

Proposed Development: Construction of an Equestrian Ménage

Site Address: 29 Lindridge Lane, Desford, LE99GN

Applicant: Felicity Curley

Date: 22/02/2025

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to support a planning application for the construction of a private equestrian ménage at 29 Lindridge Lane, Desford, LE9 9GN. The proposed development aims to provide a safe and functional riding arena for private equestrian use, ensuring year-round training facilities without negatively impacting the local landscape, biodiversity, or public access.

The design respects the rural setting, using appropriate materials and ensuring minimal environmental disruption. The proposed ménage will blend into the landscape and maintain the character of the surrounding area.

2. Site and Surroundings

The site is situated in a rural location, primarily used for equestrian and agricultural purposes. The land is currently a grazing paddock with minimal ecological constraints. The surrounding area consists of open fields, hedgerows, and existing equestrian infrastructure.

- The site is not within a conservation area or subject to specific landscape designations.
- There are no protected species or priority habitats on the proposed development site.
- The ménage will be located away from public highways and neighbouring properties to minimise visual and environmental impact.

3. Proposed Development

The proposal seeks to construct a 20m x 50m ménage using high-quality, permeable equestrian surfacing suitable for private training purposes.

Key Features:

- Surface: A well-draining, non-intrusive equestrian surface.
- Fencing: Traditional timber post-and-rail fencing for safety, designed to blend into the rural setting.
- Drainage: A permeable surface with adequate drainage to prevent waterlogging and runoff issues.
- Access: The ménage will be accessed via existing equestrian access routes, with no need for new entrances or road modifications.

This ménage is for private use only and will not operate as a commercial riding school or livery facility.

4. Design Considerations

4.1 Scale and Layout

The ménage has been designed to be proportionate to the site, ensuring it integrates well within the existing landscape. Positioned within an existing paddock, it will have minimal visibility from public vantage points.

4.2 Appearance and Materials

- The fencing will be timber post-and-rail, consistent with the surrounding equestrian and agricultural environment.
- The surfacing will be a natural, muted colour to reduce visual impact.

4.3 Landscaping and Biodiversity

- No trees, hedgerows, or priority habitats will be removed or disturbed.
- The ménage is located in a low-ecological-value area, ensuring minimal biodiversity impact.
- Surrounding vegetation and hedgerows will be retained to maintain habitat continuity.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Consideration:

Under the Environment Act 2021, BNG is required for major developments. This application does not meet that threshold because:

- It is not a major development (under 1 hectare and not commercially operated).
- It does not involve the loss of significant habitat or protected features.
- It is reversible, ensuring no long-term ecological impact.

As such, BNG should not be a mandatory requirement for this proposal.

5. Access

5.1 Vehicular and Transport Links

- The proposal will not increase traffic as it is for private use only.
- No new access points or road modifications are required—existing routes will be used.

5.2 Public Rights of Way

- The development does not obstruct or interfere with any public footpaths, bridleways, or rights of way.

5.3 Inclusive Access

- The ménage will be accessible via existing equestrian access routes.
- It will be designed for safe and easy use by riders of all abilities.

6. Planning Policy Compliance

The proposal complies with local and national planning policies, including:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Supporting rural businesses and recreational facilities while protecting the countryside.
- Local Plan Policies – Aligning with policies that encourage equestrian development in rural areas.

- Environmental Considerations – Ensuring no significant harm to biodiversity, landscape character, or public access.

The development enhances rural recreational facilities, maintains landscape character, and minimises ecological disruption.

7. Conclusion

This proposal represents a modest, well-integrated equestrian facility that:

- Provides a safe and functional riding surface for private use.
- Respects the rural landscape and local character.
- Has minimal biodiversity impact, negating the need for BNG compliance.
- Maintains existing access routes and ensures no public rights of way are affected.

Given these considerations, we respectfully request that planning permission be granted for the proposed equestrian ménage.