Personal Statement –  Mr  and Mrs G & S Drummond

Badley Bridge Barn, Badley, Suffolk, IP6 8RJ

Introduction

This Personal Statement should be read in conjunction with the planning application to erect stables and an equestrian riding arena.

Rationale for the Application

We have lived in Badley Bridge Barn for just over a year and, for the last five years, have owned horses, stabled at local livery yards. We have a site which we would like to bring back into use for horses which is currently unused. The previous owners of the Barn kept their horses on the land specified in this application.

We would prefer to home the horses at the site and bring back a meaningful use for the land. To enable this will require the building of a stable block and accompanying arena.  The proposed development will enhance and preserve the area in which the facility will sit. No commercial activities will be undertaken.

Our family have all been riding and owning horses for nearly 20 years. Gerry is a District Commissioner in the Pony Club. We now own horses at two different livery yards, which is inconvenient for us, but also unsatisfactory for the welfare of the horses, as we cannot keep as close an eye on them as is necessary. In addition, our youngest daughter is a talented and committed young event rider. She is now riding at a level where the frequency of competition and the physical demands on horse and rider are higher.  It is therefore necessary for us to improve the facilities available. A purpose built accommodation block improves dramatically the equine amenity in terms of horse health and general wellbeing.

Stabling and Arena

We would like to erect a block of five stables with integral tack-room and store. We also plan to build an arena. We are keen to develop our horses and our own skills and need a fully equipped area. The arena will be constructed of standard materials and will be landscaped sympathetically, sited in the field which is currently unused. The arena will occupy just over 15% of the field, There will be lighting for the arena which would only be used during the winter months, and only for short periods for exercising horses. The remainder of the field would be set out for paddocks and enclosed with post-and-rail fencing, the particular drainage characteristics of the field would be retained.  If any seeding is required after the development has been completed, we will source the same grass seed as is currently sown.

The area in which the stabling is planned is currently paddock grass and domestic hedging which we propose to grade to the surrounding ground level. Our boundary with the railway line we would populate with deciduous woodland trees to create a wildlife habitat. The stable block would be in keeping with the surrounding buildings.

Access

Access is via the main drive which will give safe entry from the highway (B1113). We will require access for farrier, vet, feed etc

Removal of Waste

Discussions have been held with a local farmer concerning the removal of waste (manure, straw, etc.) to a pre-existing site.

Land Management

I/ a local farmer will be responsible for land management.

Grazing & Resting – The field will be divided into 4 paddocks (using wooden post & rail fencing as well as electric fencing).  This allows the paddocks to be grazed & (more importantly) rested on rotation.   In addition, in winter, paddocks are further divided up to strip graze with electric fences and protect the ground.  Paddocks are regularly cleared of horse droppings to prevent sour grass/bare patches, encouragement of unwanted weeds & reduce the risk of summer worm larvae spreading into the grass.

Chain Harrowing & Rolling - Harrowing will be carried out twice a year, to pull all the dead grass from the healthy grass so that air water and nutrients can get to the soil more efficiently. This is advisable in early spring before strong grass growth gets underway and again in the Autumn.

Rolling in the Spring repairs any damage to the pasture from the horses hooves over the winter. However, during very bad wet spells the horses will be stabled to minimise any damage to the pasture.   We would not harvest our own hay but buy in hay and haylage from local farm to supplement feeding when horses need to be stabled.   We would also regularly reseed the pasture in spring with a horse pasture grass seed mix to repair any damaged areas.

Weeding & Topping - Due to the pond and the river which runs around the field we would not boom spray any weeds, but spot spray individual weeds. Ragwort, docks etc are manually removed before they have a chance to re-seed.  We would also regularly top the pasture throughout the growing season to help reduce unwanted weeds before they grow/re-seed.

Summary

We completely understand and support the need to retain the character of the land surrounding our village.  We also believe that the addition of the facilities set out in the planning application will enhance the area.

Wherever possible, feed and bedding will be bought from local suppliers.  Similar, local arrangements will be made for veterinary services and farriers.

If any aspects of the application are not acceptable we would welcome any guidance that can be offered.

Mr and Mrs G & S Drummond