

Mark Leedale Planning
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The Head of Planning,
Wokingham Borough Council,
Council Offices,
Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1WR.

Our Ref: FR/13/288
19th January 2026

Dear Mr Hindle,

**Fairview, Forest Road, Hurst, Berkshire RG40 5SA
252547**

I understand you visited the site last week and I wanted to take this opportunity to emphasise the matter of need for the proposed development.

- The existing stables are in a state of disrepair and cannot perform the required welfare requirements for the horses. That is why new stables are proposed and the limitation on demolition of the existing is consequential on ecology and the need for Bat surveys which cannot be undertaken until the end of April 2026.
- The existing storage of hay and feed is within containers which are unsuitable due to the lack of ventilation which causes the bedding to be damp and unusable. Much of it is currently wasted as a result of this and you have the justification in my previous letter for the barn - see below.
- Other buildings on the farm, accommodate the storage of diesel and chemicals to serve the land and machinery. Feed and bedding cannot be stored in the same building as chemicals or fuel as this leads to contamination and this would be extremely harmful to animal welfare.
- There are 5 horses and 3 foals which are 8 months old. These will be kept on the site although the foals are currently on other land where the lease arrangement is coming to an end as the holding is being sold.
- It is important to stable horses for training, management, and health reasons and this must be balanced with ample turnout time. The practice helps to acclimatise the horse to the routines and environments it will encounter throughout its life. The reasons for stabling are as follows:
 - Habituation to new environments and routines: Stabling teaches a young horse to be confident and relaxed in an enclosed space, which is a vital life skill for future activities such as travelling to shows, attending clinics, or moving to a new facility.
 - Preparation for potential veterinary needs or injury: If a horse becomes ill or injured and requires box rest, a horse already comfortable with stabling will experience significantly less stress, which can aid the healing process.

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- Groundwork and handling: The stable provides a safe, controlled environment for early groundwork, such as grooming, hoof handling for farrier visits, introducing tack (rugs, saddles, bridles), and learning to stand quietly when tied up.
- Dietary and weight management: Stabling allows owners to precisely control a young horse's diet and monitor food and water intake. This is particularly important for managing growth rates and preventing conditions like laminitis in ponies who might overeat on rich pasture.
- Protection from elements: A stable offers essential shelter from harsh weather conditions (extreme sun, wind, rain, midges), allowing the horse a place of warmth and comfort to rest.
- Monitoring health: When stabled, it is easier to monitor a horse's general health, including their droppings and eating patterns, which helps in noticing early signs of illness, such as colic.
- While stabling offers these benefits, it is crucial to balance stable time with ample opportunity for movement and social interaction (turnout), which are vital for a young horse's physical and mental development.
- Physical Development: Free movement in a paddock helps the musculoskeletal system develop especially with foals, building strong bones, muscles, and tendons.
- Social Skills: As herd animals, young horses need to interact and play with other horses to develop crucial social skills and self-restraint.
- Mental Well-being: Restricting movement and social interaction for prolonged periods can lead to stress, boredom, and abnormal behaviours (stereotypes) such as weaving or box-walking.
- Ultimately, the goal is to create a well-balanced, confident, and sound adult horse through a combination of appropriate training, a consistent routine, and a management plan that respects their natural needs.

To reiterate the points made in my letter of 8th January, when the fields are wet - and they have a propensity to be so in this location - the horses need to be brought in as they can be prone to mud fever and other related issues when subjected to periods of time on wet muddy ground.

In regard to the size of the proposed barn, this has been carefully considered in respect of need. This will be for bedding and hay. Bedding accounts for 40 bags every 6 weeks which is wood shavings in sealed bags. They are 1.0m high by 0.5m by 0.5m.

- The stables are mucked out on a daily basis with the muck being stored on a heap which is then removed via tractor and trailer. Each horse can use between 1 and 2 bags of shavings per week depending on the season and the need for stabling as opposed to being kept in the open paddocks.
- Hay in the barn is stored all year-round and is grown and cut once a year. It is purchased when it is cut in the summer. In all between 150 and 200 bails are purchased to last a full year. Although they vary, the standard bails are 1,200cms x 700cm x 500cms which allow for ease of handling whilst being cost effective.
- When aggregated and allowing for appropriate stacking techniques, the hay takes up around 75 cu. m and at 2.5m in height, a floor area of circa 185 sq m for 175 bales. This accounts for 2 of the bays shown on drawing MLP/06 with the remaining open bay available for the rolling supply of bagged shavings.

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- In respect of machinery this includes 2 small tractors; a field roller; 1 chain harrows; 1 paddock sweeper; 1 topper; 1 hedge cutter, a 3.5tonne horse trailer; a horse box (3.5 tonnes). Aside from the horse box and trailer, all are used to maintain the fields and paddocks.
- The horses are solely restricted to the occupants of Fairview as a private use only.

I trust that this satisfactorily details the size of the barn and the required stables. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Leedale

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cc Client

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