

Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036)

Adopted April 2022



5.102 Agriculture is arguably one of the most important activities that shape the character of the wider countryside. It is obviously also central to local food production. It is therefore important that agricultural enterprises are able to function and be self-sustaining. Levels of agricultural activity in the Borough have declined in recent decades, with parts of the countryside showing signs of neglect and poor management. The policy is designed to assist agricultural enterprise and to achieve better management of the Borough's countryside, while avoiding significant unplanned development that would increase urbanisation and threaten the rural quality of these areas. In accordance with guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), decisions about development affecting agricultural land should also take account of the impacts on soils and the protection of the best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land.

Policy DM18, Extension and replacement of non- residential buildings in the countryside

1. **The extension or replacement of non-residential buildings in the countryside will be permitted, subject to the general development criteria and transport policies of this Local Plan and provided that:**
 - a. the existing building is in lawful use and is not subject to a temporary permission;
 - b. the extension or replacement building is for a non-residential use;
 - c. the extension or replacement building would not have an urbanising effect on the countryside in terms of its density, scale, massing, layout and height;
 - d. access, car parking, landscaping and services can be provided without having a detrimental impact on the character of the countryside;
 - e. so far as possible the property is sustainably located in terms of accessibility by means of transport other than the private car;
 - f. the extended building or its replacement would be located within the existing curtilage unless its relocation or extension would contribute to improving the character and quality of the local area;
 - g. in the case of a replacement building, the proposal also includes the demolition of the building to be replaced; and
 - h. the development would not by itself or cumulatively with other recently permitted schemes undermine the Council's strategy for the development of employment-related floorspace (see strategic policy S4).
2. **Where the proposal also involves a change of use of the building, criteria (a), (b) and (c) of policy DM19 will apply. Notwithstanding this, where the proposal is for the development of town centre uses as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), criterion (b) of policy DM19 will apply.**

5.103 The Borough contains many agricultural, commercial and recreational enterprises in the countryside. It is inevitable that these will have development needs. These must be balanced against the overall strategy to limit the urbanising effect of development on the countryside, and the need for such activities to be in accessible locations.

Policy DM19, Change of use of buildings in the countryside

1. **The change of use of existing buildings in the countryside that are demonstrably unsuitable for continued use for their existing purpose will be permitted subject to the general development criteria**

and transport policies of the Local Plan and provided that:

- a. the proposed use is compatible with neighbouring uses and does not have an urbanising effect on the countryside in terms of external layout, lighting, noise or traffic;
 - b. any proposals for developments over 500 sq.m or that would lead to, or consolidate more than, a 30% increase in the floorspace of an established use (measured against floorspace at April 2011), in use classes E(b), E(c), E(d), E(g)(i), C1, F.2(c)/(d), or in use as a cinema, concert hall, bingo hall or dance hall are subject to a sequential test to demonstrate that they cannot be accommodated in more sustainable locations in the town, district or local centres or failing this in edge of centre or out of centre locations within the urban edge. E(a) uses will not be supported;
 - c. the building is of permanent construction and can be re-used without works detrimental to its character or that of its surroundings. For the purposes of this policy 'buildings' do not include open-sided barns or glasshouses;
 - d. access, car parking and services can be provided without having a detrimental impact on the character of the countryside; and
 - e. the property is sustainably located in terms of accessibility by modes of transport other than the private car.
2. Change of use to residential, where this is not permitted development, will only be permitted if:
- a. the building is demonstrably unsuitable for other uses allowed under this policy; or
 - b. the proposal is for an agricultural worker's dwelling and the terms of policy DM27 are met; or
 - c. the building is of architectural or historic interest and there are no other means of securing its preservation (see also policy DM12); or
 - d. it would achieve amenity, environmental or traffic benefits.
3. Where the proposal also involves extension or replacement of the building, policy DM18 will apply. In boatyards outside the urban edge, policy DM20 applies.

- 5.104 Existing buildings in the countryside that are of good quality are a re-usable resource. Enabling a change of use of such buildings can help to limit the need for new buildings in the countryside. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (GDPO) enables the change of use of agricultural buildings to a range of 'flexible' uses. The policy therefore applies to proposals outside the scope of permitted development rights. Please note that policy DM19 would also apply to proposals for retail development.
- 5.105 This plan directs most employment development to urban areas, and to sites in use or allocated for these purposes, as these are regarded as the most sustainable locations for such uses in terms of accessibility and public services. However, the re-use and adaptation of rural buildings for employment purposes can contribute to the diversification of the rural economy, help to support agricultural businesses and therefore help to make economic use of the existing building stock. The replacement of existing buildings can also enable the development of new buildings that are more suitable for modern business requirements, without leading to significant impacts on local landscape character.
- 5.106 It is important to limit residential re-use in the countryside because the high value of this use could preclude other forms of development that are generally more beneficial to the local economy and to the management of the

countryside. Residential re-use can also lead to changes in the character and appearance of the building and its surroundings that can have an urbanising effect. Where residential re-use is permitted, it is on the basis that it is making best use of the existing buildings (including their architectural enhancement) and no more – it is not the purpose of the policy to encourage new residential development in the countryside. Notwithstanding this, the GDPO allows the conversion of agricultural buildings to residential use without planning permission, in particular circumstances. The replacement of a building converted to residential use in accordance with this policy with a new residential building will not be permitted and policy DM26 will not apply. For sake of clarity, where planning permission is required for the change of an agricultural building into residential use, policy DM 19 will apply.

Policy DM20, Boatyard and marina sites on the River Hamble

1. **At boatyard and marina sites on the River Hamble (as shown on the policies map) the Borough Council will permit development associated with boat building, and the fitting out, maintenance and repair of boats and ancillary uses, provided that it does not:**
 - a. **jeopardise the safety and ease of navigation on the river or have a detrimental impact on the regime of the river;**
 - b. **adversely affect nature conservation, landscape or heritage interests;**
 - or**
 - c. **cause a reduction in water quality.**
2. **Exceptionally, development or redevelopment may be permitted incorporating a modest amount of floorspace not restricted to boat-related uses, where the Council is convinced that such a use is needed to secure the future of a boatyard or marina and it is demonstrated that the development will complement the use of the site and/or the enjoyment of the River Hamble.**

[Note: Policy DM35 refers to recreational sailing on the River Hamble.]

5.107 The boatyards on the River Hamble lie outside the defined urban edge. They make an important contribution to the economy of the Borough and the sub- region, and are important for tourism and recreation. It is important that they are retained in this use, and that they are able to evolve and change to accommodate and develop new technology, provided they do not have an adverse impact on the sensitive environment of the river. The Council will also consider whether proposals cause an unacceptable hazard to the movement of craft on the river, including smaller vessels.

5.108 However, the Council accepts that exceptionally, it may be necessary to use a small part of a boatyard for non-boat-related uses in order to secure the viability of the remainder of the boatyard or marina. The Council should be convinced that there is no demand for boat-related uses following concerted marketing efforts, however the exact proportion of non-boat uses permitted will depend on design, environmental and highway considerations.

Retail development