

Planning Design & Access Statement

Change of use of existing equestrian yard to storage (Use Class B8)

**Site: Eastmere Stables, Eastergate Lane,
Eastergate**

On behalf of Mr and Mrs Langridge
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Town Planning ► Development Consultancy



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Henry Adams Planning has been instructed to prepare an application for the change of use of the existing equestrian buildings and sand school to a B8 Use Class Storage use. The change of use of the buildings has already taken place, therefore, the application is retrospective.
- 1.2 The existing equestrian yard is no longer a viable concern and the applicants have taken the choice through lockdown to maintain an income for their family business. The equestrian yard had to rely on temporary overnight stays for those taking part in local equestrian events. Unfortunately the impact of Covid has meant the closure of a number of these event locations, so to the income associated with those visiting the area and making use of Eastmere Stables. The stables are no longer considered to be of an appropriate scale to run as a viable business, accordingly, the change of use is now sort.

2 Site Description

- 2.1 The application site, known as Eastmere Stables, is currently occupied by a number of different companies and is used for private storage purposes. It was previously in use as a working stables and sand school.
- 2.2 The site comprises a number of secure, internal storage units, converted from the stables and existing buildings on site. In addition, an open area of outdoor storage is also available on site, converted from former sand school.
- 2.3 The site is neighboured by an industrial yard to the west, which includes private storage capabilities.
- 2.4 Farmland is located to the north and south with some residential properties to the east. The centre of the village of Eastergate is located to the south west of the site.
- 2.5 Notably, the site is not connected to any existing bridleways, with the site leading onto Eastergate Lane. Eastergate Lane links the A29 Fontwell Avenue and the village of Walberton.

3 Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal seeks permission for the change of use of a number of the existing buildings at Eastmere Stables. With the exception of an existing toilet block and log cabin, which is used for residential purposes, all other buildings and the sand school are subject to the proposed change of use to B8 Storage. The proposed floorspace subject to the change of use cover 590.36 sq. metres.

- 3.2 Access would be via the existing vehicle crossover from Eastergate Lane, which served the equestrian use of the site.
- 3.3 No physical changes are proposed to any of the buildings. Within the sand school, the only change noted is the provision of loose gravel in place of the original sand surface and parking lines to demote storage margins.

4 Planning Policy background

- 4.1 Following paragraph 39 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, there is a duty to take decisions in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 To the extent that development plan policies are material to an application for planning permission, the decision must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise.
- 4.3 The Development Plans for Arun and Walberton comprise:
- Arun Local Plan 2011-2031
 - Barnham and Eastergate Neighbourhood Plan
 - West Sussex Waste and Minerals Plan
- 4.4 The specific policies of relevance to this application are summarised in the list below:

Arun District Local Plan 2011-2031

- C SP1 Countryside
- D DM1 Aspects of form and design quality
- D DM2 Internal space standards
- D SP1 Design
- ECC DM1 Renewable Energy
- ECC SP1 Adapting to Climate Change
- ECC SP2 Energy and climate change mitigation
- ENV DM4 Protection of trees
- ENV DM5 Development and biodiversity
- LAN DM1 Protection of landscape character
- QE DM1 Noise Pollution
- QE DM2 Light pollution
- QE DM3 Air Pollution
- SD SP1 Sustainable Development
- SKILLS SP1 Employment and Skills
- QE SP1 Quality of the Environment
- T DM1 Sustainable Travel and Public Rights of Way

- T SP1 Transport and Development

Barnham and Eastergate Neighbourhood Plan

- ES1: Flooding, drainage and new development
- ES12: Energy efficiency of existing development
- GA4: Parking and new development
- EE1: Support for business
- EE3: Support for new commercial uses

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)

- 4.5 In terms of decision-making, paragraph 7 explains that Local Planning Authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 4.6 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF outlines the three dimensions to sustainable development by which the planning system needs to perform; economic role, social role and environmental role. These roles involve contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, and protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.
- 4.7 Paragraph 84 sets out that planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.
- 4.8 Paragraph 117 seeks to 'promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.'
- 4.9 Section 12 stresses the importance of creating well-designed places, as good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Proposals should therefore function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive as a result of good

architecture and landscaping, be sympathetic to local character and history, establish a strong sense of place and optimise the potential of the site.

5 Planning Considerations

- 5.1 This section sets out the merits of the proposal and its compliance with national and local planning policy.

Principle of Development

- 5.2 The application seeks permission for the re-use of an existing brownfield site, in the form of a commercial equestrian stable. Whilst the site is located outside of the defined settlement boundary, the principle of the change of use should be considered acceptable, in the absence of any policy protection for the existing / former use for equestrian purposes.

- 5.3 The landowners had previously been running a commercial equestrian yard, which they managed from their adjoining home. Over the last couple of years, the viability of the business has been in question, for the following reasons:

- a) A nearby show jumping / events centre has closed. This use to attract a number of visitors to events from across the country, who used Eastmere Stables as a convenient location to stable their horses during the course of the event. Unfortunately, in 2019, this venue closed and therefore the income generated from visitors has fallen away. This provided significant subsidy to the business to continue operating as a viable entity.
- b) Reduced demand for stabling in this location, with limited direct access to public bridleways / open countryside, leaving stables empty and underutilised.
- c) Due to the reduced uptake in people using the site it was unviable to consider replacing the surface of the sand school, which is required for safe use. This meant that its use had to be significantly reduced to avoid an unsafe surface being created and the owners were unable to provide suitable facilities for those wanting to use the stables.

- 5.4 As noted above, this has resulted in a need to alter the use the buildings, which suit the proposed small scale private storage use sought.

- 5.5 In reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan, it is noted that B8 uses are not likely to be supported and the proposal would conflict with the objectives of this policy. However, there is a clear demand for these type of storage facilities and the distribution element to the B8 use class is not sought. In terms of the Local Plan, this makes provision to support employment or commercial land uses, which this proposal would

fall under. As the adoption of the Local Plan post-dates that of the Neighbourhood Plan, it is considered that Local Plan policy takes precedence on this occasion.

- 5.6 It is therefore considered to be an appropriate use, subject to considerations such as traffic movements, suitable means of access for such use and impact on adjoining residential properties.

Ecology and Biodiversity

- 5.7 There are no statutory or non-statutory designated sites of nature conservation interest situated within the application site. There would be no change to the current buildings and movements within the site would be reduced to that of the former commercial use. The use will ensure all hedgerows are preserved through the site and no additional forms of lighting are required. Accordingly, the proposal would not impact any protected species or habitats within the site.

Neighbour amenity

- 5.8 The proposed use of the site would not result in any significant changes in noise or a use that would impact any neighbouring land uses. Residential properties are located to the south side of Eastergate Lane and adjoin the sites western boundary. The existing property serving the former stables is within the applicant's ownership.
- 5.9 The proposed use for private storage would result in lesser noise disturbance to that of the existing stables, which are frequented regularly, and generally in the early hours and late afternoon / evening. Whilst attendance on site for the proposed use will be more sporadic, movements, as set out within the transport statement would be reduced from that of the equestrian use. As noted, no physical changes are proposed to the site layout or building either and the open storage is set away from the residential property to the east.
- 5.10 A large storage yard exists to the west of the site, which is not considered to result in undue harm to adjoining or nearby properties.
- 5.11 It is therefore submitted that there will be no demonstrable impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses.

Access & vehicle movements

- 5.12 Access to the site is via Eastergate Lane, which connects the A29 Fontwell Avenue with Walberton. Access would be via and crossover.
- 5.13 The application is supported by a transport statement prepared by Mode, which confirms:

- The site will continue to be accessed as per existing arrangements, utilising the access junction on Eastergate Lane.
- The site access arrangements currently accommodate LGV movements and vehicles towing caravans or trailers with no noted operational issues.
- Examination of the PIC data reveals that the regularisation of Use Class B8 will have no adverse highway safety impact on the local highway network.
- The existing vehicle trips generated by the application site will remain unchanged and have been demonstrated as having no significant impact on the operation of the local highway network.
- The previous operation of the site, as a stables and sand school, has also been shown to have no significant impact on the operation of the local highway network. However, the existing land use has been shown to reduce the trip generation of the site and any impact on the local highway network. This represents an improvement of conditions.
- The net change in total number of trips during the AM peak hour of 08:00 - 09:00 is a reduction of 7 trips. During the PM peak hour of 17:00 - 18:00, the total number of trips is reduced by 17.
- Over the course of a full day, the total number of trips generated by the site, as a result of the change of land use, is reduced by 135 two-way trips.

5.14 It is therefore submitted that given the continued use for storage purposes, there would not be any residual cumulative impacts in terms of highway safety or the operational capacity of the surrounding highway and transport networks and therefore planning permission should not be withheld on transport grounds, in accordance with the advice in the NPPF.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The application seeks retrospective permission for the change of use of the existing equestrian yard to a B8 Storage use. No physical changes are proposed to the existing buildings, with the only notable change being the provision of a gravelled surfaced within the former sand school.
- 6.2 The use of land and buildings relates to the existing yard area only and not the wider grazing land to the north.
- 6.3 The site seeks to make use of an existing brownfield site for B8 storage purposes. It is noted that the proposal would result in the loss of an equestrian facility, however, there is limited demand for such in this location and no policy protection exists for the equestrian use.

- 6.4 There is some conflict between support for these use between the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan, however, due to the date of documents, the Local Plan policy support takes precedence.
- 6.5 The proposal is considered to be acceptable from a visual and amenity perspective and will result in an overall reduction of trips to and from site. It is therefore considered to be an acceptable use for the site.