

# Design & Access Statement

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PART-RETROSPECTIVE PLANNING APPLICATION IN CONNECTION  
WITH GREEN'S LANE EQUESTRIAN LIVERY YARD.

Green's Lane Farm, Greens Lane, Lydiate, L31 4HZ.

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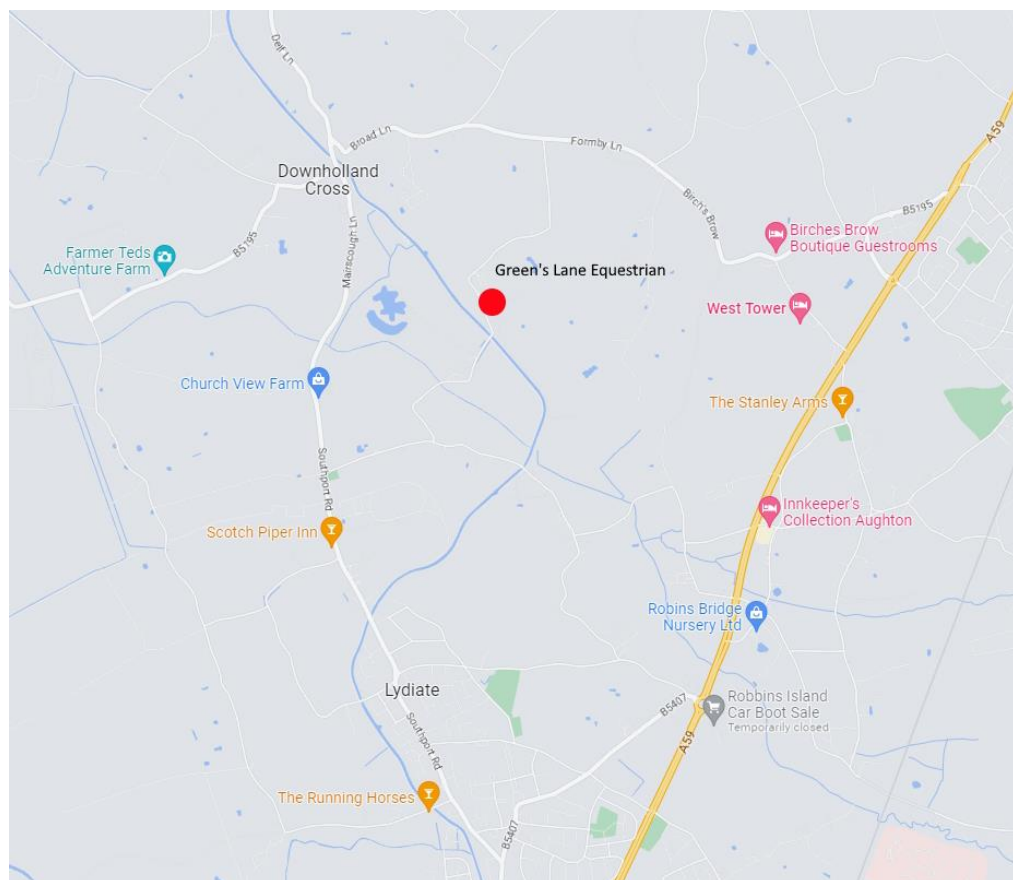
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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document has been prepared in support of the Part-Retrospective Planning Application for the site at Green's Lane Farm, Lydiate.

1.2 The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the existing facilities together with proposals for removal and replacement of buildings and structures on site.



***The site at Green's Lane Farm is located approx. 3km North of Maghull and 5km Southwest of Ormskirk.***

1.3 Green's Lane Farm amounts to approx. 16no. acres and is located to the East of the Leeds Liverpool Canal with direct access off Green's Lane.

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- 1.4 In 2016 planning approval was granted at the site for private equestrian facilities including stables and an outdoor riding arena. In 2018 following construction of the approved facilities the yard expanded through the use of temporary stable buildings and began to operate as a commercial livery yard without the benefit of planning consent.
- 1.5 The equestrian facilities at Green's Lane Farm continued to expand as the livery business grew more successful and now comprises 25no. stables together with ancillary storage, staff/customer welfare and associated equestrian outdoor facilities. The livery business currently supports full time staff and a wider network of equestrian services including farriers, vets and feed/hay suppliers. The yard also supports the local equestrian community many of which have moved their horses to Green's Lane Farm following the closure of similar livery yards in the immediate area most notably a 100no. box livery yard in Formby which is in the process of closing down.
- 1.6 A pre-application was submitted to the LPA in March 2023 ref PRE/2023/0039/MIN to allow planning officers and the site owner an opportunity to agree the best way forward bearing in mind the livery yard is a viable rural business that clearly benefits sport and recreational riding in the local community.
- 1.7 The pre-app response concluded that the development was acceptable in principle and would be in accordance with paragraph 149 of the NPPF. This detailed planning application now seeks to make the existing development lawful.
- 1.8 The latest proposals include various measures to mitigate impact on the landscape including removal of buildings / structures and replacement of poorly constructed buildings, removal of manmade earthworks and proposals for native landscaping.

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1.9 The detailed application includes plans of all buildings as well as supporting surveys and reports. A full list of the application submission drawings and documents can be found below for ref.

- Site Location Plan
- Existing Site Plan and Site Masterplan
- Proposed Site Plan and Site Masterplan
- Plans of Existing Building to be Retained
- Plans of Existing Buildings to be Removed
- Proposed Replacement Barn and Horsewalker Plans
- Ecology Survey and Biodiversity Metric
- Transport Statement
- Drainage Report
- Lighting Assessment
- Business Viability Appraisal

## **2.0 SITE AND AREA APPRAISAL**

2.1 Green's Lane Farm comprises an L-shape piece of land with Green's Lane forming its West and North boundaries and farmland situated directly to the South and East.

2.2 Topography is generally flat and agricultural in nature with mature hedgerow and woodland dividing the landscape. Built development in this area tends to be pockets of two storey residential dwellings and working farms with large agricultural barns.

2.3 A small number of residential dwellings are located along Green's Lane the closest of these properties to the livery yard is Green's Lane Farm and is owned by the applicant. The nearest neighbouring property is around 70m to the North separated from the livery yard by Green's Lane Farm.

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- 2.4 In 2016 the applicant obtained planning approval for an L-shape stable block and riding arena (App. ref 2016/0376/FUL). This development was constructed in accordance with the approved plans on land to the South of Green's Lane Farm.
- 2.5 In 2018 the private stable yard was expanded through the use of temporary stable buildings and began operating as a commercial livery with unlawful development originally occupying a paddock directly West of the existing outdoor arena before being repositioned as per the existing livery yard configuration. The applicant who owns the site but does not operate the livery yard did not realise at the time that permanent use of temporary stables for livery purposes was in breach of planning consent.
- 2.6 Since 2018 the commercial livery business has continued to invest in new stables, improving turn-out, ancillary storage, staff/customer welfare facilities and onsite parking areas to support its growing reputation, the site also now employs 3no. permanent staff.
- 2.7 Following a visit from planning enforcement It was agree that a pre-app would be submitted to agree the best way forward in terms of planning consent for the equestrian business with the applicant keen to work with the LPA to retain as many of the existing livery stables as possible in order to safeguard the business and secure existing employment.
- 2.8 As part of pre-app discussions, it was agreed that certain existing buildings and structures would be removed from site to improve landscape visual impact and limit the spread of development. To further improve visual impact, it is also proposed that an existing hay store, horsewalker and industrial storage container used for secure storage of maintenance equipment be replaced with similar scale but better quality facilities.



*An aerial view of the proposed site edged in Blue with Green's Lane Equestrian Livery Yard left of picture.*

### **3.0 PROPOSALS**

3.1 Proposed changes to the existing livery yard facilities can be summarised as follows.

- Removal from site of double field shelter building.
- Removal from site of single field shelter building.
- Removal from site of kennel building.
- Removal from site of industrial storage container
- Removal from site of hay store and adjacent stable building
- Removal from site of existing isolation stable building

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- Removal from site of arena viewing building and associated raised timber decking.
- Removal from site of two raised bunds situated adjacent to the riding arena / all-weather turn-out area.
- Removal from site of existing horsewalker
- Replacement of existing isolation stables as part of a purpose-built hay/machine/isolation barn
- Provision of modern horsewalker on site of existing
- Reseeding of the existing stoned-up paddock access track.
- Native tree and hedgerow planting to perimeter of existing built development to mitigate visual impact from neighbouring property, public footpath and Green's Lane.

3.2 A topographical survey has been produced showing the extent of the existing built development which includes.

- 25no. stables in total of which
  - 13no. are used for livery (a mix of full livery and schooling livery as set out in the business assessment)
  - 2no. stables are used for isolation purposes
  - 4no. stables are used by the applicant's horses as per extant planning approval (App. ref 2016/0376/FUL)
  - 6no. stables are used by horses owned by the livery yard manager with 3no. of these stables being field shelters.
- 40m x 20m outdoor riding arena, this was approved under the 2016 application for private use.
- 34.5m x 17.5m all-weather turn-out paddock.
- Uncovered horsewalker.
- Ancillary storage buildings / structures for hay, feed, tack and maintenance equipment / tools.
- Stable yard office building containing staff and visitor welfare facilities.
- Stoned-up yards including horsebox and visitor car parks.



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- Post and rail fenced grass paddocks accessed via a stoned-up paddock access track.
- A covered arena viewing area and raised decking.
- A large kennel building.

3.3 A business assessment was produced and submitted as part of the pre-application which illustrates that the livery yard is operating as a viable rural business. The site is well located close to local settlements such as Ormskirk, Southport, Formby, Crosby and Maghull and has over the last four years become an established livery yard by offering facilities for outdoor sport and recreation to the local equine community. The yard is currently in the process of obtaining approved status from the British Horse Society as it strives to become a 5\* equestrian establishment and an application is also pending to the KBHH Yard Excellence Scheme which is accredited by equine vets.

3.4 Viability of the business model is directly tied to the number of stables it can offer to paying customers, a reduction in the number of livery stables on site would therefore have a direct impact on the sustainability of the existing rural business.

3.5 As well as stables the yard needs to include ancillary storage for hay, feed, tack and a tractor / tractor implements used for maintaining the all-weather equestrian surfaces and paddocks. This type of storage is, in our opinion, commensurate with the scale of the stable yard and turn-out areas. Any reduction in ancillary storage would likely increase delivery traffic and may also affect the number of horses that could realistically be cared for on site.

3.6 Staff / customer welfare facilities including toilet and brew-up facilities are an essential requirement for a yard of this size and should be retained.

- 3.7 The all-weather outdoor riding arena is a key component of the livery yard as it allows staff / customers to exercise / ride their horses in a safe environment, this type of facility is a prerequisite for most livery yards.
- 3.8 The all-weather paddock and horsewalker are used to exercise and turn-out horses especially during winter months when grass paddocks can get waterlogged. These facilities are also considered essential for horse welfare based on the number of horses stabled on site.
- 3.9 All of these factors have been considered when identifying built development that could potentially be removed from site without detriment to the equine business model. The buildings / structures to be removed therefore include.
- The two field shelter buildings (occasionally used by the yard managers horses) and associated yard area.
  - a large kennel structure.
  - a covered viewing area and associated raised decking.
  - A stable building adjacent to the existing hay store that is also used by horses owned by the yard manager.
  - It is proposed that the existing hay / machine storage buildings be replaced as they are of poor quality they include an industrial container which is at odds with the rural nature of the site.
  - A replacement storage barn is proposed that would be of similar scale to the storage areas to be removed and will occupy a similar footprint. The replacement barn will house hay, the applicant's tractor, tractor implements used to maintain the yard and surrounding paddocks together with two isolation stables with the existing isolation stable building being removed from site.
  - The existing horsewalker will be replaced with a better-quality model of the same size.
  - Finally, two large raised bunds which were formed during construction of the all-weather equestrian surfaces will be removed from site.

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- 3.10 Removal of these buildings, structures and earthworks will provide a more compact development footprint especially to the North and South of the existing stable yard where development was beginning to creep further into the open landscape. The proposals will also see the removal of poor-quality buildings / structures from site improving visual impact of the stable yard as a whole.
- 3.11 Following removal of built development it is proposed that new landscaping be introduced to mitigate views from neighbouring properties (North), the public footpath (South) and views of the yard from the public highway (West). This landscaping would be in the form of native species tree and hedgerow planting.
- 3.12 The existing paddock access track to the East of the site has been stoned-up to provide safe access for paddock management equipment and horse traffic. It is proposed that this stone track be reseeded as part of the landscaping works.

#### **4.0 ACCESS ISSUES**

- 4.1 Currently vehicular access to the site is via Green's Lane to the West. There are no proposals to alter or replace this existing vehicular access.
- 4.2 There are currently two separate parking areas on site, a visitor car park at the site entrance and a horsebox parking area which is located to the East of the stable yard. Both parking areas are sufficient for the needs of the business at present and are therefore deemed suitable for the volume of traffic associated with the site.
- 4.3 There are no proposals to alter pedestrian access to the site.
- 4.4 A transport statement has been submitted as part of this application with no issues identified in terms of parking, turning on site, access or egress.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

- 5.1 This document has been prepared in support of the part-retrospective planning application for Green's Lane Equestrian Livery Yard.
- 5.2 In 2016 planning approval was obtained for private equestrian facilities at Green's Lane Farm including stables and an outdoor riding arena.
- 5.3 Over the last six years this private yard has been expanded using temporary stable buildings and is now an established equestrian livery business providing 13no. stables on livery to local customers. The livery business currently has three full-time employees. The equestrian business also supports other local rural businesses including vets, farriers, feed and hay suppliers.
- 5.4 The success of this site stems from its accessibility being close to a number of towns and villages and a demonstratable need for stabling and riding facilities in the local area.
- 5.5 The equestrian business continues to invest in facilities for outdoor sport and recreation to support the local equine community and has recently applied to the British Horse Society and KBHH to become an accredited centre.
- 5.6 The use of temporary stabling for livery purposes has been carried out without the benefit of planning approval, this is an oversight on the part of the applicant who has historically obtained planning approval for development at the site. The applicant now seeks to work with the LPA to obtain the necessary approvals and protect this viable rural business.
- 5.7 A pre-app was submitted for the site in 2023 and concluded that the proposed development was acceptable in principle and would be in accordance with paragraph 149 of the NPPF.

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- 5.8 This latest scheme includes the removal of various existing buildings which are considered superfluous to the equestrian business model.
- 5.9 Poor quality buildings including an industrial storage container are proposed to be replaced with a better-quality barn in keeping with the existing stable yard, this together with replacement of the existing horsewalker will further improve visual impact of the development.
- 5.10 Unsightly man-made bunds which have been left over from construction on site will be removed with native species landscaping proposed including the grass-seeding of the paddock access track to further improve landscape visual impact of the development.
- 5.11 This application is supported by ecology, transport and drainage reports which indicate the combined impact of the equestrian yard on its location is nominal.
- 5.12 Approval of this application will secure existing employment and a viable rural business as well as supporting local public riding facilities for sport and outdoor leisure. It is considered that on balance this application should be supported.

## 6.0 SITE PHOTOS



*Stable Yard Approach from Green's Lane (above)  
Stables and Stable Yard Office (below)*



*Existing Buildings and Horsewalker to be Replaced with New Storage / Isolation Barn  
(below)*



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***Existing Stables (Former Field Shelters) to be Removed from Site (left) with Horsewalker to be Replaced (right)***



***View looking Northeast from the corner of the All-Weather Riding Surface towards the Stable Yard and Staff Welfare Building (above)***