

Viability Statement

regarding

“Beauchamps Stables”

prepared for submission to

**Epping Forest District
Council**

Contents Page

- 1.0 Viability – Introduction
- 2.0 Summary of “Listening Out” requirements
- 3.0 Overview of Mobile Homes requirement ... living on site for care of horses.
- 4.0 Front Paddock Location
- 5.0 Alternate locations
- 6.0 Substantiation for three mobile homes
- 7.0 Viability Information – Introduction of job roles
- 8.0 Changing times due to Covid 19
- 9.0 Viability of House Rental
- 10.0 Rescue Centre

1.0 Viability – Introduction

The introduction expands on the questions raised from the committee meeting on 8th July 2020, whereupon committee disputed the need for a close proximity mobile home to the stables.

The first question raised from the committee was effectively why were the mobile homes sought to be located at the front of the site?

Quite simply, if permission is not forthcoming for the mobile homes located in the front paddock opposite the stables and near to the farm entrance, the horses and ponies will be at risk from several health conditions, which typically occur overnight.

As a consequence, we think there is a mismatch of requirement for close proximity care for the horses and planning laws / limitations.

We have tried to negotiate on behalf of the Stables tenants, to establish whether one mobile home would receive permission at the front. This is also not going to get permission it seems from negotiations with the planners.

SO, LET IT BE KNOWN that the planners are putting at risk the health and life (death) of the horses.

Horses are of course herbivores and require constant small amounts of grazing / hay / feed. They have delicately poised digestive systems, which can often go lead to health complications overnight if unwatched.

Generally, if the dwelling, in this case a mobile home, is within close proximity to the horses, a restlessness nature will alert the human occupier to the general upset of the horse. From then on, being within earshot and close proximity to the stables, is paramount.

Often horse proprietors will keep the window ajar at night, to avoid the horse incurring serious health problems the next day.

Without knowing, the planners have put the horses lives at risk by wishing to locate the mobile homes to the rear of the farm.

2.0 Summary of "Listening Out" requirements

Listed below are the health conditions under which, close proximity listening is essential.

Mobile home within "listening out" distance of the Livery Yard

- Sleeping with a window open.
- Listening out for when a horse is CAST... this is when the horse gets trapped against a wall and can't recover to standing. The horse will be audibly distressed.
- COLIC – regular ten minutes walks around the yard.
- BIRTHING – looking after the mother.
- RESCUE horses that have suffered neglect... i.e: they need tending to overnight.

3.0 Overview of Mobile Homes requirement ... living on site for care of horses.

Horses and ponies require constant maintenance of care throughout the day.

First thing in the winter, after the morning feed is changing up rugs on the horse prior to turn out.

The stable is then mucked out, which can typically last approximately 30 minutes (plus).

An overnight rug is typically very different to a turnout rug.

There is constant maintenance of water levels in the field buckets and making sure the horse hasn't stepped into or turned over the bucket.

Therefore, a constant half hour checking procedure of the turnout / grazing is often required.

The list of duties goes on and on.... Here is a copy of a typical price list from a livery yard (with prices removed) to give you a good idea of what is involved.

SERVICE
Turn Out
Bring In
Water
Rug change
Pick Out feet
Feed - Haynet - Morning
Feed - Haynet - Lunch
Feed - Haynet - Afternoon
Feed Supplements - Evening
Muck Out
Wash Legs

Lunge - 25 mins
Riding - Arena - 45 minutes
Riding - Hacking - 1 hour
7 day Exercise package - Hacking x2 & Arena x2
Individual day livery
5 Day Full livery
Holiday full livery
Weekend livery
Poo pick paddock
Wheelbarrow emptying charge (if left overnight)
Living Out Service - hay bale + water twice daily

4.0 Front Paddock Location

- Screening to front and all 4 sides.
- See photographs of a 360 view of the front paddock.
- Consider if **care of horses** outweighs any loss of visual amenity to neighbours.
- The mobile would not be viewable from the road.

5.0 Alternate Locations

NOTE:

Alternate locations have been suggested by the planners and drawings have been requested in advance of the initial application, which then unknowingly to us, were put forward and featured in the presentation to the Committee in July 2020.

These are definitely not as focussed on primary care of the horses as the front paddock.

Whilst we do appreciate the local houses are in proximity to the yard, the lack of primary care to the horses within this planning led application, does concern us until we (including all stable Managers / staff) are overwrought with worry for the horses.

Its has been suggested that the mobile home be located at the rear.

We have pointed out the safety and health of the horses and therefore none of us sanction the suggestion of placing the mobile homes to the rear one little bit.

It is sincerely the wrong decision to make, in respect of the lives of the horses.

Nevertheless, it seems the only option available to the farm in complying with planning.

6.0 Substantiation for the reason for three mobile homes

Yard as Success Story

Up until 2nd November 2020, the stable yard was very successful and has been full or very close to capacity. IE all 18 useable stables have been full at points this year.

The only reason it is now not viable during the winter 2020 and spring 2021 is due to significant on-site flooding in the flood plain of the River Roding.

The flooding has brought with it, the growth of moss and mycotoxins on the top layer of topsoil.

The land now has now to be treated to prevent the harmful mycotoxins getting into the liver of the horses, which it has already started to do.

Luckily, the proprietors have spotted this early and have called out the vets asap to prevent further liver damage to the horses.

IMPORTANT:

The mycotoxins are, it seems, present in all grazing areas of the grassland fields, or have to be treated so initially... until further detailed analysis can be carried out.

We have therefore taken the unprecedented approach of allowing a section of farmland around the farmstead to seed and grow as grass.

It was sown after good, positive chats with the planners about the requirement for extra grazing. So knowing that permission is likely to be forthcoming.

August to October 2020: We have now been in more recent talks with the planners to generate more grazing, closer to the farmstead and at a better distance and height from the river. This field is Barn field and will be subject to another, separate application.

Recovery from the Mycotoxins

However, this aside, the yard is gradually recovering and hopefully in the last Spring / Summer more grazing will become available.

Please also see "8.0 Changing times due to Covid".

7.0 Viability Information – Introduction of job roles

Stables Proprietors Managers – “Beauchamps Stables”:

- The Manager ensures the day to day smooth running of the Stables.
- Manager: keeping records / preparing specific specialist morning feeds / administering medication / providing instructions to others / organisation of vet inspections / re-habilitating rescue horses.
- Manager: Listens out in the night to ensure a horse doesn't get cast for too long (as this can lead to death). Attending to the horses overnight at times between when the yard inspector is resting.
- Reserve Manager / Groom: general daily duties turning out and bringing in.
- Reserve Manager / Groom : Brushing, clipping, cleaning out feet, hosing down and helping the livery clients with their horses. Changing rugs.
- Reserve Manager / Groom: preparation for shows.

Weekday Security - Paddock and Yard Inspector:

- Carries out regular inspections of the paddocks throughout the late evening, night and early morning.
- Horses are out all night overnight during the summer and this person's job is essential for the overnight security of the horses.
- Yard inspections are carried out regularly overnight.

The council can then be reminded that this person patrols the farmstead at night (from about 10pm to 2am) and again in the early morning (up to 6am), noting any changes to directly to the stable Proprietor verbally in the morning or via text message.

Maintenance Manager and Weekend Security:

- Maintenance of Stable-yard interiors, the yard and ancillary spaces, bedding stores.
- Maintenance of hedges, trees and fencing within the paddocks approx. 30 acres.

The person carrying out these duties serves also as weekend security for the farm, whilst he performs his major role as maintenance manager for the livery yard during the week. He does the covering job of weekend security for the whole farm, especially when the Weekday Security is at a part time job during a weekend. He has previous experience elsewhere.

The Stables Proprietors themselves form the two-person team, whom previously worked for the farm and now rent the yard indirectly from the “superior” landlady whom is the sole owner of the farm and farmhouse, all of which is overseen via a management company, Elms Farm Services Ltd.

8.0 Changing times due to Covid

Recently 5 horses and owners left during the first and more in the second lockdown.

Owners are seeking close contact with their horses during the lockdown periods have decided to leave yards and many will “private rent” grazing in order to do so.

The phenomenon will outstrip livery yards’ futures in the short term and possibly the long term.

So, in essence, people left to be closer to home during lockdown... as Elms Stable yard had to go into a lockdown state for three months.

Also, the yard suffered the passing of some older retired horses recently, hence the numbers of occupied stables have dropped. The proprietors, it seems, are now buying, backing and breaking a limited number of horses, as a way of generating a more diverse income.

9.0 Viability of House rental

Q: why don't the livery yard rent the 6 bedroomed Farmhouse after renovation

Due to the market rent and banks / lenders requirements dictating the future rent value of the house, it is most definitely financially unviable for the livery yard proprietors / managers / grooms and the like, to rent the grade 2 listed house.

It is also not feasible for the collective managers of the livery yard i.e.: all 4 occupants of the mobile homes together as an HMO. This would generate about £1200pcm which, falls way short of mortgage / rent requirements and therefore not financially viable at half the market rent. It would also not be fair to force the managers to share bathrooms, kitchens and the like.... I.e. to live together.

Outbuilding conversions

New Rentals of outbuildings will be much less due to the buildings being conversions via the landlords which will maintain a better overall balance financially. The money lent will therefore require smaller returns and smaller units that generate modest rents typically at £400pcm each.

10.0 Rescue Centre

The yard has shown it can weather the storms of the flooding of 2019 and COVID 19 effect during the 2020 year.

Disabled Riding Centre

One of the proprietors is also looking at becoming an instructor, as he is already appropriately qualified to a certain level, with the last step to be completed before becoming an instructor for riders with disabilities.

Why different from a standard livery yard....?

- Rescue horses.... Working with charities.
- Current conditioning / Riding and schooling of horses to be ridden by disabled people.
- Future Riding School for Disabled.