

Application Ref: NP/14/0229

Application Type	Full
Grid Ref:	SN02773925
Applicant	Miss R Curtis, Rebecca Curtis Racing
Agent	Mr I Pick, Ian Pick Associates Ltd
Proposal	Retention of 2 stable buildings and existing track and siting of horse walker (resubmission of NP/13/0367)
Site Location	Fforest Farm, Newport, Pembrokeshire, SA42 0UG
Case Officer	Liam Jones

Summary

The application is reported to the Development Management Committee as it is a Major Development application having regard to the total new floor space created which exceeds 1000 square metres.

The application is one of two planning applications submitted at Fforest Farm and proposes the retention of 2 existing stable buildings, existing track and the retention of a horse walker. Whilst it is unfortunate that this proposal is retrospective the development proposed for retention offers the opportunity to support an existing and now well established rural enterprise at Fforest Farm which provides employment for 22 staff in total. Whilst the development is of a considerable mass and form the site is positioned such that the development, subject to additional screening through a proposed hedgebank and planting, will have no adverse impact on the special qualities of the National Park.

Subject to improvements to the existing site access and the imposition of additional conditions relating to matters including surface water drainage, landscaping and completion of the buildings the scheme is considered to be, on balance, acceptable and having regard to Planning Policy Wales (Edition 6, February 2014), Technical Advice Note 6 – Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (TAN 6, July 2010) and policies 1, 7, 8, 9, 15, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 52 and 53 of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan (Adopted 2010) and is recommended for approval.

Consultee Response

Newport Town Council: No objection

Dwr Cymru Welsh Water: No Response Received

Dyfed Archaeological Trust: No Response Received

Tree and Landscape Officer: No Response Received

Natural Resources Wales: No objection

PCC - Head of Public Protection: No adverse comments

PCC - Transportation & Environment: No objection

PCNPA - Park Direction: No Response Received

Access Officer: No objection

Welsh Government Trunk Road Agency: Following extended discussion and receipt of further information from the applicant and their transport consultant, the Welsh Government (Transport) considers the retrospective proposal as not material in terms of its vehicular impacts on that which has previously been consented. The previous consent of NP/10/508 was however subject to conditions for works that have not been carried out. The Welsh Government (Transport) approval of the current application therefore hinges on these previously agreed conditions being implemented

Public Response

The application was advertised by display of site notices at the site access on 2 June 2014. In addition the application was advertised as a Major Application and development affecting a public right of way in the local press on 30 May 2014. Letters were sent to neighbouring dwellings in the area. To date 1 No. letter of objection has been received. A copy of the letter is available to view on the application file, however, it raises the following concerns (in summary).

- Concern about safety of users of the track.
- Affecting a local letting business through safety issue
- Lack of suitable drainage for the gallops, track and yard generally resulting in blockages.

Policies considered

Please note that these policies can be viewed on the Policies page Pembrokehire Coast National Park website - <http://www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk/default.asp?PID=549>

LDP Policy 01 - National Park Purposes and Duty

LDP Policy 07 - Countryside

LDP Policy 08 - Special Qualities

LDP Policy 09 - Light Pollution

LDP Policy 15 - Conservation of the Pembrokehire Coast National Park

LDP Policy 29 - Sustainable Design

LDP Policy 30 - Amenity

LDP Policy 31 - Minimising Waste

LDP Policy 32 - Surface Water Drainage

LDP Policy 34 - Flooding and Coastal Inundation

LDP Policy 52 - Sustainable Transport

LDP Policy 53 - Impacts on traffic

PPW6 Chapter 04 - Planning for Sustainability

PPW6 Chapter 08 - Transport

SPG05 - Sustainable Design

SPG06 - Landscape

SPG12 - Coal Works - Instability
SPG20 - Siting and Design of New Farm Buildings
SPG21 - Accessibility
TAN 06 - Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities
TAN 12 - Design

Officer's Appraisal

Background

The supporting information included as part of the application states that the applicant, Rebecca Curtis, has operated a racehorse training business from Fforest Farm since 2008. Part of the land is used for the training business whilst there are additional buildings at the farm utilised for agricultural purposes on the opposite side of an access track which runs through the site. A planning application is being considered alongside this submission proposing the erection of new agricultural buildings and appears elsewhere on this agenda (NP/14/0224)

In July 2010 an application for planning permission was received by this Authority proposing the erection of a new stables and horsewalker to serve the enterprise (NP/10/289). This application which would result in accommodation for up to 28 horses was refused by the Authority for reasons including lack of information to fully consider the application, the stables being considered detrimental to the special qualities of the National Park and because it would cause highway safety issues on the Trunk road.

A revised application was received in November 2010 (NP/10/508) proposing the same development albeit with additional information explaining the nature of the business, information that visibility splays will be improved and during the processing of the application the height of the stable building proposed was reduced from 5.0m to 4.4m. Officers recommended refusal of the scheme in relation to the harm of the building upon the character and appearance of the National Park.

Members of the Authority at that time considered the application acceptable and approved the scheme contrary to the officer's recommendation. Members provided the following reasons for granting permission:

- The economic benefit that the stables would bring to the local economy (particularly jobs)
- The reduced height, alterations to the proposed materials (ie wood and green coloured cladding) and proposed landscaping would minimise its impact in the landscape; and
- The previous highway concerns had now been addressed to the Welsh Assembly Government's satisfaction

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In February 2013 the Authority received correspondence from the applicant's agent asking that conditions attached to the planning permission granted be discharged relating to landscaping, site levels, surface water drainage, manure disposal and external lighting. On inspection of the site it became apparent to officers that the building had been sited in a new and revised location and this could not be covered by the planning permission granted. In addition to this officers became aware that an additional building had been erected to the front (South) of the approved building without the benefit of planning permission.

Discussions took place at this time and a revised application sought. An application was submitted in August 2013 proposing retention of the stable block, horse walker and erection of an additional stable block (NP/13/0367). When processing the application officers noted a lack of information and the Trunk Road Agency of Welsh Government initially objected to the scheme on the basis that (a) the works to improve the access had not been implemented on site and (b) intensification of use of site. A further Transport Statement was sought from the applicant and with delays in its submission the scheme was withdrawn in March 2014 pending receipt of the Transport Statement.

The revised scheme which includes a Transport Statement seeks to address the concerns raised by the Welsh Government (Transport) as well as those concerns raised about a lack of detail in the initial submission.

History

NP/14/0244 – Fforest Farm, Newport – Cattle accommodation building, dairy building and associated concrete hardstanding – Pending determination

NP/13/0367 - Fforest Farm, Newport – Resiting of stable block and associated access (as approved under NP/10/508), erection of horse walker and new access track and erection of new stable block (all retrospective) – Withdrawn – 18 March 2014

NP/12/0561 - Fforest Farm, Newport - Creation of a new trainers dwelling including business rooms ancillary to the racing stables – Refused – 16 January 2013

NP/10/508 - Fforest Farm, Newport - Proposed new stables and horse walker for existing racing stables (resubmission of NP/10/289) – Approved – 18 January 2011

NP/10/289 - Fforest Farm, Newport - New stables & horse-walker for existing racing stables – Refused – 18 August 2010

NP/09/348 - Fforest Farm, Newport - Change of use to mixed agriculture/equestrian, 7 wooden stables, training gallop (retrospective) – Approved – 1 October 2009

NP/09/023 - Part field OS8922 Fforest Farm, Newport - Continued use of field OS8922 for further 5 years as site for 3 caravans – Refused – 18 March 2009

NP/08/172 – Fforest Farm, Newport – Sand School – Approved – 17 June 2008

NP/03/599 - Part field OS8922 Fforest Farm, Newport - Continued use of field OS 8922 for further 5 years as site for 3 caravans – Approved – 14 January 2004

NP/99/017 - Part field OS8922 Fforest Farm, Newport - Continued use of Part field OS 8922 for further 5 years as a site for 3 caravans – Approved – 25 February 1999

NP/95/142 - Fforest Farm, Newport - Agricultural building for cattle and store – Approved – 31 May 1995

NP/93/552 – Fforest Farm, Newport - Cont use of 3 caravans – Approved – 18 January 1994

Constraints

- Biodiversity Issue
- Historic Landscape
- Rights of Way Inland – within 50m
- ROW Coast Path – within 10m
- Recreation Character Areas

Current Proposal

The application proposes the retention of 2 existing stable buildings, existing track and the retention of a horse walker.

The northern building within the site measures 30.48m x 24.40m with an eaves height of 3.4m and ridge height of 4.9m. The building provides 28 stable boxes together with ancillary storage.

The southern building which is positioned approximately 6m from the northern building measures 18.28m x 24.40m and also with an eaves height of 3.4m and ridge height of 4.9m. The building provides 20 stable boxes.

In total the scheme therefore results in accommodation for 48 horses in addition to an existing building (outside of the application site) which provides accommodation for 11 horses which was granted planning permission in 2009 (NP/09/348). The total level of accommodation provided at Fforest Farm is 59 stables.

The design of both the buildings includes a double gable and valley gutter and the buildings are finished in dark green fibre cement sheeting to the roof and concrete panels to the lower sections of the structures. As existing the

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buildings are substantially completed although plans show that the upper sides of the buildings are to be completed in stained timber boarding.

A horse walker is positioned to the west of the smaller building and measures 16.45m in diameter and up to a height of 3.6m finished in a profile sheet roof. Plans show this is to be finished in timber panel boarding to a height of 1.5m.

An access has been provided adjacent to the buildings leading in a southerly direction towards the surrounding fields and site access. The track slopes from south to north down to the site and measures approximately 190m in length x 3.8m in width and is finished in concrete and crushed stone.

The scheme includes details of low lying manure storage (1.2m high) to the west of the buildings provided in a block structure to be rendered.

The application was supported with the following information:

- Design & Access Statement
- Transport Statement

Key Issues

The application raises the following planning matters:-

- Policy and Principle of Development
- Visual Amenity and Special Qualities of the National Park
- Highway Safety, Access and Parking
- Neighbouring Amenity and Privacy
- Water and Drainage

Policy and Principle of Development

The site has been subject to the planning history set out above and the principle of development, being a rural enterprise in the open countryside, has been accepted by the Authority. Since approval of a new stable and horse walker in 2010 the site has expanded to include an additional building and new track.

Whilst the principle of development is acceptable the key considerations are whether the buildings are acceptable having regard to the special qualities of the National Park, whether the intensified nature of the use as a result of the additional accommodation for horses is acceptable in the open countryside in this location and whether there would be any adverse impact upon highway safety, neighbouring amenity and the water drainage network.

Visual Amenity and Special Qualities of the National Park

Policy 8 of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan (LDP) is a strategic policy which refers to the special qualities of the National Park and lists priorities to ensure that these special qualities will be protected

and enhanced. Policy 15 of the LDP seeks the conservation of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park with criteria 'a' and 'b' resisting development that would cause significant visual intrusion and/or, that would be insensitively and unsympathetically sited within the landscape. Criterion 'c' resists development that would introduce or intensify a use which is incompatible with its location. Criteria 'd' and 'e' resists development that would fail to harmonise with, or enhance the landform and landscape character of the National Park, and/or fail to incorporate important traditional features.

Policy 29 of the LDP requires all development proposals to be well designed in terms of place and local distinctiveness (criterion 'a'). Policy 30 of the LDP seeks to avoid development that is of an incompatible scale with its surroundings (criterion 'b') or is visually intrusive (criterion 'd').

The site accommodates two large stable buildings which are positioned to the south east of the existing farmhouse. These buildings are significant structures and serve the needs of the race horse training enterprise. Apart from the side elevations of the buildings, where the roof does not run flush to the existing side walls, these are of a design and form similar to the single building approved as part of NP/10/508. In terms of their design these buildings, although being of a bulky proportion, are consistent with the design of other rural buildings throughout Pembrokeshire.

The buildings are sited on ground which is lower than the access track which leads from the highway towards Fforest Farm and as a result the only visible parts at present are the upper proportions of the buildings as well as the upper proportion of the horse walker. Views from the coast path to the north and from land to the east and west are restricted by existing vegetation, the topography of the land and the presence of existing buildings.

Whilst being bulky structures their dark green tone and separation between the buildings helps break down their visual impact when viewed from the south. Notwithstanding this the buildings do remain prominent additions in the landscape at present. In order to attempt to address this concern in line with officer's comments the applicant has put forward plans showing the planting of a new hedgebank along the south facing boundary of the site. Subject to the imposition of a planning condition requiring the provision of this hedgebank and supplementary native tree planting to mitigate views from the south of the site it is considered that the buildings are acceptable having regard to wider visual amenity and as a result will not harm the special qualities of the National Park.

The horse walker although now sited in a more open position to the west of the buildings, as opposed to its approved position to the north, is within the confines of the buildings and yard and does not look out of keeping with the form of the stable yard. In a similar fashion to the existing buildings its roof is visible on entry to the south of the site and the proposed hedgebank and planting is required to restrict this view in the interests of visual amenity.

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Lighting to the buildings is proposed in the form of down lit floodlights which are positioned on the end elevations of each building. The applicant has advised that these are 3000 lumen per light. In order to be satisfied with this approach and to prevent light spill to any surrounding areas it is considered reasonable that the authority imposes a condition to require a scheme of lighting to be agreed. In addition to the siting and luminance level details already provided such a scheme shall include the operating hours of the proposed lighting and the product specification. Subject to this light pollution from the development will be prevented in line with the aims of policy 9.

Works proposed to the access into the site in relation to the re-alignment of a visibility splay and existing hedgerow as a result of transport improvements have previously been accepted by this Authority and subject to a method statement setting out the works this is acceptable in the interests of visual amenity.

In summary of the development it is concluded that the scheme, subject to detailed conditions, is in accordance with the aims of policies 8, 9, 15, 29 and 30.

Highway Safety, Access and Parking

Policies 52 and 53 of the Local Development Plan refer to sustainable transport and the traffic impacts of proposed development requiring that new development has no adverse impact upon traffic safety. The application has been supported by a Transport Assessment which looks in detail at the existing use of the stable enterprise, the likely traffic generation and access provisions.

The Transport Statement notes that the applicant agreed to provide access improvements as part of the former planning permission (NP/10/508), however, these works have not yet been delivered on site. The report states that the former development represented a rationalisation of existing operations at the farm and did not generate additional traffic.

The business traffic associated with the stables approved in 2011 permitted the stabling of 42 horses (15 existing and 27 new) at the site and this sets the baseline to consider against the current application. The additional stabling block which accommodates 19 horses takes the total for the site to 61 stables. In terms of traffic generation of the additional 19 horse stable building¹ it is noted in the Transport Statement that;

- The additional stabling generates 2 new jobs but the new employees share nearby accommodation that is rented by the business for existing stable staff. The staff travel together in the same vehicles so there is no additional traffic generated by the extra 2 employees.

¹ the building accommodates 20 stables, however, was being used by 19 horses by the applicants at the time of the report

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- Horse owners visit infrequently. Most are based in Ireland or the South East of England and typically visit once a year.
- Increasing the number of horses stabled from 42 to 61² doesn't increase the number of owners by the same proportion. The expansion in stabling is largely to accommodate demand from owners for more of their horses to be trained by Miss Curtis.
- There is no increase in the number of vehicles associated with deliveries and the welfare of the horse. Deliveries of feed etc. simply arrive in larger loads.
- The additional 19 horses do not lead to a material change in the number of race meetings attended, just more horses run at each meeting. Travel to and from race meetings occurs well outside of peak time typically leaving Fforest Farm at around 6am and arriving back at around 10pm.

Discussions have taken place between Welsh Government (Transport) and the Transport agents and it has been agreed that the delivery of the improvements to the access including the extent of visibility and resurfacing will result in an acceptable scheme. The Welsh Government has formally advised through consultation that this retrospective proposal as not being material in terms of its vehicular impacts on that which has previously been consented. However they explain that their support is based on the transport improvement works being carried out within a timescale of no greater than 6 months.

Officers have considered the Transport Report and response from Welsh Government (Transport) and concluded that subject to completion of the improvements to the access that the scheme will have no adverse impact upon highway safety and complies with the aims of policies 52 and 53.

Neighbouring Amenity and Privacy

Policies 29 and 30 of the Local Development Plan seek to protect community cohesion and health and to avoid incompatible development that would lead to a significant adverse impact upon amenity. The supporting text at paragraph 4.136 explains that the policy aims *"to protect the amenity enjoyed in people in their residences, workspaces and recreational areas. Amenity is defined as those elements in the appearance and layout of town and countryside which makes for pleasant life rather than mere existence. Anything ugly, dirty, noisy, crowded, intrusive or uncomfortable is likely to adversely affect amenity"*.

The site lies in a remote location in the open countryside and there are no immediate neighbours to the site of the buildings proposed for retention. Concerns have been raised by the owner of Aberfforest (to the north of the site) relating to matters of safety for users of the track, a drop in bookings of their holiday cottages and a lack of drainage for the site resulting in blockages downstream. In terms of the concerns relating to safety the response advises

² The total level of accommodation as proposed, is 59 and not 61 referred to in the Transport Statement

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that there have been many safety incidents where horses meet traffic and there is a clear danger. The response advises that the new access track mentioned should be concreted and used for the horses and that horses should be prohibited from using the old track, except to cross over onto the gallops.

The plans submitted and Design and Access Statement (para5.5) specify that the horses are only to be walked along the track towards the gallops. The track is a clear part of the business operation and it should therefore be utilised for walking horses safely to the surrounding fields as opposed to making use of the road. It would be reasonable in the interests of the development to require this practice to take place on site via a planning condition. Such a condition could require the submission of a management scheme for the horse racing enterprise which shall include full details of the extent of onsite activities to take place and routes for horses.

Whilst the business enterprise has increased as a result of the new building and access there is not considered to be harm to the amenity of neighbours such that would justify refusal in this instance. The scheme complies with the aims of policies 29 and 30.

Water and Drainage

Policy 32 of the Local Development Plan requires development to incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) for the disposal of water on site and through consultation Natural Resources Wales (NRW) have advised that in order to fulfil the requirements of Technical Advice Note 15, surface water should be disposed of in this way in order to attenuate flows and prevent an increased run off.

The submission explains that surface water would run off the site as existing, however, the applicant has agreed that SUDS can be provided to comply with the request of NRW. Subject to implementation of this through a suitable planning condition the scheme will comply with the requirements of policy 32.

Conclusion

Whilst it is unfortunate that this proposal is retrospective the development proposed for retention offers the opportunity to support an existing and now well established rural enterprise at Fforest Farm. The buildings are of a considerable mass and form, however, their siting and design subject to additional landscaping, will have no impact the special qualities of the National Park.

Subject to improvements to the existing site access and the imposition of additional conditions relating to matters including surface water drainage, landscaping, management plan and completion of the buildings the scheme is considered to be, on balance, acceptable and having regard to Planning Policy Wales (Edition 6, February 2014), Technical Advice Note 6 – Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (TAN 6, July 2010) and policies 1, 7, 8, 9,

15, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 52 and 53 of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan (Adopted 2010) and is recommended for approval.

Recommendation

The application be approved subject to conditions to require the following:

- Finishing of buildings in accordance with plans (within 4 months).
- The existing hedge to be repositioned 1 metre behind the visibility splay following receipt of method statement (within 4 months).
- Surfacing of existing access in either concrete or bituminous macadam for first 25m from edge of carriageway (within 4 months).
- Access and visibility improvements retained to serve business.
- Surface Water Drainage Scheme (within 4 months).
- Lighting Scheme including details of operating hours and specification (within 4 months).
- Provision of detailed landscaping scheme and hedgebank to be constructed and planted (within 4 months) and thereafter retained.
- Business Management Plan to include full details of the horse racing enterprise including matters such as full extent of onsite activities to take place and routes for horses. (within 4 months).

Item c)



Fforest Farm House

Track

Drain

Track

69.1n

64.2n

NP 14 2 29

81.7n

Cwm Fforest

Cwm Fforest

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Ian Pick Associates



CLIENT

Rebecca Curtis
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JOB TITLE

Racehorse Training Yard

SCALE

1:2500

Rev

-

DWG. TITLE

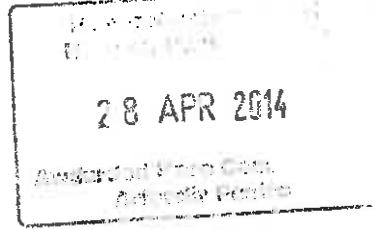
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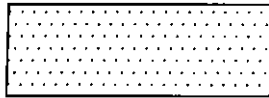
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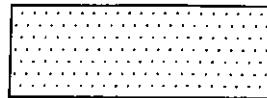
April 14



NP 14 2 29



South Elevation



North Elevation




Rendered Finish

East Elevation



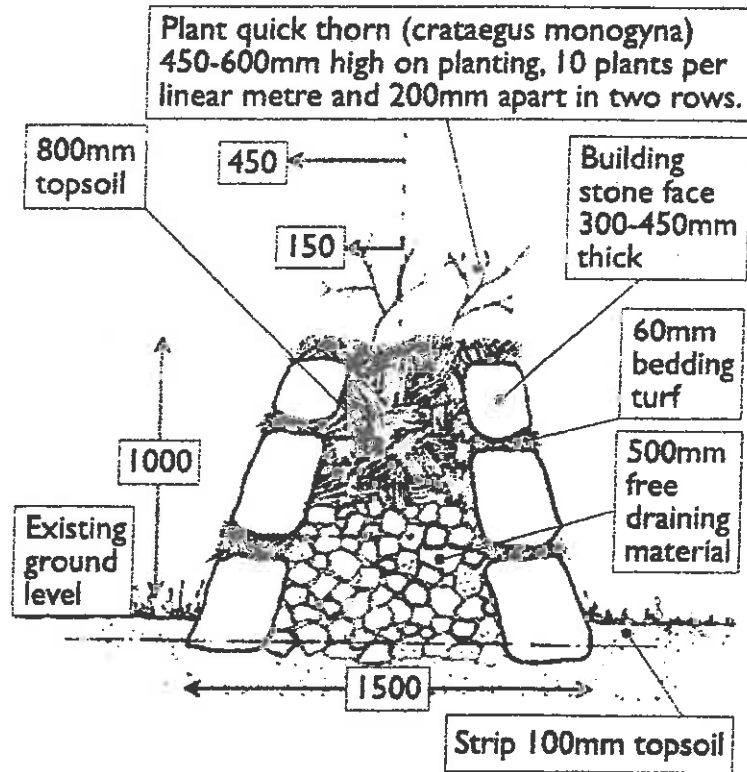
West Elevation (open)

<p>Ian Pick BSc (Hons) MRICS Ilyn House Street Field Yorkshire 4RL Fax (01262) 421807 07702814950</p> 	<p>CLIENT Rebecca Curtis Fforest Farm Newport Pembrokeshire SA62 0UG</p>	<p>JOB TITLE Racehorse Training Yard</p>	<p>SCALE 1:100</p>	<p>Rev -</p>
		<p>DWG. TITLE Manure Store Elevations</p>	<p>DWG. NUMBER IP/RC/03</p>	<p>DATE April 14</p>

**Retention of 2 stable buildings & existing track and siting of horse walker –
Fforest Farm, Newport**

PROPOSED HEDGEBANK SPECIFICATION

Hedgebank to be constructed and planting in the planting season 2014 / 2015 – November – March.



28 APR 2014

NP 14 2 29

This drawing is to be read in conjunction with the schedule of works



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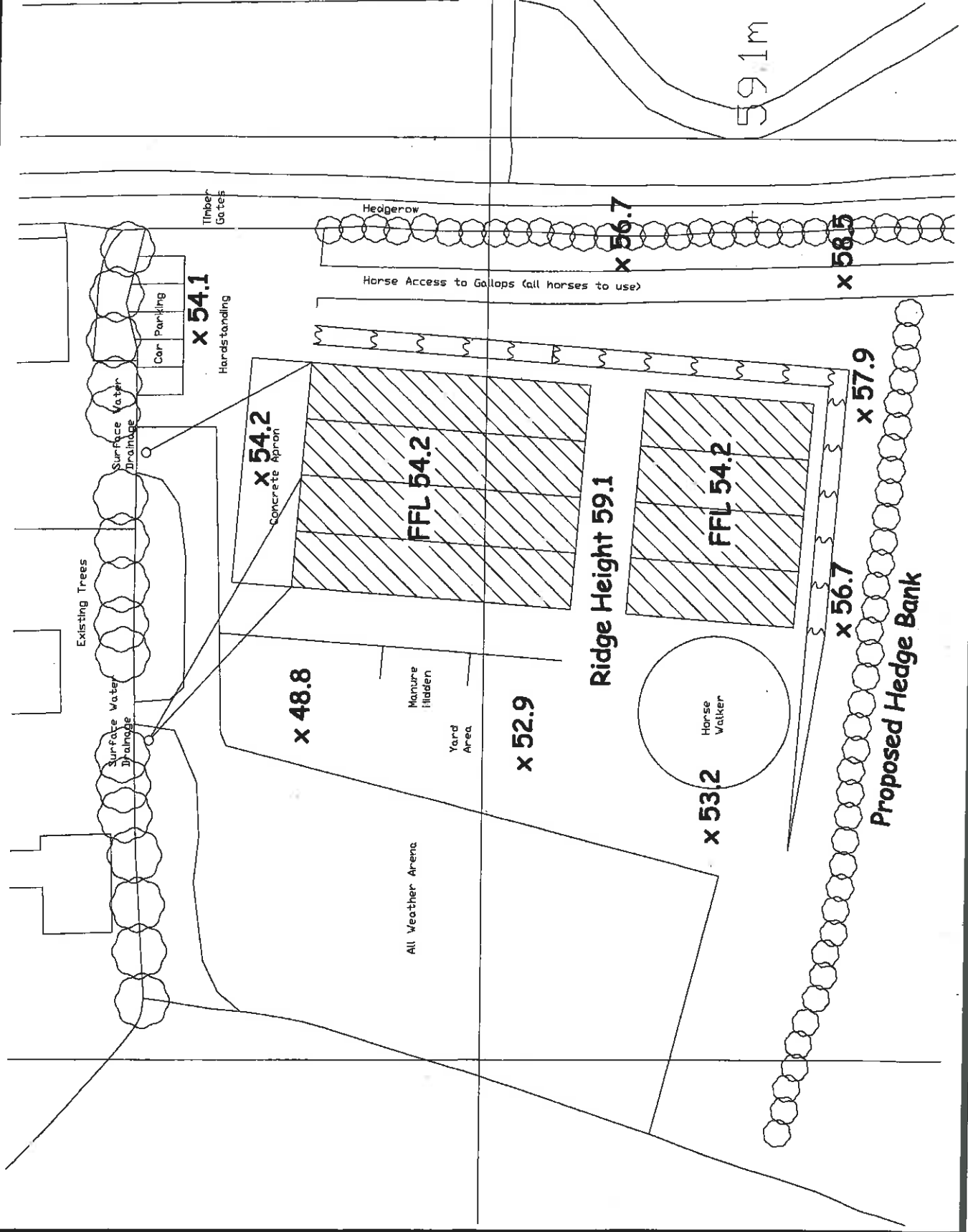
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 Racehorse Training Yard
 NP 14 2 29

DWG. TITLE
 Site Layout Plan

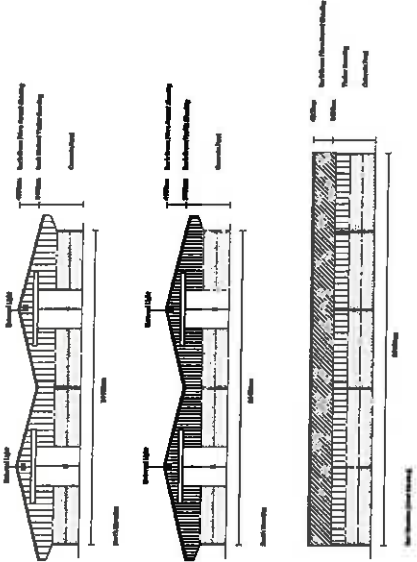
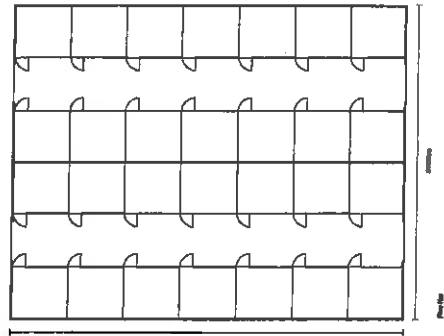
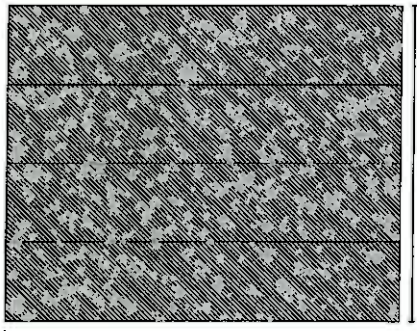
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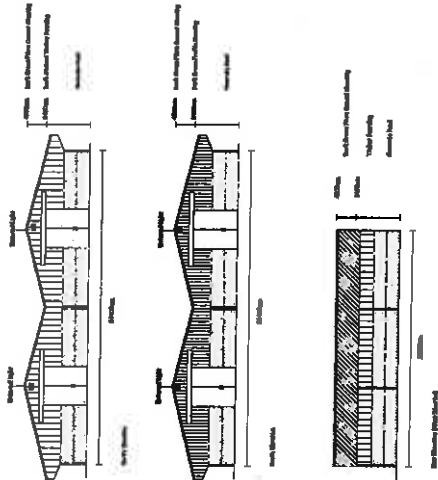
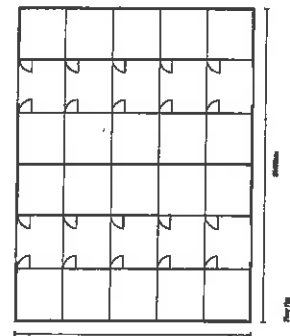
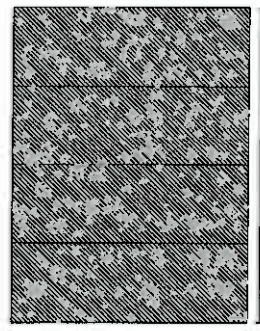
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IPR/C/22C	May 14	-



NORTHERN BUILDING



SOUTHERN BUILDING



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JOB TITLE
Northern & Southern Building
Elevations & Floor Plans

DWG. TITLE
Elevation & Floor Plans

NP 14 2 29

SCALE
1:200

DRN
Ian Pick

DATE
1-1-11

ALTERATION
-

DWG. NUMBER
IP/RB004

DATE
JUNE 13

REV
-

(m.c.)

Item c)



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NP 14 2 2 S

CLIENT
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D'ruce
Newport
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JOB TITLE
Proposed Horse Welfare

23 JUN 2014

DWG. TITLE
Elevations

SCALE	DRN
1=100	Man Pick
DATE	ALTERATION
REV	

DWG. NUMBER	DATE	REV
IP/RB/03	JUNE 13	-

