES 1 AND 2 TO BE USED FOR INCIDENTAL PURPOSES - APPROVED

- 4.3.2. This application regularised the timber stables on site; the Case Officer considered that given the small-scale nature of the proposal the National Landscape (AONB) would not be harmed as a consequence of the proposal. Similar reasoning should be applied for the proposed *manège*.

### 4.4. PLANNING PRECEDENT

**02/21/00009** - Retrospective application for outdoor equestrian *manège*.  
– **Approved** – 07/06/2021

**119976/0000** - Change of Use of land from agriculture to equestrian and erection of stables, creation of *ménage* and access (DEL) – **Approved** – 19/07/2007

**111525/007** - Creation of *ménage* (DEL) – **Approved** – 01/02/2005

The above applications are examples of approved *manèges* within the local area. All subject to comparable restrictions and conditions inherent to the local surroundings.

Although a few applications are pre 2012, they still hold material weight.



## 5. ASSESSMENT AGAINST NATIONAL POLICY AND GUIDANCE

### 5.1. NATIONAL VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS

5.1.1. For a planning application to be considered valid (to be processed for determination), it must contain all the information necessary to make a fair decision (and be accompanied by the correct fee).

5.1.2. All relevant documentation / information has been submitted in this instance.

### 5.2. NPPF

5.2.1. The following paragraphs relate to decision-making and are considered directly relevant to *this* application:

- **Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development**
- **Section 8 – Promoting Health and Safe Communities**
- **Section 11 – Making Effective Use of Land**
- **Section 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places**
- **Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment**

5.2.2. In this case the following paragraphs are of particular note:

96 – Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places ...which ...enable and support healthy lifestyles

5.2.3. The proposal will enable the healthy lifestyle of the applicants and any future occupiers.

123 – Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses.

5.2.4. “Other uses” includes the use proposed here (private recreational use).

135 – Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments;

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development

5.2.5. The proposed manège will be constructed to a high standard and will serve the current and any future occupiers of the property.

180 – Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes...
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services ...
- d) ...providing net gains for biodiversity

5.2.6. Owing to changes in BNG provision requirements, the proposed development has been considered with BNG requirements from the outset and will provide 10% BNG.

5.2.7. The proposed manège will not have adverse landscape impact and will be sited so as to nestle with the existing buildings on site.

## 6. ASSESSMENT AGAINST LOCAL POLICY AND GUIDANCE

### 6.1. LOCAL VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS

6.1.1. National validation requirements may also be supplemented by the planning authority with supplementary Local Requirements.

In this case the Local Authority 'Validation Requirements' are located at:

<https://n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-01/local%20list%20of%20planning%20application%20requirements%20-%20parts%201%20and%202.pdf>

### 6.2. LOCAL PLANNING POLICY & DECISION MAKING

6.2.1. Local planning authorities are guided that they should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

6.2.2. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

6.2.3. To the extent that development plan policies are material to an application for planning permission, the law requires that applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the development plan - unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.2.4. The extant local plan in this case is comprised of the North Somerset Core Strategy:

<https://n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/planning-building-control/planning-policy/our-local-plan/about-our-local-plan>

6.2.5. Development Management policies that are considered relevant to this application are:

#### North Somerset Core Strategy

- CS5 – Landscape and The Historic Environment
- CS12 – Achieving High Quality Design and Place Making

#### Biodiversity SPD

#### Landscape Character Assessment SPD

Site is in Mendip Ridge and Combes LCA

- E1 - Minimise the encroachment of visually intrusive land uses such as tall masts, quarrying and horse paddocks through design guidance and appropriate land management.

6.2.6. Specific policies of note are:

#### Local Plan Policy

#### CS5 – Landscape and The Historic Environment

The character, distinctiveness, diversity and quality of North Somerset's landscape and townscape will be protected and enhanced by the careful, sensitive Management and design of development. Close regard will be paid to the character of National Character Areas in North Somerset and particularly that of the 11 landscape types and 31 landscape character areas identified in the North Somerset Landscape Character Assessment. The Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) will be protected by ensuring that development proposals conserve and enhance its natural beauty and respect its character, taking into account the economic and social well-being of the area.

The council will conserve the historic environment of North Somerset, having regard to the significance of heritage assets such as conservation areas, listed buildings, buildings of local significance, scheduled monuments, other archaeological sites, registered and other historic parks and gardens.

6.2.7. This policy aims to protect North Somerset's landscape, townscape, and historic environment through careful development Management and design. It emphasizes preserving the unique character of National Character Areas and the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The council commits to conserving heritage assets such as conservation areas, listed buildings, and historic parks and gardens.

#### CS12 – Achieving High Quality Design and Place Making

Proposals of all scales will be required to demonstrate sensitivity to the existing local character already established in an area and should take the opportunity to enhance the sense of place and local identity through a well thought out design. Where the existing design characteristics are not considered of a high quality, new development should actively aim to enhance the area through good design. Schemes must be based on a thorough site appraisal. In particular the following aspects of North Somerset's character should be maintained and enhanced in addition to the heritage aspects identified through Policy CS5.

6.2.8. The policy aims to deliver action in conjunction with a range of policy areas covered in this Strategy recognising the importance of design in promoting healthy neighbourhoods, contributing to the quality of life, increasing environmental standards, and when applied to larger schemes aims to deliver places that function well, reduce emissions and add value to places.

#### Local Character Assessment

#### E1 – Mendip Ridges and Combes.

Minimise the encroachment of visually intrusive land uses such as tall masts, quarrying and horse paddocks through design guidance and appropriate land management.

6.2.9. We can use this policy as an aim to ensure that the design of the manège is not visually intrusive on the Mendip Ridge.

6.2.10. Whilst the local plan is silent on equestrian proposals, the proposal nonetheless complies with the planning policies concerning landscaping and design.

### 6.3. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

6.3.1. At the time of this application there is no a neighbourhood plan in place within the Churchill Parish Council.



## 7. LANDSCAPING

7.1.1. The applicant has put a lot of thought into how to enhance the biodiversity at the site. The submitted 'Block Plan – Proposed', details the planting scheme and the information below sets out the establishment, maintenance, and adaptive measures to be taken in regards to landscaping.

### 7.2. HEDGEROWS

7.2.1. Planting to comply with BS4428: 1989 – Code of practice for general landscape operations. Planting to be carried out in suitable weather conditions during dormant period November to March inclusive.

7.2.2. **Establishment:** Clear ground of existing vegetation as appropriate by mechanical stripping or treatment with glyphosate herbicide in accordance with manufacturer's instructions allowing leaf symptoms to develop fully before cultivating ground. Cultivate cleared ground to 300mm depth. Remove rubbish and stones over 50mm and any perennial weed roots brought to surface and rake to even grade.

7.2.3. Native hedges to be planted with transplants in double staggered rows set 400mm apart at 350mm linear spacings (6 plants per linear metre) in random groups of 3-7 single species.

7.2.4. Plant species as per schedule/ planting plan, backfill around roots using excavated soils placed in layers to match surrounding soil horizons and lightly firm.

7.2.5. Tip back transplants by ¼ at time of planting to promote bushiness (except tree species intended to develop to full size specimen trees).

7.2.6. Supply and fix 600mm high bio-degradable spiral guards with cane supports to shrub/ hedge plantings

7.2.7. **Maintenance:** Apply mulch minimum 1.2 m wide along full length of new hedge.

7.2.8. Stock proof fencing to be erected around planting areas as necessary to prevent trampling/ grazing.

7.2.9. Attend site at bi-monthly intervals March to November inclusive during first two growing seasons following completion of planting to clear weeds by hand digging or spot application of glyphosate, firm plants, top up bark mulch and prune damaged/ diseased branches.

7.2.10. Water as necessary during drought periods.

7.2.11. Attend site three times yearly during years 3-5 to clear weeds, firm plants and adjust stakes and ties.

7.2.12. Lightly trim sides of new hedge transplants annually in winter.

7.2.13. **Adaptive measures:** Replace plants which are dead/ missing diseased or otherwise failing to make satisfactory growth during years 1- 5.

7.2.14. Once established, hedges to be maintained by cutting on 2-3 year cycle, raising cutting height by 100mm at each cut. Refer Hedgelinek - Hedge Management cycle for further details. Established hedges should be maintained at a minimum height of 3m.

### 7.3. TREES

7.3.1. Planting will comply with BS8545: 2014 – Trees from Nursery to independence in the landscape. Planting to be carried out in suitable weather conditions during dormant period November to March inclusive.

7.3.2. **Establishment:** Clear ground of existing vegetation as appropriate by mechanical stripping or treatment with glyphosate herbicide in accordance with manufacturer's instructions allowing leaf symptoms to develop fully before cultivating ground. Cultivate cleared ground to 300mm depth. Remove rubbish and stones over 50mm and any perennial weed roots brought to surface and rake to even grade.

7.3.3. **Maintenance:** Supply and spread 75mm depth composted bark mulch in 0.5m radius around base of transplants/ whips and 1m radius around feathered trees or supply and fix bio-degradable mulch mats around.

7.3.4. Specimen trees in open field situations to be protected by installation of tree guards comprising four well driven 100mm diameter round stakes set 1.8m high in 1x1m square at base and splaying to 1.5x1.5m at top and

secured with two 100mm half round horizontal rails nailed at top and mid height with 1.8m deer netting stapled to inside.



7.3.5. Attend site at bi-monthly intervals March to November inclusive during first two growing seasons following completion of planting to clear weeds by hand digging or spot application of glyphosate, firm plants, adjust stakes, ties and guards, top up bark mulch and prune damaged/ diseased branches.

7.3.6. Water as necessary during drought periods.

7.3.7. Attend site three times yearly during years 3-5 to clear weeds, firm plants and adjust stakes and ties.

7.3.8. **Adaptive measures:** Replace plants which are dead/ missing diseased or otherwise failing to make satisfactory growth during years 1- 5.

7.3.9. Remove stakes and ties as plants become established (years 3-5).

### 7.4. PERENNIAL WILDFLOWER MEADOWS

7.4.1. **Establishment:** Control weeds by digging or rotovating, burying any vegetation to a depth of 15-20 cm. This also brings less fertile soil to the surface.

7.4.2. Firm and rake the surface to make a seedbed.

7.4.3. No fertiliser/manure shall be added.

7.4.4. Sow in autumn, giving the seed time to settle in over winter.

- 7.4.5. Ensure that the seed is scattered evenly by sowing half lengthways and the remaining half widthways across the plot. Mixing the seed with silver sand makes the process easier. Rake in lightly and water thoroughly.
- 7.4.6. Water the site if there is a prolonged dry period to aid germination and establishment of seedlings.
- 7.4.7. **Maintenance:** During the first year, it is essential to get the mowing regime right. Cut to 5-7 cm whenever the height reaches 10-20 cm. The number of mows required can range from one to four. Control assertive weeds like thistles, nettles and docks by hand-weeding.
- 7.4.8. The following years, a couple of cuts a year should be enough. Once in late July/early August and then again in early autumn.
- 7.4.9. After mowing, always leave the clippings for a couple of days to drop any seed, then rake up and remove to keep soil fertility down.
- 7.4.10. Water the site if there is a prolonged dry period to aid germination and establishment of seedlings.
- 7.4.11. **Adaptive measures:** Regularly monitor the meadows progress, noting changes in plant and wildlife populations and adapt maintenance practices.

## 8. ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY

- 8.1.1. The proposal is accompanied by biodiversity net gain calculations. There are no designations in close proximity to the site that will be affected by the proposal. There are no habitats of principal Importance for Biodiversity near to the site.

## 9. PLANNING CONDITIONS

### 9.1. SUGGESTED PLANNING CONDITIONS

- 9.1.1. While by no means a comprehensive list we anticipate that the following conditions (or variations thereof) will be attached to the grant of planning permission in this case:

### Landscaping

*Condition:* Landscaping to be implemented in accordance with the landscaping maintenance plan / details submitted.

*Reason:* Ensuring the long-term health and attractiveness of the landscaping, as well as facilitating the responsible Management of outdoor spaces over time. To ensure that the details are planned and considered at an early stage in the interests of amenity and to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area in accordance with CS5 and CS12 of the North Somerset Local Plan.



## 10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1. The proposed equestrian manège is considered to be a site appropriate form of development.
- 10.2. Whilst planning policy concerning equestrian development is limited, the applicable policies as outlined in Section 6 & 7 indicate that the proposal is policy compliant and thus supportable.
- 10.3. The manège can be accommodated without adverse amenity and environmental impacts.
- 10.4. The use of the land for equestrian activity – for private recreational enjoyment – is fully appropriate to this countryside location, where equestrian activity is a popular pastime.
- 10.5. Consequently, the proposed development should be supported by the Local Authority without undue delay.

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