

NEW ACCESS JUSTIFICATION

AT

UPPER CULHAM FARM, CULHAM LANE, HENLEY, RG10 8NR.

This further statement has been requested to expand upon the justification for the new access to Upper Culham Farm from the A4130.

Firstly, there seems to be some misunderstanding as to the proposed use. It is a private polo facility for a new High Goal team, and it will be operating for 12 months of the year and not 4 months as has been mentioned by Highways.

It is important to understand the operation of a High Goal team with busy periods during the summer season with the major tournaments and the downtime especially during the winter.

Below I have broken down the busy and down time periods to illustrate what would be happening on site at any one time.

January to end of February – general maintenance of the site, bedding and hay being delivered for the horses coming in at the start of March. Some horses being wintered and horses on box rest.

March – May – Horses come in at the beginning of March and are exercised to get fit for the start of practice chukkas in mid-April. Young horses will come in for a few months' work and then turned out.

May – August – the polo season with the four main high goal tournaments and other tournaments played at Guards Polo Club. This is the core season and busiest time of the year. Outside teams will come to the farm to play practices.

September – December – Horses start to play less during September, and many are turned out for their winter rest. Young horses likely to come back into work. Horses that have been injured during the season are likely to be on box rest and then rehabilitation work. General maintenance of the property is undertaken.

March to September Trip Figures:

September to February Trip Figures:

	Daily	Monthly	Daily	Monthly
Grooms	14		4	
Players	12		2	
Vets	1			3
Farriers	1			1
Office Staff	2		2	
Feed Delivery		2		1
Hay Delivery		2		1
Bedding Delivery		2		1
Stable Items Delivery		4		1
Diesel Delivery		2		1
Mechanic for Team		4		1
Horseboxes		20		4
Visitor Horseboxes		12		0
TOTAL:	30	48	8	14

Therefore, between the summer core period and the winter period, there is a 70% reduction of traffic for both the weekly and monthly traffic generation. This is due to the difference between the summer core period with the horses in work and playing tournaments and the winter period which is the horses rest period, rehabilitation and young horses working.

While Culham Lane has served the existing equestrian activity on site, this was for a dressage yard which had only around 20 horses and therefore resulted in much fewer traffic movements. Although, I understand from the previous owners it was still difficult to get a horsebox down the lane.

Culham Lane has had a historical issue of flooding and construction traffic to the neighbour sites at Templecombe have caused problems with traffic passing each other.

During the polo season, horses will be moved in HGV vehicles ranging from 18-ton rigid horseboxes to 26-ton articulated vehicles. These driving down Culham Lane will have an affect

oncoming traffic. Also, the bedding and hay deliveries will normally be delivered on articulated trucks because of the volume required for 150 horses.

As shown on the trip generation, the larger deliveries are being kept to a monthly delivery basis to avoid weekly traffic volume, and to facilitate an even smaller impact upon the local road network. However, during the summer season of May to September, there will be horseboxes moving horses on a daily basis.

Then there is the initial construction to be considered with large earth moving vehicles and equipment being brought onto the site for the construction of the polo fields, reservoir and exercise track. These vehicles will be delivered on large rear steering HGV articulated trucks and they will physically not be able to enter via the existing entrance on Culham Lane, as major alterations to the existing access would be required.

The proposed new access was designed to alleviate the traffic issue on Culham Lane from construction traffic and horseboxes. In addition to making the junction with the A4130 safer for the community.

The new proposed access is located in the optimal position to achieve the required visibility based on two ATC surveys. The PIA data has been obtained from the Department for Transport's Mapping Application for Visualising Road Injury Casualties (MAVRIC) for the latest five-year period between 2020 – 2024. The data demonstrates there is no accident history on the local road network within the vicinity of the proposed site access. Therefore, there are no existing highway safety issues which would be exacerbated by the proposals.

The new access will be constructed of a bell mouth arrangement which will be 8m in width and a distance of 20m from the highway to entrance gates to ensure that all vehicles are off the highway when turning in.

Internally, the track was increased to 6m in width as requested by Highways and now the request of a reduction to 5m in width with passing places has been made. This has been amended as shown on the Site Layout Plan. Additionally, the junction area and track to the pavilion has been removed. Therefore, the new access only serves the equestrian buildings with one single track.

In conclusion the new proposed access is the most logical and sensible option for the construction stage and the proposed use of the site going forward. It will take all traffic to the site away from Culham Lane and increase road safety on the lane.

The very nature of equestrian sport means that horse boxes are large vehicles and these need space to turn and navigate roads in safety not only for other road users but for the horses being transported.