

OCLE PYCHARD GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk

The Old School House
Burley Gate
HEREFORD
Herefordshire
HR1 3QR

26th January 2004

Dear Sirs,

**Planning Application DCNC2003/3755/F
Tack Farm, Ullingswick**

The Ocle Pychard Group Parish Council Meeting of the 20th of January, combined with that of Much Cowarne Group, was the best attended for several years and was addressed by a number of residents of Ullingswick. All were against the above application. Quite apart from those Villagers who spoke in person, Councillors received additional letters, telephone calls and personal representations along the same lines. It would be fair to say that the majority of the people of Ullingswick are against the planned upgrade of the access track to a stone surface.

The letters received to date are enclosed for your information. Some have already been sent to you directly, but I would ask you to consider the comments made in them.

Dealing specifically with the track itself, the main objections were as follows:

- a) The proposed upgrade is over and above the standard required and there is a query as to how the expense can be justified. A good part of the 'grass/mud track' is a bridle path, first and foremost, and should be retained for this purpose. If access from the main farm buildings to the surrounding fields is required, then it is felt that a tractor or similar vehicle would do the job quite adequately. The Oxford English Dictionary defines a bridle path as a 'rough path or road, fit only for riders or walkers, not vehicles'.

The applicant states that the Rights-of-Way Officer wishes to see the path upgraded, but Mr Thompson has said in a letter that the condition of this path is no worse than others in the area at this time of the year. It is believed that the applicant is making selective use of parts of that letter. If ever the path does happen to be in poor condition, it is because of excessive use by vehicles. If used for its original purpose it would be fine.

- b) It is noted that jumps have been installed alongside the bridle path, on part of Tack Farm, and that horses negotiating them would land on the path itself. Access to the path by walkers should be free and uninterrupted.
- c) Despite the statement by the applicant, residents regard the bridle path as being in good condition. They believe that grass is a perfectly acceptable surface and do not believe that an upgrade is necessary.
- d) An upgraded path would lead to worse drainage problems as a stone surface would impede the run-off of surface water. It is understood that a water tank on Tack Farm, used for feeding the horses, often overflows and is itself a cause of muddy conditions along the bridle path.

There are other factors which, although not directly concerned with the path itself, should be considered when dealing with the application.

- e) "Access to the show field needs to be improved in order for Tack Farm to be taken seriously as a show venue". This would suggest that, rather than making 'changes crucial to the operation of the Farm', the upgraded path is intended primarily as an entry point for 'trade stands, caterers and ambulances'. The farm already has a main entrance that can be used by such vehicles.

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- f) One of the main objections by residents concerns the increase in traffic that could result from improved access following the upgrade of the Bridle Path. The condition of the roads in Ullingswick has been the subject of concern for some years, and it is felt that they are not designed for use by a large number of cars, heavy vehicles and horseboxes. The main roads through the village are certainly not wide enough for two-way traffic of this kind. Parking facilities at Tack Farm are such that vehicles are often left parked at the side of the road after drivers have failed to find a space off-road.
- g) Tack Farm has developed far beyond what was expected by Villagers when planning permission was first granted. Residents report unacceptable pollution caused by noise, floodlights and excessive traffic on days when functions are being held. It is believed that, in line with the first sentence of paragraph (e), the intention is to transform Tack Farm into a National or International eventing showground. Complainants object to any further developments, such as the upgraded path, that will assist in this transformation.

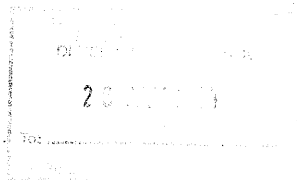
On behalf of the clear majority of the people of Ullingswick, the Parish Council seriously objects to this proposal and would ask for it to be refused.

Yours sincerely,

M. R. Field

M R Field

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Response by Much Cowarne Group Parish Council to application DCNC2003/3755/F

The Much Cowarne Group Parish Council has consulted the parishioners who live near Tack Farm and there is unanimous opposition to the conversion of 485m of bridleway (MJ1) to a road capable of carrying heavy motor vehicles. Such a development would enable and encourage use of the bridleway for motor vehicles, which would be detrimental to its utility for walkers and riders and would increase the nuisance and possibly increase the risks of accidents. It would also destroy the natural surface, which is currently highly suitable for access by walkers and riders and has the benefit of wild flowers. Furthermore the Parish Council considers that the conditions applied to Tack Farm in its operation as a stables, livery yard and saddlery are currently being contravened in several respects. Until the alleged contravention has been resolved it is believed that Hereford Council would be acting irresponsibly were it to consider this latest application.

Additional points regarding the application

Point 10 "access"

Application claims "no alteration"

Converting the bridleway to a road will in effect alter the access to the village lane near to Tidmore Cottage. The resulting road will undoubtedly raise the level of traffic entering and or exiting at this road access. The highways department should be consulted and the ownership and rights concerning the existing road access by Tidmore Cottage requires research before consent is given.

Point 11 "Public Right of Way"

Application claims "no alteration"

This claim is incorrect – as you can see from above the road building will severely affect the bridleway.

Point 12 "waste"

Application claims all soil and clay waste will be disposed of. A gross calculation leads to an estimate of 900 cubic meters (approximately 80 lorry loads of waste). Details are needed regarding the disposal of this waste.

Supporting Letter

In Mrs Kawczynski's supporting letter she refers to complaints from the public regarding the condition of the bridleway. The local residents confirm that there were complaints made last winter and the poor condition of the bridleway was entirely due to Tack Farm contractors erecting paddock fencing along the whole length of the bridleway. Insufficient care had been taken of the bridleway. It is evident that motor vehicle access to the bridleway has been limited this winter and the condition is good for the time of year. In Mrs Kawczynski's supporting letter she speaks of the condition of the tracks last winter being so bad that her Land Rover almost tipped over on several occasions. This is very hard to believe as the gradients on the tracks are not particularly steep.

Please provide this Parish Council with copies of the supporting documents submitted by Tack Farm owners.

Viz:

Letters of support

Letter from DEFRA

Letter from Alison Dawes

Letter from the Rights of Way Officer

End of comments. E P Parkes (Clerk), 21.01.2004.

