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Flood Risk Assessment

Existing Riding School – Retrospective Stables
West Pinchbeck, Lincolnshire

1. Introduction

This Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been prepared in support of a full planning application relating to eight retrospective stables at an existing riding school located in West Pinchbeck, Lincolnshire.

The site has operated as a riding school for a number of years. The stables existed prior to the applicant's ownership of the site; works undertaken during the last four years comprise the addition of a roof and general improvements to existing structures. No new stable footprint has been created.

The purpose of this FRA is to assess flood risk at the site and demonstrate that the continued use of the stables is appropriate and safe within planning policy.

2. Site Description

The application site comprises an established riding school including:

- Existing stables
- Paddocks
- Ancillary hardstanding and access tracks

The eight stables subject to this application are single-storey structures used solely for the housing of horses. The site is generally flat, typical of the surrounding fenland area.

There are drainage ditches and watercourses within the wider area, consistent with the local drainage network managed by the Internal Drainage Board.

3. Planning Policy Context

This assessment has been prepared in accordance with:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance: Flood Risk and Coastal Change
- Relevant policies within the South Holland District Council Local Plan
- Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning

These policies seek to ensure development is located and designed to remain safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

4. Flood Risk Classification

According to the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning, the site lies within Flood Zone 3, defined as land with a high probability of flooding (greater than 1 in 100 annual probability of river flooding).

The FRA therefore considers flood risk in detail and sets out appropriate mitigation and management measures.

5. Sources of Flood Risk

5.1 Fluvial Flooding

The principal flood risk to the site is from fluvial flooding, associated with overtopping of local drainage channels and watercourses during extreme rainfall events.

There is no recorded history of floodwater entering the existing stables. The site has experienced standing water within paddock areas, which is typical of low-lying fenland and does not constitute flooding of buildings.

5.2 Surface Water Flooding

Surface water flooding is possible during intense rainfall events due to the flat topography and local ground conditions. However, the stables are already in situ and no additional impermeable area is proposed.

5.3 Groundwater Flooding

Groundwater levels in the area may be seasonally high. This risk is managed through existing land drainage arrangements and does not present a safety risk to the structures.

5.4 Sewer and Residual Flood Risk

The site is not considered at significant risk from sewer flooding. Residual risks associated with defence failure are low and consistent with other land uses in the surrounding area.

6. Vulnerability Classification and Sequential Test

Riding schools and stables fall within the "Less Vulnerable" classification under the NPPF.

The application relates to existing development and retrospective works rather than the introduction of a new vulnerable use. As such, the continued use of the stables is considered appropriate within Flood Zone 3.

7. Flood Risk Mitigation Measures

Given the retrospective nature of the development, mitigation measures focus on management and resilience rather than structural alteration:

- The stables are single-storey, reducing risk to occupants and animals.
 - No sleeping accommodation is provided within the stables.
 - Feed, bedding, and electrical equipment are stored above ground level where practicable.
 - The works undertaken (roofing and improvements) do not reduce floodplain storage or alter land levels.
 - No additional hardstanding or building footprint has been created.
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8. Safe Access, Egress, and Evacuation

The riding school operates with established management procedures for adverse weather conditions.

- The site operator is registered to receive Environment Agency Flood Warnings.
- In the event of a flood warning, horses can be:
- Moved to higher areas within the site where appropriate, or
- Relocated to alternative stabling facilities already available to the operator that are located outside areas requiring an FRA.
- Staff and visitors are familiar with access routes and flood response procedures.
- No members of the public are required to remain on site during flood events.

These measures ensure the safety of both people and animals during extreme weather events.

9. Impact on Flood Risk Elsewhere

The retrospective stables do not:

- Increase building footprint
- Alter land levels
- Increase surface water runoff

As such, the development does not increase flood risk elsewhere and maintains existing floodplain function.

10. Conclusion

This Flood Risk Assessment has demonstrated that:

- The site lies within Flood Zone 3 but supports an existing, less vulnerable use.
- There is no history of flooding affecting the stable buildings.
- The retrospective works do not increase flood risk on or off site.
- Appropriate management and evacuation procedures are in place.

It is therefore concluded that the continued use of the eight stables at the existing riding school is acceptable in flood risk terms and complies with national and local planning policy.

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