

PLANNING STATEMENT

Extension to Existing Commercial Equestrian Arena

Lee Place, The Stables

Blackgate Lane

Pulborough

West Sussex RH20 1DF

Planning Application Reference: DC/26/0999

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of an application for Full Planning Permission for the extension of an existing commercial equestrian arena at Lee Place, The Stables, Blackgate Lane, Pulborough.

The proposal seeks planning permission to extend the existing sand school from approximately **20 metres x 60 metres** to **30 metres x 60 metres** by extending the arena by 10 metres along its northern side.

The application relates solely to the enlargement of the existing arena. There is **no proposed change of use**, and the site will continue to operate as an established commercial equestrian facility.

2. Site Description and Proposed Development

The application site forms part of an established commercial equestrian facility located within a rural area at Lee Place, Pulborough.

The existing arena measures approximately 20 metres by 60 metres and is surfaced with a sand and fibre riding surface. The proposal will extend the arena to approximately 30 metres by 60 metres to provide an improved working area for the existing equestrian operation.

The development will retain:

- the existing commercial equestrian use;
- the existing access arrangements;
- the existing parking provision;
- the existing drainage arrangements; and
- the existing sand and fibre riding surface.

The proposal does not involve the construction of any buildings and does not alter the established use of the site.

3. Need for the Development

The existing arena has become restrictive for professional schooling and showjump training.

Extending the width of the arena will provide a safer and more practical riding environment for the existing operation, allowing improved manoeuvrability during flatwork and jumping exercises.

The proposal represents an operational improvement to an existing authorised commercial equestrian facility rather than an expansion of the approved planning use.

There will be:

- no increase in horse numbers;
- no increase in staff;
- no increase in customer numbers;
- no increase in vehicle movements; and
- no material intensification of the authorised commercial use.

4. Pre-Application Discussions and Consultation

No formal pre-application advice was sought from Horsham District Council prior to the submission of this application.

Given the modest nature of the proposal, which comprises the extension of an existing authorised equestrian arena without changing its use or increasing operational activity, no formal community consultation or consultation with statutory consultees was undertaken before submission.

5. Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

The site already benefits from planning permission for commercial equestrian use.

This application seeks only permission to enlarge the existing riding arena to improve its functionality. The proposal does not introduce a new planning use and does not materially alter the nature or scale of the existing authorised equestrian operation.

The principle of improving an established rural business is consistent with national planning policy supporting sustainable rural enterprise.

Landscape Impact

The proposed extension is immediately adjacent to the existing arena.

The development represents a modest extension to an existing feature and will continue to be used as part of the established equestrian facilities.

The proposal includes replacement of the section of hedgerow affected by the development with a longer native hedgerow together with additional native tree planting, providing enhanced landscape integration over time.

Highways

The proposal will make use of the existing site access.

No alterations to the highway network are proposed and no additional parking provision is required.

As there is no change to the approved use of the site and no increase in operational activity, the proposal is not expected to generate any material increase in vehicle movements.

Biodiversity

A Biodiversity Net Gain assessment accompanies the application.

The proposal replaces the existing hedgerow affected by the extension with a longer native hedgerow and includes additional native tree planting.

The submitted Biodiversity Metric demonstrates that the development achieves:

- **11.71% Area Habitat Biodiversity Net Gain**
- **125.15% Hedgerow Biodiversity Net Gain**

All biodiversity enhancements are delivered on-site and no off-site biodiversity units or statutory biodiversity credits are required.

Drainage

The arena will continue to comprise a permeable sand and fibre riding surface.

Existing drainage arrangements remain unchanged and the proposal will not increase surface water runoff or flood risk.

6. Planning Policy

The proposal accords with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly those that support sustainable economic growth in rural areas while conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

The proposal supports an existing rural business through the improvement of an established equestrian facility without extending the authorised use or creating unacceptable impacts on the surrounding countryside.

The development is proportionate in scale and demonstrates that:

- the existing commercial use is retained;
- landscape impacts are limited and mitigated through new planting;
- biodiversity will be enhanced through measurable Biodiversity Net Gain;
- there will be no material increase in traffic or parking demand; and
- existing drainage arrangements remain satisfactory.

The proposal is therefore consistent with the objectives of both national planning policy and the development plan for Horsham District.

Horsham District Planning Policy

The proposal accords with the objectives of the Horsham District development plan by:

- supporting an established rural enterprise;
- protecting the character of the countryside;
- avoiding unacceptable impacts upon neighbouring properties;
- making use of existing access and infrastructure;
- protecting highway safety;
- enhancing biodiversity.

The proposal is proportionate to the existing development and remains entirely compatible with the established use of the site

7. Conclusion

This application seeks permission for a modest extension to an existing authorised commercial equestrian arena.

The proposal represents an operational improvement that will provide a safer and more functional riding environment for the existing business while maintaining the established use of the site.

The development does not introduce additional built development, does not intensify the existing commercial operation and will not result in unacceptable impacts upon the character of the countryside, highway safety or neighbouring amenity.

The proposal delivers measurable on-site Biodiversity Net Gain through new native hedgerow planting and additional trees, resulting in an overall environmental enhancement.

For these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the proposal represents sustainable development and planning permission is requested.