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Northcote Stud Farm, Langho
Planning Policy Compliance Statement
April 2012

Contents

1.	Introduction	2
2.	The Site and Description of the Proposals	4
3.	Planning Application History	6
	2010 Application (Ref: 3/2010/0157)	7
4.	The Development Plan	9
	Regional Strategy	9
	Local Development Framework	9
5.	National Planning Policy Framework	15
6.	Response to Previous Concerns	17
	Discussions with Langho Football Club	17
	Consultation with RVBC Planning Officers	18
	Assessment of Traffic and Transport Implications	18
	Assessment of Potential Acoustic Impact	18
	Assessment of Relationship with Planning Policy	19
7.	Summary and Conclusions	20
	Appendix	21

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Policy Compliance Statement has been prepared by Euan Kellie Property Solutions on behalf of our client, Richard and Janet Mizon. It has been prepared in support of an application for the discharge of a Unilateral Undertaking dated 20 March 2007 ("the Undertaking") offered by our client to Ribble Valley Borough Council ("RVBC") in connection with planning permission ref. 3/2007/0029 granted on 4 April 2007 ("the 2007 Planning Permission"), which authorised the use of Northcote Stud Farm, Langho, Blackburn ("the application site") as a riding centre. A copy of this Undertaking can be found in **Appendix 1** of this Statement.

- 1.2 The Undertaking (at paragraph 2 of the Schedule to the Undertaking) contains the following restrictions:

Not to allow the indoor and outdoor riding arenas the subject of the Development to be used for competitive events gymkhanas or other such events other than internal activities using the centre's own residential horses and pupils.

Not to allow the new managers' dwellinghouses the subject of the Development to be occupied until the same time as the riding facilities have been completed and are fully operational

- 1.3 The 2007 Planning Permission has been implemented and the application site has since this time and continues to be operated in accordance with the above-mentioned restrictions. However, our client would like to be able to use the indoor and outdoor riding arenas at the application site for competitive events. In order for this to be permitted, the first of the above-mentioned restrictions will need to be removed, with the effect that the Undertaking could be discharged.

- 1.4 The application for the discharge of the Undertaking is (necessarily) accompanied by an application for the removal of condition 12 attached to the 2007 Planning Permission. This condition requires the 2007 Planning Permission to be implemented in accordance with the terms of the Unilateral Undertaking ("Condition 12"). This application is made pursuant to Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. As outlined by paragraph 4 of Circular 11/95, 'Use of conditions in planning permissions':

*"Section 73 of the Act provides for applications for planning permission to develop land without complying with conditions previously imposed on a planning permission. The local planning authority can grant such permission unconditionally or subject to different conditions, or they can refuse the application if they decide the original condition(s) should continue. The original planning permission will continue to subsist whatever the outcome of the application under section 73."*¹

- 1.5 A copy of the 2007 Planning Permission can be found in **Appendix 2** of this Statement.

- 1.6 The remainder of this Statement is structured as follows:

Chapter 2	Introduces the site and our client's proposals.
Chapter 3	Outlines the relevant site planning history.
Chapter 4	Introduces the Development Plan which must be taken into account during the determination of any application made under the Planning Acts.

¹ <http://tinyurl.com/bs4bsss>

320120336P

Chapter 5 Outlines 'other material considerations' that may be relevant during the decision making process – specifically, the National Planning Policy Framework, published on 27 March 2012

Chapter 6 Provides an overview of how our client has sought to respond to the concerns raised as part of the 2010 Planning Application, which was refused by RVBC on 21 May 2010.

Chapter 7 Summary and Conclusions

1.7 This Statement is also supported by **Appendices 1-4**

1.8 It should be noted that this Statement forms part of a series of documents that have been submitted to RVBC in support of the aforementioned applications. Other documents include a Traffic Statement prepared by SK Transport Planning and a Noise Impact Assessment prepared by BDP

Contact Details

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2. The Site and Description of the Proposals

- 2.1 Northcote Stud Farm falls within the administrative boundary of RVBC and the Ward of Langho. It is located off Northcote Road and is in close proximity to Longsight Road and the A59. A plan showing the approximate site boundary can be found below in **Figure 2.1** and **Figure 2.2**.

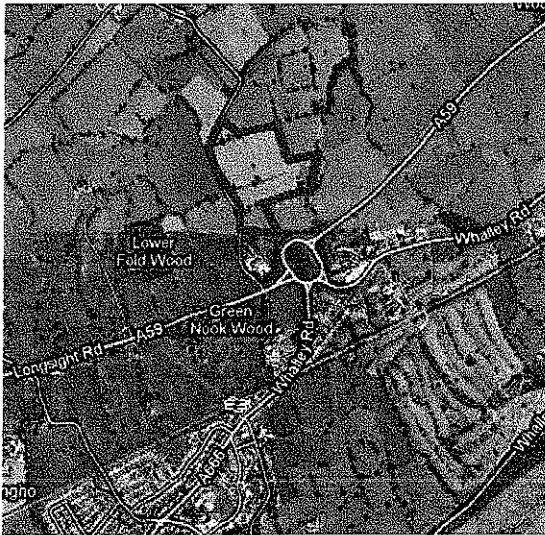


Figure 2 1 (courtesy of Google Maps)

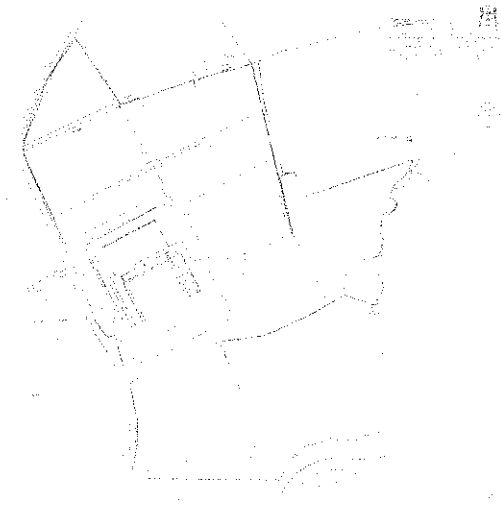


Figure 2 2

- 2.2 To the west of Northcote Stud Farm is a playing field which is used by Langho Football and Sports Club. Approximately 100 metres to the south is the country house hotel, Northcote Manor.

The Application Site

- 2.3 Northcote Stud Equestrian Centre (the "Centre") is owned by our client and became operational at Northcote Stud Farm in June 2008 following the grant of the 2007 Planning Permission.
- 2.4 Notably, our client's son, Andrew Mizon, is a resident on site. He is a leading show jumper who has competed as part of several Nations Cup teams - a premier international team 'Grand Prix' show jumping competition run by the International Federation for Equestrian Sports.

Training Facilities

- 2.5 The Centre offers a broad range of training facilities including; a 60m x 30m indoor school and a 60 x 60m outdoor school specially adapted for all weather conditions. In addition, the Centre has a full set of professional show jumps, dressage boards, stables, and a secure individual tack room.
- 2.6 The Centre currently provides stabling for our client's own horses and commercial livery (in accordance with the 2007 Planning Permission). It also plays host to a number of training events.
- 2.7 In addition, the care of our client's horses and the livery facilities ensures that there is a permanent presence on-site which is essential for both security reasons and animal welfare. Owners of the horses are able to visit the Centre at any time and also have access to both the indoor and outdoor riding arenas.

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Training Days

- 2.8 Since June 2009, our client has been running regular training days for dressage and show jumping, alternating the two disciplines on at least a weekly basis. These 'clinics' have been very popular and, as a consequence, have attracted attendees from central and east Lancashire.
- 2.9 The training events cover a range of ages, skills and disciplines within dressage and show jumping. In order to ensure that each person attending a training event receives adequate and, where appropriate, individual time from the trainers, start times are staggered over a day or an evening.
- 2.10 The premises are also rented out for a number of outside groups including the local Pony and Riding Clubs who have members that can attend any subsidised training the Club offers. Recent and future training events are being held with The Pendle Forest Pony Club, Chipping Pony Club and Holcombe Pony Club.
- 2.11 All of these organisations are affiliated to The Pony Club. Founded in England in 1929, and granted independent charitable status on 1st January 1997, there are approximately 345 branches and 600 centres in the UK alone. The Pony Club is also represented in 18 countries with a worldwide membership exceeding 110,477, making it the largest association of young riders in the world.
- 2.12 Against this background, the local Pony Clubs have expressed a strong interest in and support for our client to hold competitions at Northcote Stud Farm.

Description of Proposals

- 2.13 Whilst the training events at Northcote Stud Farm have been successful in terms of attracting attendees and the interest of organisations affiliated to The Pony Club, the inability to hold competitions is having an impact on the viability of the business.
- 2.14 Furthermore, whilst no prizes are available for these training events, it is our client's belief that the scale of activity that currently takes place on site is similar to that which would be generated through the holding of competitions – in other words, it would have no adverse impact upon the amenity of the immediate area. Rather, the impact would be positive, as set out in more detail in **Chapters 4-7** of this Statement.
- 2.15 Therefore, in order to secure the removal of the restriction on the holding of competitive events at Northcote Stud Farm, our client is applying for consent for the discharge of the Unilateral Undertaking referred to in paragraph 1.1 above and (necessarily) the removal of Condition 12 (see paragraph 1.4 above).
- 2.16 To provide further background, **Chapter 3** will outline the relevant planning history in respect of the application site.

3. Planning Application History

- 3.1 Over the last twenty years there have been a number of planning applications submitted in respect of the application site. Since 1994, the following applications have been approved:

Ref	Description	Decision	Date
3/94/01070/P	Riding centre, managers dwelling, new access and car park	Approved with conditions and a Unilateral Undertaking	25/08/1994
3/98/0622/P	Renewal of planning permission for a riding centre	Approved with conditions	02/02/1999
3/2004/0750/P	Revised application for a riding centre, manager's dwelling, new access and car park	Approved with conditions	14/10/2004
3/2007/0029	Riding centre, access, car parking and associated works	Approved with conditions and a Unilateral Undertaking	04/04/2007

Table 3.1 – Northcote Stud Farm: Planning History

- 3.2 As outlined above in **Table 3.1**, permission was granted on 4 April 2007 by RVBC for a "riding centre, access, car parking and associated works" (referred to hereinbefore and after as the "2007 Planning Permission").
- 3.3 As stated in paragraph 1.1 of this Statement, the Undertaking was offered by our client to RVBC in connection with the 2007 Planning Permission. The terms of the Undertaking are similar to those of an Undertaking offered in connection with an earlier planning permission granted in August 1994 (see **Table 3.1**), which also authorised the use of the application site as a Riding Centre ("the 1994 Planning Permission").
- 3.4 As stated in the RVBC Planning and Development Committee Report (dated 3 April 2007) which was prepared in relation to the 2007 Planning Permission;
- "The applicant has reissued an undertaking that would replicate the previous unilateral agreement [originally attached to the 3/94/01070/P permission] limiting the nature of use to prevent such activities and on this basis the highway authority would not object to the development."*
- 3.5 However, with regard to the 1994 Planning Permission and the earlier Unilateral Undertaking (dated 25 August 1994), it is notable that:
- The RVBC County Surveyor had no objection to the planning application subject to a visibility splay of 4.5m x 160m being provided before any of the permitted buildings were operational and subsequently safeguarded. The delivery of access and visibility improvements at the site was controlled by way of a condition (Condition 3) attached to the 1994 Planning Permission.
 - The Parish Council objected to the planning application but offered no evidence to justify its assertion that vehicles were traveling in excess of the 50mph speed limit in force at that time on Northcote Road. Indeed, the 2011 '85th percentile speed surveys' (further details of which are contained in the Traffic Statement) confirm that vehicles today are travelling past the site access on Northcote Road at speeds less than 30mph.

- Only one letter of representation was received in response to the planning application. This letter did not object in principle to the application but requested that adequate off-street parking be provided to avoid visitors parking on Northcote Road. Parking for approximately 100 cars, trailers and horseboxes is currently available at the application site.
- 3.6 With regard to highways matters generally (and since the 1994 Planning Permission was granted):
- Lancashire County Council ("LCC") Highways has confirmed that the Northcote Road/Longsight Road junction was upgraded in January 1999, with the introduction of a 'banned right turn'.
 - No recorded personal injury accidents have been recorded on Northcote Road between the application site and the junction of the A59 between June 2008 and the end of December 2011 (confirmed on LCC's MARIO system). Again, this is considered in more detail in the Traffic Statement.
 - The carriageway of Northcote Road is 5m wide at the site access point, wide enough for two private cars to pass (4.1m as advised in Manual for Streets).
- 3.7 In sum, taking account of the above-mentioned context and the matters addressed in the subsequent sections of this Statement, we are of the view that the Undertaking no longer serves a useful purpose and, as such, that, in accordance with Section 106A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, it ought to be discharged.
- 3.8 As stated in paragraph 1.4 of this Statement, Condition 12 requires the 2007 Planning Permission to be implemented in accordance with the terms of the Undertaking. Accordingly, its removal would necessarily have to follow on from the discharge of the Undertaking.

2010 Application (Ref: 3/2010/0157)

- 3.9 Following on from the 2007 Planning Permission, an application was prepared and submitted to RVBC on 26 February 2010 to discharge the Undertaking to "allow the indoor and outdoor riding arenas to be used for competitive events, gymkhanas or other such events" ("the 2010 Application").
- 3.10 During the consultation process, the Traffic and Development Engineer of LCC confirmed in writing that he had "no objection to the application in principle on highway safety grounds". However, he recommended that a period of 12 month's monitoring be undertaken in order to verify that the holding of competitive events at the Centre would not have a detrimental impact on movements to and from the A59 Longsight Road.
- 3.11 In the RVBC Planning and Development Committee Report, Planning Officers commented on the issue of noise:
- "Whilst it is acknowledged that use of the outdoor arena for competitive events may lead to an increase in noise and above the impact already experienced **it is not considered that the potential impact would be so significantly detrimental as to warrant an unfavourable decision on that ground alone.**" (our emphasis)*
- 3.12 This assertion was supported by a discussion with RVBC's Senior Environmental Health Officers who:
- "informally... expressed the view that given the distance involved between the outdoor arena and rear of Northcote Manor **it would be unreasonable to object on the grounds of noise.**" (our emphasis)*

- 3.13 Despite a recommendation for approval by Planning Officers, the 2010 Application was refused by RVBC Planning and Development Committee on 20 May 2010. The decision notice, issued one day later, cited one reason for refusal:

*"On the basis of the submitted plan **insufficient evidence has been put forward to fully assess the proposal and the scheme would be likely to result in over intensification of the site due to additional activities resulting from competitive events.** As such it would lead to conditions to the detriment of general amenity arising from congestion on the highway network and noise which would be contrary to Policy G1 of the Districtwide Local Plan "* (our emphasis)

- 3.14 The documents submitted in support of the current applications are intended to respond to the concerns raised by Committee Members and consultees in connection with the 2010 Application and to demonstrate that the Undertaking no longer serves a useful purpose such that it should be discharged, with the consequent removal of Condition 12.
- 3.15 Against this background, this Statement will now consider the Development Plan

4. The Development Plan

- 4.1 The Planning System in England and Wales has a 'plan-led' approach. In terms of decision making, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

*"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts **the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise**."* (our emphasis)

- 4.2 We will now consider each component of the Development Plan that is relevant at the time of writing.

Regional Strategy

- 4.3 The Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West² was adopted in September 2008 ("RSS") and replaced the previously published Regional Planning Guidance. The RSS provides a framework for development and investment in the region over the next fifteen to twenty years.
- 4.4 The decision by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, dated 6 July 2010, to revoke Regional Strategies has been found by the Courts to be unlawful. Whilst it remains the Government's intention to abolish Regional Strategies outside of London, they will remain part of the development plan until they are abolished by an Order made pursuant to the powers given to the Secretary of State by the Localism Act 2011, which was granted Royal Assent on 15 November 2011.
- 4.5 It is anticipated that an Order abolishing Regional Strategies will be made during the first half of 2012 once the Government's abolition proposals have been the subject of strategic environmental assessment (the consultation in relation to which closed on 20 January 2012)³.
- 4.6 In terms of relevant policies:
- RSS Chapter 2, 'Our Region', states in paragraph 2.28 that *"tourism and agriculture remains important to many rural areas and economic diversification of rural areas must continue to be encouraged"*
 - In addition RSS Policy RDF2, 'Rural Areas' is relevant and sets out that plans and strategies for the Region's rural areas should support the priorities of the Regional Rural Delivery Framework and *"maximise the economic potential of the Region's rural areas"*
- 4.7 Our client's proposal to hold competitive events at the application site will accord with both of these objectives by contributing to the economic diversification of the Langho rural area and, in addition, maximising the economic potential of the application site in a manner that will not lead to any negative impact on the surrounding amenity.

Local Development Framework

- 4.8 In accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, RVBC must replace its current adopted Districtwide Local Plan, against which all planning applications for development are assessed, with a Local Development Framework ("LDF")
- 4.9 The LDF will consist of a portfolio of themed documents that sets the Council's land-use strategy for the future. Relevant documents as at April 2012 are as follows.

² http://www.4nw.org.uk/articles/article.php?page_id=457

³ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/revocationnwrrss>

Core Strategy

- 4.10 According to the RVBC website and Revised Local Development Scheme (February 2011) *"it is anticipated that the submission of the Core Strategy will take place around Spring 2012"*⁴ with adoption potentially taking place in November 2012⁵.
- 4.11 It is understood that consultation took place between June and August 2011 on proposed revisions to the Core Strategy Development Management Policies and Key Statements following comments received during an earlier period of consultation (undertaken from August until October 2010).
- 4.12 These Development Management policies will eventually replace the current detailed policies in the Districtwide Local Plan.
- 4.13 Our client's proposals will respond positively to the following emerging Development Management policies (as published for consultation June 2011):
- The Business and Employment Development Key Statement which states that *"developments that contribute to farm diversification, strengthening of the wider rural and village economies or that promote town centre vitality and viability will be supported in principle"*
 - They will accord with the provisions of Key Statement DMG1, 'General Considerations' and – in particular – will *"not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area."*
 - They will also accord with the objectives set out in Key Statements DMG2, 'Strategic Considerations', DMG3, 'Transport and Mobility', and DMB3, 'Recreation and Tourism Development'.

'Saved' Districtwide Local Plan Policies

- 4.14 RVBC's Local Plan was adopted in June 1998. According to the 2011 Annual Monitoring Report⁶ ("AMR"), as the RVBC LDF is in the early stages of production, it has been necessary to continue to 'save' the vast majority of extant Local Plan policies.
- 4.15 A full list of saved policies is included in 'Section 10' of the 2011 AMR. It is understood these saved policies will remain in place until replaced by the LDF or affected by national policy changes. The site allocation is shown below in **Figure 4.2**.

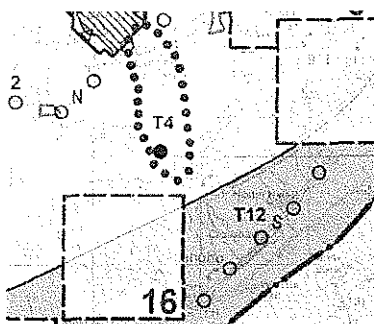


Figure 4.2: Local Plan Proposals Map⁷ (site marked with red circle)

⁴ http://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk/info/200180/planning_policy/1358/local_development_framework/5

⁵ http://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk/download/7456/local_development_scheme

⁶ http://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk/downloads/file/7948/amr_2011

- 4 16 The 2007 Planning Permission referred to six relevant Local Plan policies **Table 4.1** identifies which of these policies are "saved" according to the 2011 AMR:

Policy	'Saved'	Comments
G1, 'Development Control'	Yes	None
H2, 'Dwellings in the Open Countryside'	Yes	None
ENV3, 'Development in Open Countryside'	Yes	None
RT1, 'General Recreation and Tourism Policy'	Yes	None
RT15, 'Organised Outdoor Recreation'	No	"Other policies can be used to determine proposals."
RT16, 'Development Involving the Keeping or Riding of Horses'	No	"Other policies can be used to determine proposals "

Table 4.1: Relevant Local Plan policies

- 4 17 Policies G1 and RT1 are relevant for the purposes of the current applications.

Policy G1, 'Development Control'

- 4 18 The Policy states that *"all development proposals will be expected to provide a high standard of building design and landscape quality Development which does so will be permitted, unless it adversely affects the amenities of the surrounding area "*

- 4 19 Relevant criteria from Policy G1 in respect of the proposals at Northcote Stud Farm includes the following:

"(a) Development should be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature

(b) The likely scale and type of traffic generation will be assessed in relationship to the highway infrastructure and the proposed and existing public transport network This will include safety, operational efficiency, amenity and environmental considerations.

(c) Developments should make adequate arrangements for car parking (see Policy T7).

(d) A safe access should be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated "

- 4 20 Paragraph 3.1.3 of Policy G1 is also relevant:

"This policy is important in order to safeguard the amenities of the Borough and also of those properties adjacent to proposed developments. The various criteria will not be of equal importance in all cases. The Borough Council will also weigh the economic benefits arising from the development against the environmental impact when making decisions." (our emphasis)

- 4 21 Policy G1 is of particular relevance, not least because it was referred to in the refusal notice issued in respect of the 2010 Application.

⁷ http://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk/download/243/proposals_map_south

4.22 As outlined in **Chapter 6** of this Statement, our client's proposals for the application site accord with Policy G1 for the following reasons:

- The proposals will not result in an unacceptable increase in traffic flows
- The site access junction meets the requirements of the Local Highway Authority (by virtue of it being constructed in line with the Local Highway Authority's previous requirements and the conditions attached to the 2007 Planning Permission).
- Visibility at the site access junction accords with the approach speeds on all links.
- The proposed discharge of the Undertaking (and the consequent removal of Condition 12) will not be detrimental to highway safety.
- The daytime noise climate varies very little day-by-day even when show jumping clinics are taking place at the application site.
- There would be no additional impact from road traffic noise during competitive events
- It is possible that a public address system would need to be used during competitive events. If this were the case, our client would be content to accept a limit on the noise which could be generated by such a system. The setting of this limit could be secured through the imposition of a planning condition

Policy RT1, 'General Recreation and Tourism Policy'

4.23 According to Policy RT1 the Borough Council "*will approve development proposals which extend the range of tourism and visitor facilities in the Borough*". This is subject to the following criteria being met:

- "i) the proposal must not conflict with other policies of this plan*
- ii) the proposal must be physically well related to an existing main settlement or village or to an existing group of buildings.*
- iii) the development should not undermine the character, quality or visual amenities of the plan area by virtue of its scale, siting, materials or design.*
- iv) the proposal should be well related to the existing highway network. It should not generate additional traffic movements of a scale and type likely to cause undue problems or disturbance. Where possible the proposals should be well related to the public transport network*
- v) the site should be large enough to accommodate the necessary car parking, service areas and appropriate landscaped areas."*

4.24 As outlined previously in respect of Policy G1, our client's proposal to hold competitive events at the application site will be sympathetic to the countryside and the amenity of nearby residents and businesses

4.25 Moreover, the proposals will extend the range of tourism and visitor facilities in the Borough. **Appendix 3** contains correspondence received by our client in response to their proposals. **Table 4.2** overleaf highlights some of the positive comments made within this correspondence.

Author	Comments
Blue Slate Stables	• <i>"My show practice evenings are popular simply because of this venue and the quality of surface which enables animal to work well and improve."</i> • <i>"The access is very good being just off the A59 and therefore away from residential areas"</i> • <i>"There is a demand for top class venues with modern facilities and I believe that the Northcote Stud could fulfil this need."</i>
Tracey Newman – British Show Jumping Association Accredited Trainer	• <i>"Many thanks for putting your training shows on a Tuesday. I have found these absolutely essential to part of training my young showjumpers and also give the more experienced horses a fantastic facility to maintain their progress"</i> • <i>"It would be even better if you were able to run competitive shows as you are in such an ideal place and so easy to find with fantastic access...may I offer you my continued support throughout the coming months as there is nowhere like what you have to offer within a 40 mile radius."</i>
Pennine Distribution Limited	• <i>"My experience delivering to Northcote Stud afforded none of the difficulties usually associated with bulk pallet delivery."</i> • <i>"The access, straight off the A59 was excellent. It was easily negotiated by my 38 ton articulated lorry, which then brought me down to the stud and easily in through the double gated entrance I was able to make my delivery very easily and also able to turn my vehicle around inside the stud making the exit from the premises also very easy."</i>
Jeanne Bullock – British Show Jumping Judge and Commentator	• <i>"In my capacity as a judge, commentator and horse owners, I have visited, worked and experienced many of the equestrian centres in the UK In my opinion the facilities currently at Northcote Stud are world class"</i> • <i>"The approach and access to the stud is ideal (unlike some of the centres I have been to) ...I believe the access to the centre to be one of its' best points – traffic will be able to move freely into the centre at the same time as traffic leaving the venue"</i> • <i>"Lancashire and the UK have been waiting quite some time for a quality centre for equestrianism – Northcote Stud is ready to be that centre with the backing of the owners the Mizon Family who have extensive experience in all things equestrian."</i>
Geoff Billington – International Showjumper	• <i>"The reason for my writing is to compliment the Mizons on building a fantastic Equestrian Centre, being the Northcote Stud, Northcote Road, Langho, Blackburn, BB6 8BE"</i> • <i>"It has everything there is to warrant holding affiliated showjumping shows... in my opinion it is a much needed venue in the area"</i>

Table 4 2

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- 4 26 In addition to the positive feedback outlined above, our client's proposal is likely to create up to 10 part-time employment opportunities, with a need for judges, ring stewards, car parking stewards, an entries secretary, and assistance in the café and the 'tack and feed' shop.
- 4 27 This Statement will now introduce the National Planning Policy Framework.

5. National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.1 As outlined by Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the determination of planning applications must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") is a material consideration in planning decisions.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.2 The NPPF was adopted on 27 March 2012. It sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. In line with the publication of the NPPF, Greg Clark MP's Oral Ministerial Statement dated 27 March sets out the fundamental objectives of the document:

- *"To put unprecedented power in the hands of communities to shape the places in which they live;*
- *To better support growth to give the next generation the chance that our generation has had to have a decent home, and to allow the jobs to be created on which our prosperity demands; and*
- *To ensure that the places we cherish – our countryside, towns and cities – are bequeathed to the next generation in a better condition than they are now."*⁸

- 5.3 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as a *"golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking"*. This position is reflected by the structure of the document which is built around 'achieving sustainable development', set out under thirteen specific headings

'Three Dimensions' to Sustainable Development

- 5.4 According to paragraph 7 of the NPPF there are 'three dimensions' to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental
- 5.5 These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles, essentially; ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places at the right time (economic); supporting strong vibrant and healthy communities (social); and contributing to the protection and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment (environmental)
- 5.6 Our client's proposal to hold competitive events at the application site will accord with these three dimensions by creating up to 10 part-time jobs (economic); by delivering a much needed resource in a suitable location (social); and by ensuring no negative impact upon the natural, built and historic environment (environmental).

Core Planning Principles

- 5.7 Paragraph 17 of the NPPF sets out that within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of 12 core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking
- 5.8 Our client's proposal will accord with the spirit of these principles for the following reasons:
- They accord with the Development Plan (as set out in **Chapter 4**) and, therefore, the 'plan-led' system
 - They will contribute to a thriving rural community

⁸ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/statements/corporate/2115442>

- They will encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in rural areas.
- They are located in a sustainable location.
- They will deliver a community facility and service to meet local needs.

Achieving Sustainable Development

5 9 As set out in paragraph 6 of the NPPF, the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Accordingly, the policies in paragraphs 18 to 219 of the NPPF *"taken as a whole, constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system."*

5 10 Paragraph 28 is most relevant and sets out the requirements for 'Supporting a prosperous rural economy':

"Planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:

- *support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings;*
- *promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;*
- *support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres; and*
- *promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship."*

5.11 Our client's proposal to hold competitive events at the application site, will meet these requirements by diversifying an existing rural business and expanding tourist and visitor facilities in an appropriate location.

Summary and Conclusion

5.12 In sum, consent for the current applications will contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development as defined by the NPPF. Furthermore, our client's proposal to hold competitive events at the application site will accord with relevant policies contained in RVBC's Local Plan (as required by Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and reflected throughout the NPPF).

5 13 This Statement will now set out how our client has sought to respond to the concerns raised by Committee Members and consultees in connection with the 2010 Application.

6. Response to Previous Concerns

- 6.1 Having introduced the application site, the relevant planning history, along with the Development Plan and other material considerations, it is relevant to set out how the current applications respond directly to the concerns raised by Committee Members and consultees in connection with the 2010 Application

Discussions with Langho Football Club

- 6.2 Following the refusal of the 2010 Application, our client approached, and entered into discussions with, Langho Football Club ("Langho FC") who use the playing fields to west of the application site. This was in response to concerns raised by Committee Members that the traffic problems being experienced on Northcote Road were due to the training events and activities being held at Northcote Stud Farm.

- 6.3 Following these discussions, Michael Cook of Langho FC subsequently wrote to our client. It was acknowledged by Mr Cook that the traffic problems on Northcote Road were associated with the "significant increase" in football traffic – not as a consequence of the activities being undertaken at Northcote Stud Farm:

"In the autumn, over the first few weeks of the season, Northcote Lane on Sunday mornings was over-run with football traffic, causing the lane to become blocked in parts and at times obstructing the access from the equestrian centre to the A59 highway."

- 6.4 The following three actions have since been undertaken by Langho FC to resolve the problem:

- (i) Kick-off times for the second round of football matches have been "pushed back" later in the day to allow a sufficient gap between games. This allows traffic from the first game to depart before incoming traffic arrives for the second game.
- (ii) The club has spent £1,700 on improving and extending its existing car park
- (iii) In the case of overflow, the Langho managers have been instructed to inform parents of both teams to park further down the lane towards Brocknall, and not to block the road between the entrance gate and the A59 highway.

- 6.5 A copy of Mr Cook's letter can be found in **Appendix 4**.

- 6.6 The letter states that:

*"having listened to the plans put forward for the shows, and having seen the level of investment the owners of the stables have put into the facilities, **the football club believes it is only right for the centre to be granted permission to host the events.**" (our emphasis)*

- 6.7 The letter concludes:

***"I hope this letter has managed to convince you that the previous problems encountered on the land have now been corrected, and that the football club and stables are now working together to ensure both can provide excellent sporting facilities for the community to enjoy."** (our emphasis)*

Consultation with RVBC Planning Officers

- 6.8 Our client met with RVBC Planning Officers on 8 June 2011 and discussed the supporting information that would need to be submitted with the current applications
- 6.9 It was agreed at this meeting that a Noise Impact Assessment and Traffic Statement would be necessary, along with a Planning Policy Compliance Statement
- 6.10 Accordingly, our client commissioned these reports which have been undertaken by SK Transport Planning (Traffic Statement), BDP (Noise Impact Assessment), and ourselves (Planning Policy Compliance Statement)

Assessment of Traffic and Transport Implications

- 6.11 The Traffic Statement assesses the traffic and transport implications of using the indoor and outdoor riding arenas at the application site for competitive events, gymkhanas and other such events.
- 6.12 It seeks to respond to the highways related concerns raised by Committee Members and consultees, such as Northcote Manor, in connection with the 2010 Application, and to demonstrate that our client's proposal to hold competitive events at the application site is acceptable.
- 6.13 During the preparation of the Traffic Statement, SK Transport Planning consulted with Martin Nugent and Michael Turner of LCC.
- 6.14 The Traffic Statement draws the following conclusions:
- Our client's proposal will not result in an unacceptable increase in traffic flows
 - The site access junction meets the requirements of the Local Highway Authority (by virtue of it being constructed in line with the Local Highway Authority's previous requirements and the conditions attached to the 2007 Planning Permission)
 - Visibility at the site access junction accords with the approach speeds on all links.
 - The proposed discharge of the Unilateral Undertaking (and the consequent removal of Condition 12) will not be detrimental to highway safety
 - In light of the analyses undertaken in respect of existing trip generation, off-site speed surveys and historic accident data at the application site - which informed the Transport Statement but were not available to LCC's Traffic and Development Engineer when he was considering the 2010 Application - it is considered that a period of monitoring (as was recommended in the case of the 2010 Application) is not necessary.

Assessment of Potential Acoustic Impact

- 6.15 The Noise Impact Assessment addresses the following issues: the current noise climate at the application site; the likely changes in noise levels due to traffic flows on local roads during the holding of competitive events; and, noise from amplified announcements during such events.
- 6.16 The Noise Impact Assessment draws the following conclusions:
- The daytime noise climate varies very little day-by-day even during the show jumping clinics which currently take place at the application site.
 - There would be no additional impact from road traffic noise during competitive events.

- 6 17 It is possible that a public address system would need to be used during competitive events (although it should be noted that amplified announcements would be used infrequently by our client) If this were the case, the Noise Impact Assessment recommends, in recognition of the previous concerns raised by Northcote Manor, that a limit on the noise which could be generated by such a system be imposed. This limit could be secured through the imposition of planning condition.

Assessment of Relationship with Planning Policy

- 6 18 It is relevant to set out, in planning policy terms, why our client's proposals for the application site are acceptable:
- They accord with the provisions of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West, in particular Policy RDF2, 'Rural Areas'.
 - They contribute positively to the relevant 'saved' Local Plan policies; in particular G1 and RT1.
 - They will deliver sustainable development as defined by the NPPF.
- 6 19 **Chapter 7** will now summarise and conclude the findings of this Statement

7. Summary and Conclusions

7.1 In sum, the findings of this Statement are as follows:

- Following the refusal of the 2010 Application, our client approached, and entered into discussions with, Langho Football Club ("Langho FC") who use the playing fields to west of the application site. This was in response to concerns raised by Committee Members that the traffic problems being experienced on Northcote Road were due to the training events and activities being held at Northcote Stud Farm.
- It has been acknowledged by Langho FC that these problems were not caused by activities at the application site and were a consequence of a significant increase in traffic associated with football matches taking place at the football club. Action has now been taken by Langho FC to address these problems. Moreover, Langho FC has written to our client to confirm its support for the proposal to use the indoor and outdoor riding arenas at Northcote Stud Farm for competitive events.
- Our client's proposal has also received support from local businesses and professionals, and will create up to 10 part-time employment opportunities – in so doing encouraging multiple benefits from the use of land in a rural area whilst contributing to a thriving rural community.
- The Traffic Statement prepared by SK Transport Planning demonstrates that the local highway network within the study area has no existing safety issues, and also confirms that if competitive events were to operate at Northcote Stud Farm, there would be no material change to the traffic flows to and from the application site over the existing situation.
- The Noise Impact Assessment prepared by BDP confirms that by comparing consecutive days, the daytime noise climate varies very little day-by-day even during the showing jumping clinics which are currently undertaken at the application site. It also concludes that the use of the outdoor riding arena has little or no effect on the ambient noise levels at the boundary with Northcote Manor and that there would be no additional impact from road traffic noise during competitive events.
- To allay any concerns raised by Northcote Manor in relation to noise, and particularly that which may be generated by a public address system, the Noise Impact Assessment recommends that a limit (which our client is prepared to accept) be imposed on the noise which could be generated by such a system if used. This limit could be secured through the imposition of a planning condition.
- Our client's proposal to hold competitive events at the application site wholly accords with relevant policies in the Development Plan and is in line with the policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

7.2 For the above reasons, we would encourage RVBC to consent to the discharge of the Undertaking (which it has been demonstrated no longer serves a useful purpose) and the consequent removal of Condition 12.

320120336 P

Appendix

- Appendix 1 Unilateral Undertaking, dated 20 March 2007
- Appendix 2 Planning Permission 3/2007/0029
- Appendix 3 Letters of support
- Appendix 4 Letter from Langho F.C. Sports and Country Club

320120336 P

APPENDIX 1

THE SCHEDULE

320120336P

1. The Owner hereby covenants with the Council that the Site shall be permanently subject to the restrictions regulating the Development thereof as hereafter contained
2. The said restrictions referred to in the preceding clause is as follows:-
 - 2.1 Not to allow the indoor and outdoor riding arenas the subject of the Development to be used for competitive events gymkhanas or other such events other than internal activities using the centres own residential horses and pupils
 - 2.2 Not to allow the new managers dwellinghouses the subject of the Development to be occupied until such time as the riding facilities have been completed and a fully operational

X
SIGNED as a Deed by
Mr and Mrs R Mizon
in the presence of:-

R Mizon

R. M. Mizon

X
Witness' Signature:

M Lucas

Witness' Name:

MARIA LUCAS

Witness' Address:

11 LOWER FOLD AVE, RAYTON

Witness' Occupation:

PRACTICE MANAGER

320120330 P

APPENDIX 2

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Department of Development

Council Offices, Church Walk, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 2RA

Telephone: 01200 425111

Fax: 01200 414488

Planning Fax: 01200 414487

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

PLANNING PERMISSION

APPLICATION NO: 3/2007/0029

DECISION DATE: 04 April 2007

DATE RECEIVED: 19/01/2007

APPLICANT:

Mr & Mrs Mizon
Lower Allesholes Farm
Allescholes Road
Walsden
Todmorden
OL14 7TL

AGENT:

MCK Partnership Ltd
48 Watling Street Road
Fulwood
PRESTON
PR2 8BP

DEVELOPMENT Revised application for Riding Centre, Access, Carparking and associated works.

PROPOSED:

AT: land adjacent Northcote Manor Northcote Road Langho Lanes

Ribble Valley Borough Council hereby give notice that **permission has been granted** for the carrying out of the above development in accordance with the application plans and documents submitted subject to the following condition(s):

1. The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

2. Prior to commencement of the development, precise details of any external lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. In accordance with this condition, there shall be no external lighting at the paddock area unless otherwise agreed as low lighting units.

REASON: In order to minimise light pollution and comply with Policies G1 and G8 of the Districtwide Local Plan.

3. Prior to being discharged into any watercourse, surface water, sewer or soakaway system or surface water drainage and parking areas shall be sealed through trapped gullies with an overall capacity compatible with the site being drained.

REASON: To prevent pollution of the water environment in accordance with Policy G1 of the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan.

4. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a scheme for disposal of foul surface water has been approved by the Local Planning Authority. Such a scheme shall be constructed and completed in accordance with the approved plans.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory means of drainage in accordance with Policy G1 of the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan.

P.T.O.

320120330P

APPLICATION NO. 3/2007/0029

DECISION DATE: 4 April 2007

5. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until the scheme for the containment and storage of manure has been approved by the Local Planning Authority. Such a scheme shall be constructed and completed in accordance with approved plans.

REASON: To prevent pollution of water environment in accordance with Policy G1 of the Districtwide Local Plan.

6. The proposed landscaping scheme submitted under drawing 06/963/003 shall be implemented at a timescale to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority. The landscaping shall be maintained thereafter for a period of not less than 5 years to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority. This maintenance shall include replacement of any tree or shrub which is removed or dies or is seriously damaged or becomes seriously diseased by a species of a similar size than that originally planted.

REASON: In the interests of the amenities of the area and to comply with Policy G1 of the Districtwide Local Plan.

7. The occupation of a dwelling shall be limited to persons solely or mainly employed in the proposed equestrian centre as described in the application.

REASON: Since the Local Planning Authority would not normally grant permission for a dwelling in such a location without specific justification and to comply with Policy G1 of the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan.

8. The access details as submitted shall be carried out to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority before any of the buildings are occupied.

REASON: In the interest of highway safety and to comply with Policy G1 of the Districtwide Local Plan.

9. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Order) 1998, there shall not at any time in connection with the development hereby permitted be erected or planted or allowed to remain upon the land hereinafter any building, wall, fence, hedge, tree, shrub or other device which will obstruct the view above a plane 1m above the ground level of the adjoining highway. The piece of land affected by this condition shall be that part of the site in front of a line drawn from the point 2.4m along the centre line of the proposed access and the continuation of the near edge of the carriageway some 160m in a northerly direction and 120m in a southerly direction along Northcote Road from the intersection of the centre line of the access point.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety and to comply with Policy G1 of the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan.

10. Precise specifications or samples of walling and roofing materials and details of any surface materials to be used including their colour and texture shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before their use in the proposed works.

Reason: In order that the Local Planning Authority may ensure that the materials to be used are appropriate to the locality in accordance with Policies G1 of the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan.
P.T.O

APPLICATION NO. 3/2007/0029

DECISION DATE: 4 April 2007

- 11 This permission shall be implemented in accordance with the proposal as amended by letter and plan received on the 16 March 2007.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt since the proposal was the subject of agreed amendments in the interests of visual amenity and to reduce the overall impact of the scheme.

- 12 This permission shall relate to the proposal as submitted and agreed that the unilateral undertaking dated 20 March 2007.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt since the proposal has been subject of additional controls to minimise highway problems.

- 13 No more than 25 of the stables hereby approved shall be used for commercial livery purposes.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety and to comply with Policy G1 of the Districtwide Local Plan

Relevant planning policy

Policy G1 - Development Control.

Policy H2 - Dwellings in the Open Countryside.

Policy ENV3 - Development in Open Countryside

Policy RT1 - General Recreation and Tourism Policy.

Policy RT15 - Organised Outdoor Recreation.

Policy RT16 - Development Involving the Keeping or Riding of Horses.

Summary of reasons for approval

The proposal has no significant detrimental impact on nearby residential amenity nor would it have an adverse visual impact

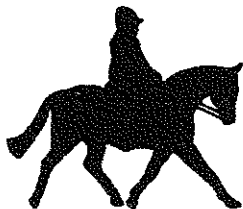
Note(s)

1. For rights of appeal in respect of any condition(s)/or reason(s) attached to the permission see the attached notes.
2. The applicant is advised that should there be any deviation from the approved plan the Local Planning Authority must be informed. It is therefore vital that any future Building Regulation application must comply with the approved planning application

STEWART BAILEY
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

320120330P

APPENDIX 3



Blue Slate Stables,
Showley Road,
Clayton-le-Dale,
Blackburn,
Lancashire,
BB1 9DP.

19 October 2011

To whom it may concern

320120338P

Re:Northcote Stud

I understand that the Mizen family are wishing to run events at the above venue but have met with some opposition

I use the arena to hold showing practice evenings as well as taking my own animals for a pre-show foray away from home

My show practice evenings are popular simply because of this venue and the quality of surface which enables animals to work well and improve.

I judge and compete all over the country and both the indoor and outdoor arenas are on a par with other venues hosting Royal International Horse Show and Horse of the Year Show qualifiers. The quality of entries forward is always in relation to the standard of facilities.

The access is very good being just off the A59 and therefore away from residential areas and we have no problem at all in driving there in our 39 foot 29.5 tonne HGV. There is a demand for top class venues with modern facilities and I believe that the Northcote Stud could fulfil this need.

In conclusion, it is a superb facility in a very accessible location.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Penny Hollings'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Mrs P J Hollings
Part of Team Hollings. Trainers of top class Show Horses & Riders

From: tracey.newman6@btinternet.com
To: theoffice@northcotestud.co.uk
Sent: 06/03/2012 20:22:01 GMT Standard Time
Subj: Fab facility

320120330P

To Northcote Stud,

Many thank for putting your training shows on a Tuesday, I have found these absolutley essential to part of training my young showjumpers and also giving the more experienced horses a fantastic facility to maintain there progress. It would be even better if you were able to run competitive shows as you are in such an ideal place and so easy to find with fantastic access.

May I offer you my continued support throughout the coming months as there is no-where like what you have to offer within a 40 mile radius and very much needed in a very active horsey area.

Regards

Tracey Newman

PENNINE DISTRIBUTION LIMITED

Haulage, Storage & Driver CPC Training

01706 647101 / 07720505880

www.penninedistributionlimited.co.uk

320120338P

30th November 2010

Dear Sirs

Recently my haulage company Pennine Distribution Limited was commissioned to deliver 14 pallets of tiles to Northcote Stud, Langho, Blackburn. As a hugely experienced delivery company we can be asked to collect and deliver to any destination throughout the UK and Europe. Many of the day to day approach roads and premises we encounter are very difficult and require the most professional of drivers as the access and premises they are based in are usually very small, often not big enough for the huge wagons that are required for the loads.

My experience delivering to Northcote Stud afforded non of the difficulties usually associated with bulk pallet delivery. The access - straight off the A59 was excellent. It was easily negotiated by my 38 ton articulated lorry, which then brought me down to the stud and easily in through the double gated entrance. I was able to make my delivery very easily and also able to turn my vehicle around inside the stud making the exit from the premises also very easy.

In my opinion Northcote Stud has the ideal access and traffic facilities required for any event especially equestrian competitors and their large modern horse boxes.

Regards

John N Bullock

JEANNE BULLOCK

British Showjumping Judge & Commentator

DOBFIELD HOUSE

1 DOBFIELD ROAD

ROCHDALE

LANCASHIRE

OL16 3AW

jeannebullock712@hotmail.com

320120338P

29th November 2010

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I have recently returned from a visit to Northcote Stud, Northcote Road, Langho, Blackburn in Lancashire.

In my capacity as a judge, commentator and horse owner, I have visited, worked and experienced many of the equestrian centres in the UK. In my opinion the facilities currently at Northcote Stud are world class. The design of the centre and its use of the very best in modern technological equestrian products such as the state of the art Andrews Bowen Surfaces (who will supply the same surface for the Olympic Arenas in 2012) will make it a premier centre for not only local competitors but international ones too. The centre is one of the most exciting venues I have had the pleasure to visit in many years. It offers both indoor and outdoor arenas with the best rated surfaces, full sets of professional showjumps - ideal for shows and schooling and top class indoor stables with all the up to date technology for caring for horses in a professional manner. The approach and access to the stud is ideal (unlike some of the centres I have been to). It is straight off a main road which then leads directly to the car park where there is ample parking for the modern horseboxes and trailers. I believe the access to the centre to be one of its' best points - traffic will be able to move freely into the centre at the same time as traffic leaving the venue. The road leading in and out of the centre is totally adequate for the incoming and outgoing traffic that would be there for an event.

320120338P

Lancashire and the UK have been waiting quite some time for a quality centre for equestrianism – Northcote Stud is ready to be that centre with the backing of the owners the Mizon Family who have extensive experience in all things equestrian. We look forward to witnessing its first competitions in the very near future.

Jeanne Bullock

320120318P



Shearwater House 8 Regent Gate
High Street Waltham Cross Herts EN8 7AF
Commercial, Motor & General Insurance
Tel: 01992 718666 Fax: 01992 707189
Customer Services Tel: 01992 718666 Fax: 01992 700959
Equine Insurance Tel: 01992 767666 Fax: 01992 707188

Email: enquiries@shearwater-insurance.co.uk
www.shearwater-insurance.co.uk

18th November 2009

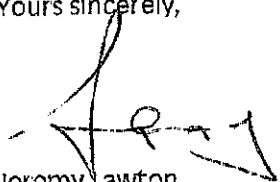
Janet Mizon
Lower Allescholes Farm
Allescholes Road
Walsden
Todmorden OL14 7TL

Dear Janet,

Further to our conversation of 18th November 2009, I am pleased to confirm that in light of our experience, as a specialist Insurance Broker, in relation to Horse Boxes, that in most cases drivers of same, tend to be extremely experienced and cautious due to the transportation of blood stock

I have enclosed a copy of the Das Commercial Legal Protection Policy Summary along with the Equestrian Business Interruption Wording, which I hope you find helpful, however if I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to let me know

Yours sincerely,


Jeremy Lawton
Managing Director



Geoff Billington

4/4/12



To Whom it may concern. **32012033BP**

My name is Geoff Billington, I am an International Showjumper, I have ridden on over 50 Nations Cups (Team competitions) for Great Britain, and have competed at two Olympic Games.

I was born in Whalley, and lived all my youth, in Accrington. My Parents, both came from Great Harwood.

The reason for my writing, is to complement the Mizons on building a fantastic Equestrian Centre, being the Northcote Stud, Northcote RD, Langho, Blackburn BB6 8BE.

It has everything there to, warrant holding affiliated Showjumping shows. There is a large Indoor, and outdoor, arenas lots of hardstanding, for parking, and easy access, from the A59 (no long winding country lanes, where it is difficult for two lorries to pass).

In my opinion, it is a much needed Venue, in the area.

Yours faithfully, Geoff Billington

Hall O'Coole Grange, Heatley Lane, Newhall, Nantwich, Cheshire, CW5 8AZ, UK

Fax: 01270 780 885 Mobile: 07785 301 919 Email: info@geoffbillington.com Website: www.geoffbillington.com

320120330P

APPENDIX 4



Established 1972

320120338P

To whom it may concern,

Langho Football club would like to place on record its full support to Northcote Studs application to expand its equestrian centres activities and fully backs their proposals to host horse shows and other events at its Northcote Road site.

Working in partnership to provide better sporting and leisure facilities for the local community, and to ensure the accessibility of Northcote Lane for local residents remains both passable and clear, the football club and equestrian centre have got together to discuss the recent problems encountered on Sunday mornings when football matches were played at Northcote Lane.

For many years junior football has been played on weekends (usually Sundays) at Northcote. Whilst the facilities on site haven't changed over the years, with more and more cars on the road, and more and more parents / grandchildren watching the games, the traffic associated with each match has increased significantly. Similarly with more and more children taking part in junior football, the number of teams now run by Langho has increased significantly.

In the autumn, over the first few weeks of the season, Northcote Lane on Sunday mornings was over-run with football traffic, causing the lane to become blocked in parts and at times obstructing the access from the equestrian centre to the A59 highway.

The reason was simple, in planning back to back fixtures on both pitches at Northcote, the league scheduled the games in such a fashion that didn't allow one game to finish and all the traffic associated with that match to clear the grounds before the traffic for the second match arrived. In truth the kick-off times set were too close together. This problem was brought to the attention of the league by Langho, and now with their co-operation kick-off times for the second matches have been pushed back later into the day to allow sufficient a gap between games to exist to clear departing traffic from game one, before incoming traffic for game two arrives.

The other problem identified by the football club, and more noticeable this year than in any other year is the lack of existing space in the current car park for increased traffic, and the poor state the existing car park had lapsed into. With the amount of rainfall currently experienced, the grass areas off the pitches rely on when dry for relief parking are not suitable in the wetter winter months for vehicles to park on. With this in mind, the club has taken the decision to spent approximately £1700 in tidying and extending its existing car park.

320120330P

The measures taken by the club will now hopefully allow all the match day traffic to park within the current football grounds, and ensure the road remains clear of parked traffic. In the case of overflow, the Langho managers have been instructed to inform parents of both teams to park further down the lane towards Brockall, and not to block the road between the entrance gate and the A59 highway.

Regarding Northcote Studs application to host equestrian events on its own premises, having listened to the plans put forward for the shows, and having seen the level of investment the owners of the stables have put into the facilities, the football club believes it only right for the centre to be granted permission to host the events.

In particular, over the summer months, when football takes a back seat in the sporting calendar, there should be no issues with access to the lane to prevent horse vehicles from safely accessing and leaving the centres premises without "blocking" Northcote Lane. And with the measures now put in place during football matches, the issue of a congested lane should no longer be used as prevention from allowing the shows to take place at the centre in the winter months.

I hope this letter has managed to convince you that the previous problems encountered on the lane have now been corrected, and that the football club and stables are now working together to ensure both can provide excellent sporting facilities for the community to enjoy.

If you wish to discuss anything in more detail please contact me direct on my mobile 07703 941 388, or through email at RJreadhall@aol.com

Yours sincerely

Michael Cook
Langho Football Club.