



Robert Lees  
Linkswood Stud  
Wickham St Pauls  
Halstead  
Essex, CO92PE



Date: 27/ 11/2023

Land to the West of The Street, Preston St Mary  
Stud Manager Dwelling

To whom it may concern

I have been asked by the Applicants to make this statement in support of their planning application for a mobile home and equestrian barn.

I own and run, together with my wife Avril Lees, Linkswood Stud which currently operates as a veterinary clinic and horse breeding facility. I have over 40 years experience of equine veterinary surgery and horse breeding.

The Applicants have asked me, in my capacity as a veterinary surgeon, to explain to the Council why a dwelling within sight and sound of pregnant mares is essential to the pregnant mare and foal's wellbeing. I have set out a bullet point list below which I hope demonstrates the justification as to why any dwelling needs to be close to hand:

- 95% of Mares foal between 320 days and 360 days of conception. With the majority foaling during the night.
- Problems foaling have been reported to occur in between 4% and 10% of pregnant Mares.
- Normal foaling is a fast process, with most foals being born within 20 minutes of the Mare beginning to strain. Foaling's with a duration longer than 30 minutes are associated with significantly increased foal mortality.
- Early recognition and intervention during dystocia is required to save the life of the foal, save the life of the Mare and preserve the future fertility of the Mare.
- In the first six hours after a foal is born it is important to ensure the Mare accepts the foal, the foal is active and is sucking milk from the Mare properly and that the Mare is well and

Email

Date: 27/ 11/2023

Land to the West of The Street, Preston St Mary

Stud Manager Dwelling

Page 2

passes her afterbirth intact. Some foals will require hourly attendance to ensure survival during their first few days of life.

- From both the animal welfare and economic points of view it is imperative that help is close at hand to monitor foaling. This in my opinion requires the Stud groom to be able to live on site at the Stud. As I know from my own experience, having attended foaling mares for over forty years, minutes do count. Early recognition of a Mare having a problem foaling can make the difference between life and death.

Should the Council require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on the details above.

Yours sincerely

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Robert Lees.

Robert Lees MRCVS