Equestrian Facility at Congerstone Lane, Barton in the Beans, Leicestershire.

Set on the outskirts of a tranquil village in the heart of an established equestrian community. The site has been owned by Matthew Gilliver and Laura Broadhurst for the past 3 years. It currently hosts 12 stables, an all weather riding menage and 11 acres split into several grazing and turnout paddocks. All main services are laid to the site.

Paddocks are currently post & railed fenced with electric sub-division. Hedging plants have been planted to eventually create a more permanent barrier and afford the horse's better protection from the elements.

There are presently 9 horses on site, of which 1 belongs to the proprietors. Current clients have all been attracted simply by word of mouth – it is evident that with the surge in popularity of varying equestrian disciplines that there is a huge client base looking for livery services.

Considerable work has already been completed on the site but further improvements are planned in order further enhance the facilities and offer clients greater choice of services and increased security measures. Once complete, it is intended that local adverts will be placed to attract other clients.

Future plans include the erection of a further 8 stables for which planning permission has already been granted. It is intended that a proportion of the stabling will be dedicated foaling boxes as the owners wish to offer a complete service to clients with brood mares and youngstock.

Laura has been involved in the horse breeding process for many years now, having successfully bred 3 foals from her own stock and assisted several other owners in their own breeding programmes.

Security on the site, like the majority of such sites in the UK is crucial to the success of the operation. Recent spates of thefts and cruelty to animals in the area threaten the very existence of such businesses.

This site has suffered numerous break-ins with equipment and plant having been stolen. There have also been incidences where fences were cut through which resulted in horses getting onto the village roads. The issue of security should not be underestimated.

CCTV is being introduced; however the need to be quick to react to events unfolding on the monitors is necessary, especially in terms of the breeding program being proposed.

The addition of a temporary accommodation structure on the site would provide the enhanced security required to enable this business to grow and reach its full potential, as well as allowing response to any welfare incidences needing intervention.

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SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- Excellent location with good access to bridle paths and quiet roads.
- Good onsite facilities including all weather ménage.
- In the heart of the Atherstone Hunt country.
- Variety of competition venues within the area.
- Knowledgeable owners.

Weaknesses

- Ratio of stables/grazing requiring careful land management.
- Immaturity of site compromising the security.
- Poor surface to access road.
- Lack of secure storage.

Opportunities

- Additional 8 stables.
- Set up a dedicated breeding/youngstock service.
- Further training/qualifications/experience to be gained by owners.
- Planned improvements to enhance the site and increase occupancy.

Threats

- Security issues
- Local competition from other livery yards
- Possible disease or infections causing restrictions to movements

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Plans for the future are, having improved the site to a standard that the owners feel is expected and acceptable, simply to offer the best service and facilities in the area.

Assuming 80% occupancy at all time (research indicates that in general occupancy is 100%) on the 20 permitted stables.

Full livery per week is charged at £ 95 - £130 dependant upon requirements. This includes use of stable and all bedding, mucking out, grazing, full use of ménage and equipment.

DIY Livery is charged at £25 per week. This is purely for use of stable and grazing with all bedding, feed and forage purchased at extra cost.

Clients not paying for forage within the weekly charge are required to purchase directly from the owners. No exceptions are allowed.

Extra charges are made for riding/exercising, clipping, being in attendance for vet, farrier, physiotherapist and foaling etc.

As the business expands and the livery comes into action, staffing levels will need to be increased accordingly. Once at full capacity we anticipate the following structure

Owner

Full Time groom (NMW)

Full Time Apprentice

Volunteers working towards vocational qualifications

Weekend work experience staff

The sector is well known for its high turnover of staff so every effort has to be made to recruit and retain loyal, hardworking individuals with a real passion for the job.