

On Instructions From

Eastleigh Borough Council

Appraisal for

*Extension to existing hay barn for additional hay
storage purposes, and conversion of an existing
agricultural barn for use as a tied agricultural
dwelling for farm succession purposes*

Hall Lands Farm
Hall Lands Lane
Fair Oak
Eastleigh
SO50 7EF

Contact Details

Prepared by: **Bruton Knowles LLP**
Olympus House
Olympus Park
Quedgeley
Gloucester
GL2 4NF

BK Contacts: **Julia Allen**
Senior Rural Surveyor



Prepared for: **Eastleigh Borough Council**
Upper Market Street
Eastleigh,
SO50 9YN

Client Contacts: **Katie Lasham**

Date: 14th July 2026

Version: JEA/548000 v2 Final

Contents

	Page No
1 Reference.....	1
2 Description.....	2
3 Business Operation.....	2
4 Proposed Development.....	4
5 Planning Policy Considerations and General Comments.....	4
6 Appraisal.....	5
7 Conclusion.....	8
Appendix 1	9

1. Reference

- | | | | |
|------------|------------------------------|---|--|
| 1.1 | Proposed Development | - | Extension to existing hay barn for additional hay storage purposes, and conversion of an existing agricultural barn for use as a tied agricultural dwelling for farm succession purposes |
| 1.2 | Planning Authority | - | Eastleigh Borough Council |
| 1.3 | Planning Application | - | F/26/100843 |
| 1.4 | Applicant | - | Mr George Miles |
| 1.5 | Site Address | - | Hall Lands Farm Hall Lands Lane
Fair Oak Eastleigh SO50 7EF |
| 1.6 | Caveat to Instruction | - | We have considered this application in accordance with the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework and the and the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan.

No site visit has been undertaken.

A Teams call with the Katie McLaren, Louise Cutts and Roger Sewill and Katie Lasham took place on 3 rd July 2026 |
| 1.7 | Information Provided | - | We have been provided with the following information in conjunction with the planning application; plans, Planning Design & Access statement, Rural Worker's Dwelling Appraisal (RAC report), Farming Partnership Agreement (2023), photos of front page of Lasting Power of Attorneys for Mr & Mrs Miles (details not provided), financial accounts to year end 31 st March 2025 farm & equestrian, & stables/livery lease |

2 Description

2.1 Location

- 2.1.1 Hall Lands Farm is accessed off Hall Lands Lane on the outskirts of Fair Oak, approximately a 5 mile drive from Eastleigh. It is located in open countryside.

2.2 Land & Tenure

- 2.2.1 It is understood that the property subject to the planning application is owned by Mr & Mrs Miles (senior) and their ownership extends to approximately 56 acres (approximately 22.66 hectares) of pasture and the 'built environment' including agricultural & equestrian building complexes.
- 2.2.2 It is understood that the farming business operates as a family farming partnership (Mr & Mrs Miles & the Applicant, George Miles), which also rents approximately 200 acres (approximately 82.99 hectares) of pasture and arable land in the locality on informal arrangements, grazing licences and Farm Business tenancies.
- 2.2.3 It is understood that Mr & Mrs Miles lease out the equestrian facilities and 4.64 acres to their son, Alec Miles, under a 7 year lease to 4th December 2029 (a six month break clause is referred to). It is unclear whether the lease has been contracted out of the Landlord & Tenant Act 1954 or not. It is understood a further 8 acres are made available to Alec for winter grazing.

2.3 Buildings

2.3.1 *Existing*

It is understood that there are both traditional and modern farm buildings within the farmyard complex, with the farm buildings utilised for machinery and equipment, hay, haylage, straw and woodchip storage.

On the opposite side of Hall Lands Lane, the equestrian facilities include 22 stables, tack & feed rooms & WC, manege and parking areas.

2.3.2 *Dwellings*

It is understood that there is one existing dwelling on the property, Hall Lands Farmhouse, occupied by Mr & Mrs Miles, and that the Applicant and his family live in Horton Heath (approx. 2 miles away) and Alec Miles and his family live in Fair Oak (approx. 1 mile away).

3 Business Operations

- 3.1 It is stated that Hall Lands Farm has been within the Miles family for over 100 years, historically operating a dairy enterprise which became a forage enterprise on cessation of the dairy enterprise. Mr & Mrs Miles are understood to have three sons who will inherit the farm, however it is the Applicant who is a partner in the farming partnership (since 2023) and his brother Alec Miles who operates his equestrian business under a lease arrangement with his parents and rental income is included within the farming partnership.
- 3.2 The RAC report details the current farming enterprise as the production of hay (2000t) and haylage (2600 bales), together with straw production (100t). In addition, it is understood the business purchases additional forage and equine woodchip for resale.
- 3.3 The RAC report detailed the equestrian enterprise as *'full livery accommodation for up to 21 horses, with the yard operating at full capacity. Of these, ten privately owned horses are trained under his supervision. In addition to the livery service, up to five horses are owned as part of a training and resale programme, together with one mare kept for breeding purposes.'* Current horse numbers are understood to stand at 26, with 16 on full livery, 2 in training and 8 owned horses, for training, competing, breeding and personal use.
- 3.4 The RAC report states that Mr & Mrs Miles have provided continuous on site residential oversight for the farming and equestrian businesses, however this out of hours assistance and security oversight needs to reduce given age and health considerations.
- 3.5 It is understood that the Applicant has always worked on the farm, together with undertaking self employed contracting and welding work and has been employed full time by the farming business for some time, becoming a partner in 2023 and has since taken on the role of running the operation. It is understood his partner Katie, assists with both practical and administration duties, and the business also operates with use of a sub contractor for hay deliveries.
- 3.6 It is stated *'Alec Miles works full time running and managing the equestrian business, and employs three full-time staff and two part-time staff.'* It is understood that Katie will assist the out of hours assistance and oversight of the equestrian operation, if she lives at Hall Lands Farm.

4. Proposed Development

- 4.1 It is understood that the application seeks the extension to existing hay barn for additional hay storage purposes, and conversion of an existing agricultural barn for use as a tied agricultural dwelling for farm succession purposes.
- 4.2 It is understood that extension of the hay barn would measure 256.2m² and have a ridge height of 8.1m (a 3.5 bay extension).
- 4.3 It is understood that the barn for conversion to residential accommodation is single storey with a gross internal area of 160.5m². It is stated in the Design and Access Statement and proposed floor plan that the proposed accommodation has a gross ground floor area of 158.72m² and a loft floor area of 34.6m² and comprises on the ground floor; three bedrooms, one bathroom, WC, two stores, wheelchair store, hall and open plan kitchen, dining room & living room and on first floor; loft storage area. It is however understood that the LPA has taken measurements of the loft space, which is assessed close to 40m².
- 4.4 It is understood that the barn conversion would be occupied by the Applicant and his family, but in time may be occupied by Mr & Mrs Miles and the Applicant will reside in the farmhouse instead.

5. Planning Policy Considerations & General Comments

- 5.1 Bruton Knowles have been instructed to appraise the requirement for a permanent dwelling for an agricultural worker.
- 5.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), provides guidance in respect of isolated homes in the countryside and the rural economy and states:-

i) At paragraph 84 that:

'Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside.....'

ii) At paragraph 88 that:

'Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.....'*

5.3 Further guidance on the NPPF in respect of homes for rural workers is provided in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which was published in July 2019. It makes reference to paragraph 79 as opposed to paragraph 84 (as referred to in the current NPPF). It states:

"Considerations that it may be relevant to take into account when applying paragraph 79a of the NPPF could include:

- evidence of the necessity for a rural worker to live at, or in close proximity to, their place of work to ensure the effective operation of an agricultural, forestry or similar land-based rural enterprise (for instance, where farm animals or agricultural processes require on-site attention 24-hours a day and where otherwise there would be a risk to human or animal health or from crime, or to deal quickly with emergencies that could cause serious loss of crops or products);*
- the degree to which there is confidence that the enterprise will remain viable for the foreseeable future;*
- whether the provision of an additional dwelling on site is essential for the continued viability of a farming business through the farm succession process;*
- whether the need could be met through improvements to existing accommodation on the site, providing such improvements are appropriate taking into account their scale, appearance and the local context; and*
- in the case of new enterprises, whether it is appropriate to consider granting permission for a temporary dwelling for a trial period..."*

5.4 The Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 was adopted on 25th April 2022, Policy DM27 of the Local Plan refers to rural workers dwellings and sets out criteria for assessment of applications (see Appendix 1).

6. Appraisal

6.1 For ease of reference the appraisal refers to the criteria of Policy DM27 for a permanent dwelling.

6.2.1 *a. it is essential for the worker to live at their place of work;*

6.2.1.1 It is noted that there are full time workers associated with both farming and equestrian businesses, however labour requirements and essential need requirements differ in interpretation (a full time labour requirement does not prove an essential need in isolation, but where an essential need for a worker is proven it is usual for that worker to be employed full time).

6.2.1.2 In terms of the farming (forage production business), it is noted that there are operational benefits of residing either on or in close proximity to site, given early and late deliveries. Whilst not a primary consideration when assessing essential need security is a genuine concern for any rural business, although the existing residential property may provide some deterrent, it is noted some incidents in the past have required a response which may not be provided by Mr & Mrs Miles going forward. On balance, it is considered questionable whether there is an essential need for a rural worker to reside on site for the operation of the forage production business.

6.2.1.3 In terms of the equestrian business, a duty of care exists towards all animals (certain welfare standards are required under The Animals Act 2006, and are referred to in the DEFRA Code of Practice for the Welfare of Horses, Ponies, Donkeys and their Hybrids (Code). However, the Act and Code do not state that a residential presence is required in every circumstance where livestock is present. The nature of the stock in question and their number will impact on whether incidents will occur that may require a prompt response and these factors will also directly influence the frequency that such events may occur.

6.2.1.4 In general terms, unforeseen incidents can occur at any time of day or night and cover a wide range of situations, from dealing with emergencies such as a horse cast in its box or a horse with colic, to damage to the stables from say horses or severe weather conditions or third party interference with horses. Responsible staff need to be available to recognise and deal swiftly with any emergencies that may occur, either through their own actions or by calling the assistance of third parties, such as the vet, to mitigate losses.

6.2.1.5 Having regard to the horse numbers, nature of livery operation and horse type and activity, it is considered there is an essential need for a residential presence on site or in close proximity to the stables.

6.2.2 *b. the work is an activity that can only be carried out in a rural area and supports management of the countryside;*

6.2.2.1 It is considered that both the agricultural and equestrian businesses operated from Hall Lands Farm are such that they need to be carried out in a rural area and elements of the operation will support management of the countryside.

6.2.3 *c. the enterprise can be demonstrated to be economically viable in the long term, and the dwelling is essential to its continued viability;*

6.2.3.1 The farming activity associated with Hall Lands Farm is long established and with two of Mr & Mrs Miles sons now making a living from the farm, the activity has transitioned into two separate businesses, the forage production business and the equestrian business.

6.2.3.2 Mr & Mrs Miles are understood to have retired from physical operation of the farming business and are stepping back from the provision of out of hours oversight of the equestrian business, although remain in the farming partnership, in terms of property ownership and sharing the farm profit. There has been some succession to the next generation in terms of the two businesses now operated and it is understood that the Applicant is in the process of taking on greater management control of the farming business.

6.2.3.2 The farming accounts for the financial year to 31st March 2026 have not been provided. The accounts for the year ending 31st March 2025 (including the 2024 year as well) show that the business turnover and profitability increased over the two years and made a net profit in each year (a net profit of £17,247 in the 2025 year after deduction of depreciation costs of £33,299), facilitating drawings by the Applicant and share of the profit between all three partners. The balance sheet shows significant equity in the business and limited borrowings.

6.2.3.3 The equestrian accounts for the financial year to 31st March 2026 have not been provided. The accounts for the year ending 31st March 2025 (including the 2024 year as well) show that the business turnover and profitability increased over the two years and made a net profit in each year (a net profit of £26,638 in the 2025 year after deduction of depreciation costs of £6,493), facilitating drawings by the Alec Miles. The balance sheet shows limited equity in the business and no significant borrowings.

6.2.3.4 It is considered that both businesses are economically viable in their own right. It is noted there is some synergy between the two businesses. The equestrian business provides some income to the farming enterprise and farm business offers some additional winter grazing land for the equestrian business. In addition, whilst the equestrian lease does not specify that the Lessor will provide any oversight or assistance out of hours, but it is understood that an

informal arrangement has existed between the family members to facilitate this. It is understood that it is proposed that the Applicant's partner will continue to provide this service if they reside on site, albeit it is not clear what her status will be within the equestrian business, how she will be remunerated and if so, how this will impact on the viability of the equestrian business.

6.2.3.5 Despite some synergy between the two businesses, it is considered that of the two businesses, that a residential presence either on site or in close proximity to site is essential to the continued viability of the equestrian business, not only to mitigate losses associated with horse welfare issues, but in either attracting new or maintaining existing livery clients (because it is noted that where a livery operator is responsible for full horse care, horse owners tend to require a residential presence).

6.2.4 *d. there are no suitable alternative dwellings or buildings available for use or conversion in the immediate locality;*

6.2.4.1 It is understood that the existing farmhouse is occupied by the Applicant's parents, who are understood to have retired from physical operation of the farming business and are stepping back from the provision of out of hours oversight of the equestrian business, although remain in the farming partnership. It is considered that the existing farmhouse should not be treated as suitable and available, having regard to relevant case law as referred to within the application submissions.

6.2.4.2 A search of Rightmove website has been undertaken for properties to rent and buy in the locality (within a mile radius of the postcode). There are properties available to buy and rent (including a property subject to an agricultural occupancy condition), some are not considered suitable for a rural worker and none are, considered to be, sufficiently close enough, if an essential need for a residential presence either on site or in close proximity to the site is established.

6.2.4.3 A barn conversion is proposed which would meet criteria requirements where a suitable alternative dwelling is not available.

6.2.5 *e. no dwellings connected with the enterprise have been sold off in the past 5 years;*

6.2.5.1 It is understood from the Design and Access Statement that no dwellings connected with the enterprise have been sold off in the last 5 years.

6.2.6 *f. the dwelling is sited and designed so as to limit its impact on the countryside; and*

6.2.6.1 It is noted that the proposed dwelling is a conversion of an existing barn. It will however be for the LPA to consider design.

6.2.7 *g. the internal floor area of the dwelling does not exceed 120 sq.m unless special justification is provided in terms of the operation of the agricultural enterprise*

6.2.7.1 It is stated in the Design and Access Statement and on the proposed floor plan, that the gross floor area of the ground floor accommodation extends to 158.72m², with an additional 36.4m² of loft floor area. It is however understood that the LPA has taken measurements of the loft space, which is assessed close to 40m². Whatever the exact measurement of the loft space is deemed to be, the ground floor accommodation is in excess the area set out in criteria g, before the addition of the loft space.

6.2.7.2 It is noted that in this case the proposed dwelling is a barn conversion with an existing floor area of 160.5m², although no other justification has been given in respect of the proposed the size of the proposed dwelling in relation to the criteria set out in 6.2.7.

6.2.7.3 It will be for the LPA to consider proposed dwelling size.

6.3 It will be for the LPA to consider all other relevant planning policy and associated matters.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Taking into account the evidence submitted, it is queried whether the application fully meets the criteria of DM27, notwithstanding it will be for the LPA to comment on some of the criteria.

Bruton Knowles Ltd
Olympus House
Olympus Park
Quedgeley
Gloucester GL2 4NF

Date: 14th July 2026

Appendix 1

Policy DM27, Rural workers' dwellings

1. The provision of dwellings for rural workers in the countryside will only be permitted where:
 - a. it is essential for the worker to live at their place of work;
 - b. the work is an activity that can only be carried out in a rural area and supports management of the countryside;
 - c. the enterprise can be demonstrated to be economically viable in the long term, and the dwelling is essential to its continued viability;
 - d. there are no suitable alternative dwellings or buildings available for use or conversion in the immediate locality;
 - e. no dwellings connected with the enterprise have been sold off in the past 5 years;
 - f. the dwelling is sited and designed so as to limit its impact on the countryside; and
 - g. the internal floor area of the dwelling does not exceed 120 sq.m unless special justification is provided in terms of the operation of the agricultural enterprise.
2. Conditions will be imposed on any permission for a rural workers dwelling limiting the occupancy of the dwelling to workers engaged in the enterprise for which the dwelling was sought. These conditions will not be removed unless the Borough Council is satisfied that:
 - a. there is no longer-term need for a rural workers dwelling in the locality;
 - b. reasonable efforts have been made to sell or lease the property with the occupancy restrictions; and
 - c. the property is not suitable or needed as a rural affordable dwelling.
3. Permission will not normally be given for extensions to or replacement of rural workers dwellings which result in the internal floor area exceeding 120 sq.m, unless special justification is provided.