

Change of use of land from agricultural to
equestrian and retention of access track

Foxfields, Dodwell Lane

PLANNING STATEMENT

JANUARY 2026
PREPARED ON BEHALF OF:
MR WOODHEAD



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CONTENTS PAGE

SECTION ONE INTRODUCTION	4
SECTION TWO THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDS	5
SECTION THREE PLANNING HISTORY	7
SECTION FOUR THE PROPOSALS	8
SECTION FIVE RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY	2
SECTION SIX RATIONALE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT	2
SECTION SEVEN CONCLUSION	2

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

- I.1 Southern Planning Practice Ltd have been instructed by Mr Woodhead to prepare and submit a retrospective planning application for the Change of Use of Land from Agricultural to Equestrian together with retention of an access track at land at Foxfields, Dodwell Lane.
- I.2 The proposed development would involve the change of use of the land from agricultural to equestrian to allow the keeping of horses on the land. The proposed development also includes the retention and reuse of the existing movable structures on site and also the retention of the access track from the driveway at Foxfields to the stables.
- I.3 The following plans and documents are submitted together with the statement for the council's consideration:
- Site Location Plan Dwg No. E-AD-505.01
 - Block Plan Dwg No. E-AD-505.02
 - Plans and Elevations Dwg No. E-AD-505.03
- I.4 The applicant purchased the site in 2022, and at this time a large proportion of land subject of this application had been used for the stabling of horses and grazing for many years. This was without the benefit of planning permission, however through virtue of the passing of time it is considered that this use is lawful, and this area of land is included within this application for the sake of good order.
- I.5 On purchasing the property, the applicant sited two green containers in the north-eastern section of the site to provide an all-weather hay/feed store and a tack room. An access track was laid to get to these containers together with an access through to the stables. The previous access from the north is not a safe or suitable access and there have been security issues also as a result of this access. This access has been retained for large farm machinery which cannot access the site through the residential access.
- I.6 The use of the site is consistent with the countryside location and is only used by one person.

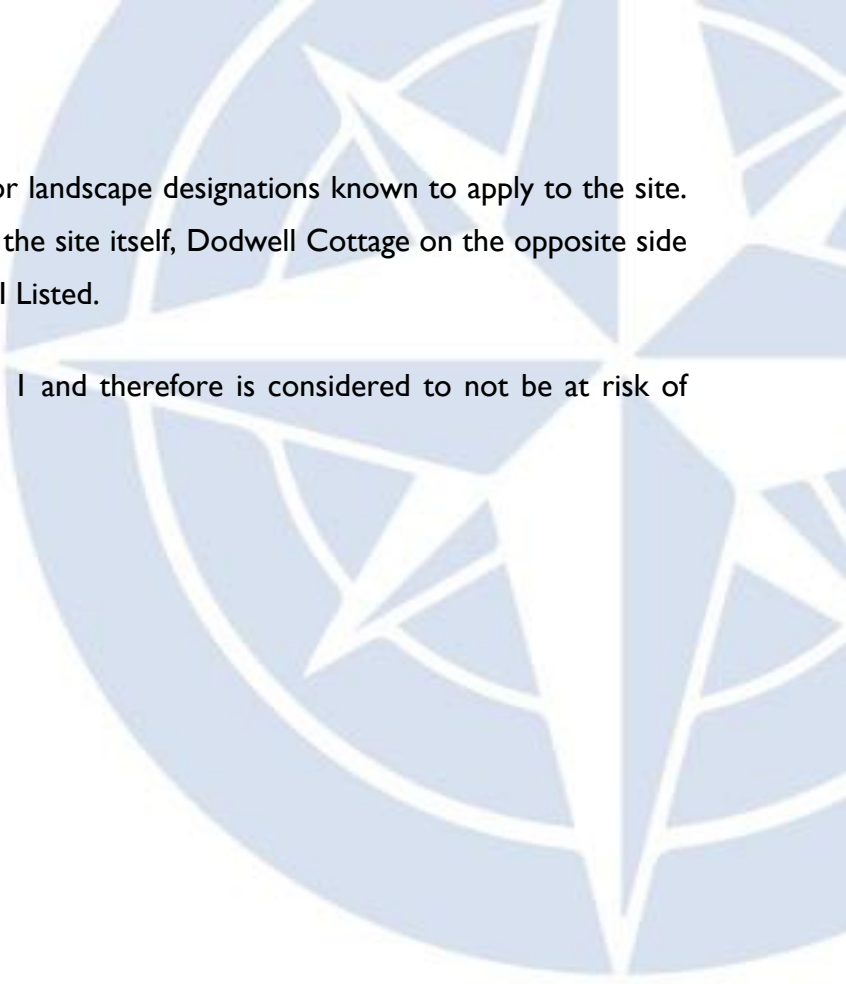
SECTION 2

THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDS

- 2.1 The site is located between Hedge End (north) and Bursledon (south), with the M27 positioned to the west, and sits at the end of the Dodwell Lane. This is shown by the aerial image below.



- 2.2 The site is accessed from Dodwell Lane and shares an access with the dwelling 'Foxfields', which is situated immediately south of the site. This access is laid to hardstanding and extends into the site from the southern boundary.
- 2.3 The area of hardstanding in the north eastern section of the site is used for parking, in addition to the siting of two containers, which are used for a tack room and hay/feed store. The remainder of the site comprises areas of mown grass, with three stable buildings positioned in the south western corner. The area immediately in front of the stables has been fenced as a paddock area.
- 2.4 There is a line of mature trees along the north western boundary, behind the stables, and an area of thick vegetation in the northern corner of the site. There is also mature vegetation screening between the site and the rear garden of Foxfields.

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- 2.5 There are no environmental, historic or landscape designations known to apply to the site. Whilst there are no listed buildings on the site itself, Dodwell Cottage on the opposite side of Dodwell Lane to the east, is Grade II Listed.
- 2.6 The site is located within Flood Zone I and therefore is considered to not be at risk of flooding.



SECTION 3

PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 Following a planning history search on Eastleigh Borough Council's planning search tool and interactive mapping, it appears that there is no planning history for this site since 2004 when records are visible from in the public realm.

SECTION 4

THE PROPOSALS

4.1 This planning application seeks planning permission for the following:

- Retrospective change of use of land from agricultural to equestrian;
- Retention of the existing mobile structures on the site including mobile field shelters and two containers which are used for a tack room and feed store;
- Retention of existing hardstanding access and parking area.

4.2 The description of development is as follows:

Retrospective Change of Use of Land from Agricultural to Equestrian and retention of mobile structures for hay barn/feed store and tack room, manure bay. Retention of access track and associated works including hardstanding.

4.3 The western section of the site has been used for the keeping of horses for many years previous to the applicant's ownership of the property. The change of use of eastern section of the site together with the construction of the access track took place since the applicant has owned the property. The two containers on site are used for a hay barn/feed store and tack room respectively. The existing stable/field shelter structures are all temporary in nature.

4.4 Permission is also sought for the retention of the existing access track to the site. The access track extends to the stables to ensure safe access all year round.

4.5 No new structures or hardstanding are proposed on site in addition to those already in situ.

4.6 Lighting will be very minimal and motion activated.

4.7 A temporary manure bay is located on the site to contain all of the manure produced by the horses. The manure will be collected from the pasture daily and brought into the manure heap, allowed to break down and removed from the site using a trailer.

SECTION 5

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 In accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the planning policy framework relevant to the determination of the application comprises the adopted Development Plan and relevant material considerations. Where the Development Plan contains relevant policies, applications for development which are in accordance with the plans should be allowed, unless material considerations state otherwise.
- 5.2 The site is located within the administrative boundary of Eastleigh Borough Council. As such, the Development Plan comprises the following:
- Adopted Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) (Adopted April 2022)
- 5.3 The “other material considerations” relevant as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act and Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, include the National Planning Policy Framework, the Planning Practice Guidance, Supplementary Planning Documents, and other local guidance.

National Planning Policy

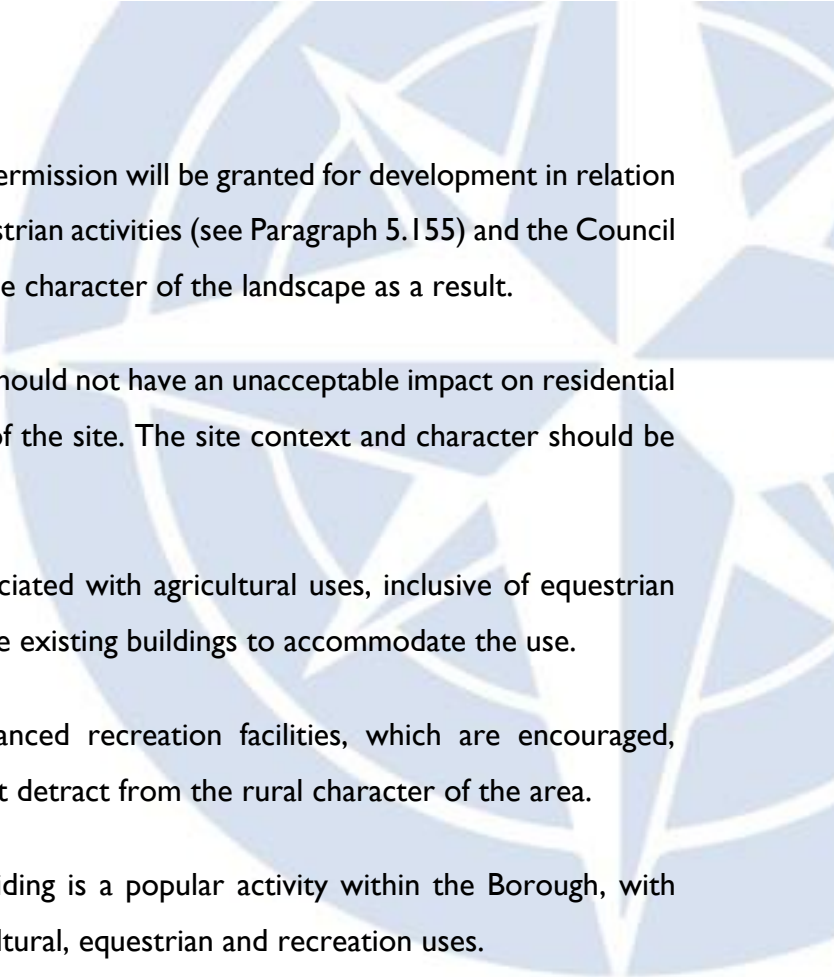
- 5.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012 and forms the Government’s planning policy at the national level. It is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was most recently updated in December 2024, with minor revisions in February 2025. There is currently an ongoing consultation on a new NPPF.
- 5.5 The NPPF sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development through three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental.
- 5.6 Section 2 of the NPPF focuses on achieving sustainable development, with a presumption in favour of sustainable development sitting at the heart of the Framework. Paragraph 11 states

that, for decision-making, development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay. Where there are no relevant plan policies, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

- 5.7 Section 4 sets out guidance on decision-making and encourages authorities to approach decisions in a positive and creative way.
- 5.8 Section 11 states that planning decisions should 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. Planning decisions should encourage multiple benefits from rural land and both promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings.
- 5.9 Section 12 encourages the creation of high quality places, as this is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Planning decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area in both the short and long term. Development should be sympathetic to local character and maintain a strong sense of place.

The Development Plan

- 5.10 The Adopted Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) sets out the policies and plans to guide future development to 2036, identifying how much development is required and key locations for this development.
- 5.11 The key policies relevant to this application are as follows:
- Strategic Policy S1: Delivering sustainable development
 - Strategic Policy S5: New development in the countryside
 - Policy DM1: General criteria for new development
 - Policy DM17: Agricultural development
 - Policy DM34: New and enhanced recreation and open space facilities

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- 5.12 Strategic Policy S5 states that planning permission will be granted for development in relation to outdoor recreation, inclusive of equestrian activities (see Paragraph 5.155) and the Council will seek to avoid adverse impacts on the character of the landscape as a result.
 - 5.13 Policy DM1 sets out that development should not have an unacceptable impact on residential amenity and should make efficient use of the site. The site context and character should be fully accounted for and considered.
 - 5.14 Policy DM17 encourages activities associated with agricultural uses, inclusive of equestrian activities (see Paragraph 5.155), to utilise existing buildings to accommodate the use.
 - 5.15 Policy DM34 considers new and enhanced recreation facilities, which are encouraged, provided that the development does not detract from the rural character of the area.
 - 5.16 Paragraph 5.155 identifies that horse riding is a popular activity within the Borough, with equine development falling under agricultural, equestrian and recreation uses.
 - 5.17 Paragraph 5.156 states that equine uses may be acceptable in the countryside, but they can have substantial visual impacts, which should be limited and mitigated.

Other Material Considerations

Eastleigh Borough Settlement Gap Study (2020)

- 5.18 The site sits within Area B, which is the settlement gap between Hedge End and Bursledon.
- 5.19 Dodwell Lane is described as linking the northern settlement of Bursledon to Hedge End over the M27.
- 5.20 The site falls within sub section B I I (south of Dodwell Lane), which is characterised by a mix of grazing fields and provides a sense of separation to the M27. Buffer vegetation assists in minimising views between settlements.
- 5.21 Table B I identifies that area B I I helps to preserve the open nature of the settlement gap and maintain the sense of separation between the settlements. This area is identified as playing an important role in defining the settlement character and separating settlements at risk of coalescence.

SECTION 6

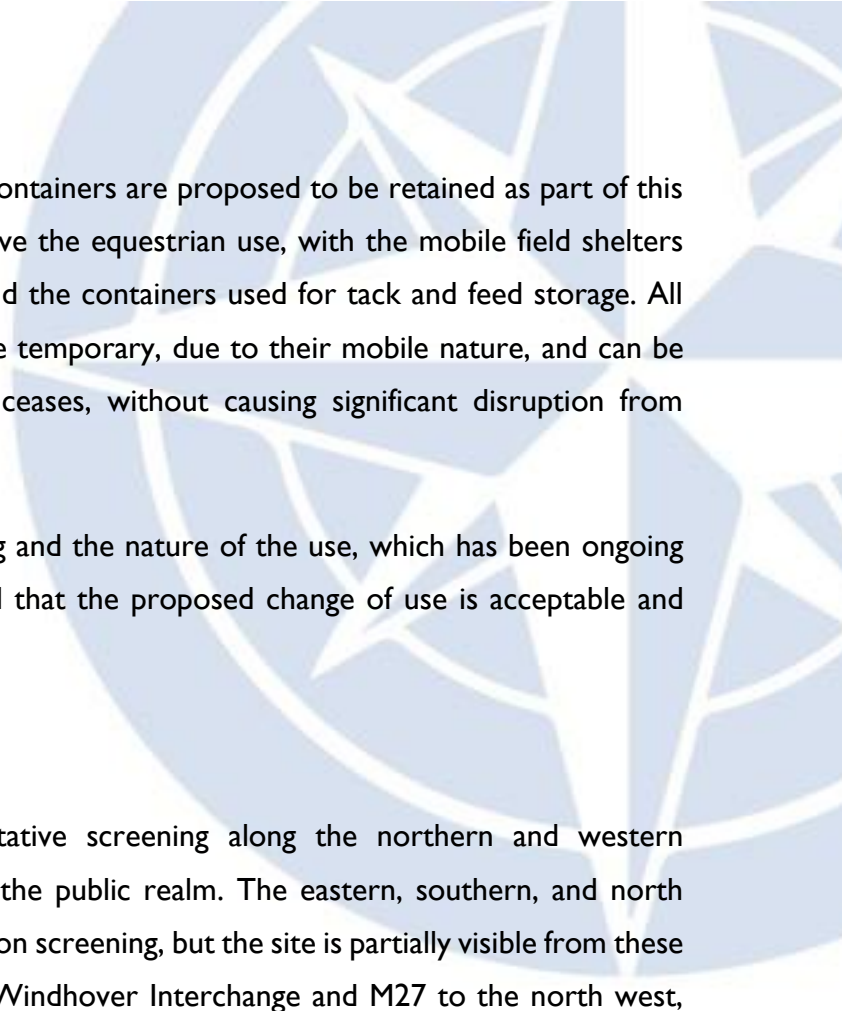
RATIONALE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT

Planning Considerations

- 6.1 The main planning considerations in this instance are the principle of development, the impact on the surrounding landscape character, impact on neighbouring amenity and impact on surrounding highway network. Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) have also been considered in the following assessment.

Principle of Development

- 6.2 The site is located within the Hedge End - Bursledon Settlement Gap and, as per the Eastleigh Borough Council Settlement Gap Policy Review (2017), the area is labelled as a 'predominantly rural landscape' within a 'countryside' location (p65-67 of the Local Plan). Equestrian activities in this location are supported by Strategic Policy S5, which states that planning permission will be granted for outdoor recreational activities, ensuring that adverse impacts are avoided wherever possible. In light of this, the principle of development in relation to the equestrian use is considered to be acceptable within this location.
- 6.3 The Local Plan emphasises that horse riding is a popular recreational activity within the Borough and may be acceptable in the countryside. This is due to the nature of the use being most suitable for a countryside location, as a result of greater space for horses to graze and be ridden safely. Therefore, the locational context is considered to be suitable for equestrian purposes.
- 6.4 The change of use from agricultural to equestrian is considered to be acceptable, due to the similar requirement for a rural location to function successfully and the similar impacts produced by both uses.
- 6.5 It is pertinent to acknowledge that the western section of the site has been used for the keeping of horses for many years and predates the applicant's ownership of the land. This use has been carried out for many years in this location without any significant disruption or adverse impacts as a result.

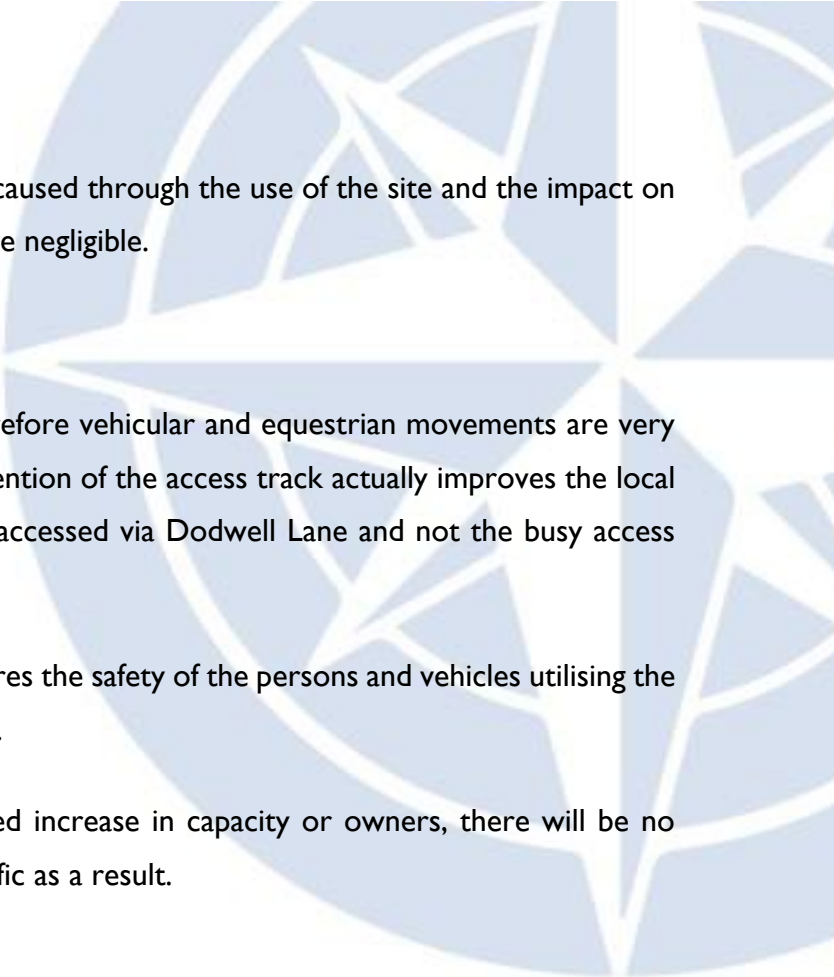
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- 6.6 The existing mobile field shelters and containers are proposed to be retained as part of this application. The structures directly serve the equestrian use, with the mobile field shelters used for accommodating the horses and the containers used for tack and feed storage. All structures on site are considered to be temporary, due to their mobile nature, and can be removed at a later date if their use ceases, without causing significant disruption from demolition.
- 6.7 Due to the context of the site's setting and the nature of the use, which has been ongoing for a number of years, it is considered that the proposed change of use is acceptable and consistent with the rural surroundings.

Landscape and Visual Impact

- 6.8 The site benefits from mature vegetative screening along the northern and western boundaries which restrict views from the public realm. The eastern, southern, and north western boundaries have some vegetation screening, but the site is partially visible from these locations. The site is visible from the Windhover Interchange and M27 to the north west, however this is not considered to be detrimental due to the nature of the busy roads, with views being very glimpse as a result.
- 6.9 Policy DM34 encourages new and enhanced recreational facilities, ensuring that the development does not detract from the rural character of the area. As discussed, equestrian uses are common within rural areas and therefore the structures and uses on site are not considered to be out of place with the existing landscape.
- 6.10 It is pertinent to note that no new built form is proposed. Therefore, the site and surrounding landscape will remain visually the same and there will be no adverse impact as a result of the retention of the structures.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

- 6.11 The land has been used for the keeping and grazing of horses for many years and it is considered to be a countryside use consistent with the surrounding area.
- 6.12 The lighting on site is minimal and controlled by motion sensor to avoid unnecessary disruption to neighbouring amenity.

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- 6.13 As a result, there is minimal disruption caused through the use of the site and the impact on neighbouring amenity is considered to be negligible.

Access and Highways

- 6.14 The site is used by one owner and therefore vehicular and equestrian movements are very limited. It should be noted that the retention of the access track actually improves the local highway safety, as the stables are now accessed via Dodwell Lane and not the busy access adjacent to the roundabout.
- 6.15 The position of the on-site parking ensures the safety of the persons and vehicles utilising the stables, rather than parking on the road.
- 6.16 As the use is existing, with no proposed increase in capacity or owners, there will be no increase in vehicular movements or traffic as a result.

Ecology and BNG

- 6.17 Given the application's retrospective nature, there is no requirement to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal or Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment.

SECTION 7

CONCLUSION

- 7.1 As demonstrated in this statement, the principle of development for the change of use from agricultural to equestrian and the retention of the structures for stabling, hay/feed store, tack room and access track is considered to be acceptable.
- 7.2 The change of use of land is entirely consistent with the countryside location of the site and no further changes are proposed. Given the siting and design of the structures on site, it is not considered that there is any adverse harm to the surrounding landscape character or the Settlement Gap it sits within.
- 7.3 The change of use will not result in any significant Highways or Ecological impacts, with this application simply seeking to regularise an existing use which has been ongoing without issue.
- 7.4 As such, the proposals are in accordance with the relevant Development Plan policies and will promote all three strands of sustainable development. Therefore, the development should be looked on favourably and approved without delay in accordance with Paragraph 11 of the NPPF.