

## EXPLANATORY NOTE

### **Retrospective: Retention of brick entrance pillars and timber boundary fencing, reinstatement of equestrian/stables building following weather damage, and improvements to original entrance to the site off the B6288 at Merrington Stables, Merrington Road, Spennymoor, DL16 7HD**

---

This application is submitted to the Council on behalf of William and Alexis Laidler (hereafter referred to as “the Applicants”) in relation to works carried out at their Merrington Stables equestrian site without planning consent.

The site (also known as “Laidler Racing Stables”) is located to the east of Vyners Close on the B6288 between Spennymoor and Kirk Merrington approximately 1km to the south of the built-up part of the town. The site is occupied by an established elite harness racing training centre.

The purpose of the application is to secure planning permission retrospectively for works undertaken at the site in order to regularise the development and engineering works carried out. Specifically, retrospective permission is being sought for the following:

- Reinstatement of an equestrian/stables building following weather damage; and
- Improvements to the original site entrance off the B6288 including the installation of brick entrance pillars and timber boundary fencing.

The equestrian/stables building is a steel portal framed structure that has been erected close to the western boundary of the site (nearest to the B6288) at the southern end of the harness racing training track. The building has been positioned on a north-south axis and is a like-for-like replacement of a previous equestrian/stables building that stood on the same footprint but was damaged during Storm Arwen in November 2021. The structure has a length of 13.5m, a depth of 9m and internally it accommodates 6no. stables alongside storage and washing areas.

The works to the site entrance from the B6288 again at the southern end of the training centre have related to what was the original entrance to the stabling/training business up until the time that the existing workers dwelling was developed and the now main entrance to the premises was constructed at the northern end of the site. Over many years prior to the new main entrance being created the southern access from the B6288 operated safely and gave rise to no accidents or highway incidents. However, during the intervening period since becoming a secondary access its condition and appearance deteriorated significantly to the point where it was felt by the Applicants that improvements to its condition were required to improve both highway safety and its appearance.

A kerbed bell-mouth to the access has been installed to give clear definition and delineation to the secondary access point whilst also allowing for improved surface water flows off the public highway to address flooding problems that have adversely affected the southern end of the site for many years. Brick entrance pillars measuring 1.8m in height and featuring 0.3m stone caps have been installed to further define the site access whilst 1.8m high timber fencing has also been installed either side of the entrance to improve security at this end of the training centre site.

Overall, it is felt that the works undertaken have improved the general appearance of this secondary access point to the benefit of the immediate surrounding area. They have also resulted in significant highway safety improvements through the creation of a much improved and clearly defined access point into the site when compared with the previous level of deterioration of the access. The application, whilst retrospective, is fully compliant with relevant national and local planning policy in these respects and it is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.