

# DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

**Applicant: Michelle Cardno**

**Site Address: Land adjacent to 1 Gorses, Bury, BL9 6UE**

**Local Planning Authority: Rochdale Borough Council**

## **Proposal:**

- Erection of a private stable block for three horses including tack, feed and bedding store
  - Stable block dimensions: 22.3m x 3.8m x 3.0m (overall height)
  - Formation of hardstanding for access, parking and turning
  - Change of use of land to form a private sand paddock riding arena measuring 40m x 20m
  - Access via an existing private track serving adjacent dwellings (The Gorses)
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## **1. Introduction**

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of **Michelle Cardno** in support of a planning application for private equestrian facilities.

Michelle currently keeps her horses on livery at a separate facility. This arrangement is costly and provides limited flexibility and facilities. The proposal will allow her to:

- Bring her horses home for private management
- Reduce ongoing livery costs
- Improve daily welfare oversight
- Provide a full private livery setup for her own horses

The proposal is strictly for private use. No commercial livery, riding school activity, competitions or external users are proposed.

This statement demonstrates that the development accords with national policy, Rochdale's development plan, and reflects the approach taken by Inspectors in recent appeal decisions concerning private equestrian development within the Green Belt.

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## **2. Site Context and Character**

The site comprises open pasture land within the Green Belt. It is characterised by:

- A rural appearance
- Limited surrounding built development
- Mature trees and established field boundaries
- A strong landscape structure providing natural screening

A defining characteristic of the site is:

- The substantial backdrop of mature trees
- Its position set well within the field and away from the public highway

These characteristics are material considerations in assessing visual impact and Green Belt openness.

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### **3. Proposed Use – Private and Ancillary**

The proposed development is entirely private and ancillary in nature.

- Three stables for Michelle's own horses
- No commercial livery
- No riding school
- No events or competitions
- No visiting clients

Private equestrian use generates:

- Limited vehicle movements
- Low levels of daily activity
- No intensified commercial traffic

The development is directly related to the enjoyment and management of the land for personal equestrian purposes.

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### **4. Amount, Scale and Permanence**

#### **Stable Block**

- Single-storey structure
- Modest overall height of 3.0 metres
- Linear form reducing perceived bulk
- Proportionate to the keeping of three horses

The scale is modest and appropriate to private use. The building does not introduce excessive bulk or massing.

## **Riding Arena**

- 40m x 20m sand paddock
- No lighting proposed
- No permanent grandstands or structures
- Simple post-and-rail boundary treatment

The arena will function as a sand paddock rather than a formal competition facility. In visual terms, it remains read as part of the wider field.

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## **5. Layout and Visual Impact**

The layout has been carefully considered to minimise visual impact:

- The stable block is positioned against a mature tree backdrop
- Development is located away from the skyline
- The arena sits comfortably within the field rather than dominating it

The mature tree screening significantly reduces long-distance views of the development.

The siting ensures that the development is visually contained within the landscape structure of the site.

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## **6. Appearance and Materials**

The stable block has a traditional rural appearance:

- Timber cladding
- Dark, recessive roofing materials
- Simple functional detailing

These materials are typical of rural equestrian buildings and ensure the structure reads as an agricultural-style outbuilding rather than a domestic or urban form of development.

The sand paddock surface will weather naturally and integrate with the surrounding land over time.

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## **7. Access and Highway Considerations**

Access will be taken via the existing private track serving The Gorses.

- No new access onto the public highway is required

- No alteration to the public highway network is proposed
- Adequate on-site turning is provided

Vehicle movements will be limited to:

- Michelle's personal visits
- Occasional feed or bedding deliveries
- Routine horse care activities

Traffic generation will be materially lower than a commercial equestrian use.

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## **8. Green Belt Assessment**

### **Appropriateness**

The NPPF recognises appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation in the Green Belt, provided they preserve openness and do not conflict with Green Belt purposes.

Private equestrian facilities are a recognised countryside activity.

### **Openness**

Openness is preserved by:

- Modest built footprint
- Low building height
- Absence of lighting
- Retention of existing landscape features

The proposal does not materially reduce spatial openness.

### **Green Belt Purposes**

The development:

- Does not lead to unrestricted sprawl
- Does not result in settlement coalescence
- Does not encroach beyond existing rural land use
- Does not undermine the countryside's character

The proposal represents a logical rural activity within the Green Belt.

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## **9. Landscaping and Biodiversity**

- Existing mature trees and boundaries are retained
- No removal of established screening is proposed
- Biodiversity Net Gain planting will be incorporated

The scheme delivers ecological enhancement consistent with current policy expectations.

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## 10. Overall Planning Balance

The proposal:

- Is private and non-commercial
- Is modest in scale and height
- Is visually contained by landscape features
- Preserves Green Belt openness
- Generates limited traffic
- Enhances biodiversity

It enables Michelle Cardno to relocate her horses from an expensive and inflexible livery arrangement to a sustainable, well-managed private facility.

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## 11. Conclusion

The proposed stable block, hardstanding and private riding arena represent a carefully considered and proportionate form of development within the Green Belt.

The scheme:

- Preserves openness
- Maintains rural character
- Is visually contained
- Is private and ancillary in nature
- Aligns with national and local planning policy

The proposal is acceptable in planning terms and should be granted planning permission.