

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DELEGATED REPORT

13/02930/FUL

Woody Riding Club, Philpots Farm, Hook Lane, West Hoathly, East Grinstead, West Sussex
6 low level floodlights for the external menage

Mr And Mrs Hirst

LIST OF POLICIES

C1, C4, R12, B1, B3 - Mid Sussex Local Plan
NPPF

The District Plan was submitted to Government on 24th July 2013 and an Inspector has been appointed to carry out the Examination of the Plan. However, the policies in this plan carry limited weight as all have received at least one objection during the publication period.

ASSESSMENT

Planning application 13/2930/FUL seeks planning consent for the erection of six floodlights for the ménage at Woody Riding Club, Philpots Farm, Hook Lane, West Hoathly.

The floodlights are to be erected for the ménage that itself was granted planning consent under application reference number 13/03648/COU. There are to be six floodlights, each measuring 5 metres in height. The hours of use are stated to be between the hours of 08:00 to 19:30 seven days a week.

This application originally sought consent for floodlights as well as the ménage but, as no lighting detail had been submitted, they were removed for consideration from the scheme.

The NPPF states that Local Authorities should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. To do so it states that Local Planning Authorities should support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings. In addition they should promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land based rural businesses.

Reflective of this approach is Local Plan policy R12 that relates to all forms of equestrian development. This policy supports the principle of development such as that currently proposed subject to a number of criteria being met. Such criteria include seeking to preserve the character and appearance of the countryside; protecting the amenities of adjacent residents and; preventing the generation of a level of traffic which would result in substantial additional use of the local road network or which would prejudice highway safety.

In support of this application the applicant has provided lighting detail that has been assessed by the Council's Environmental Protection team.

No objection has been raised with regards to the impact on neighbouring residential amenity

caused by any potential light spillage from the floodlights. Conditions are though suggested by Environmental Protection officers: restricting the hours of use to those stipulated by the applicant and; ensuring the use of baffles if required by the LPA.

Given these comments, the distance to the nearest neighbour and the hours of use restrictions, it can therefore be concluded that the impact on neighbouring amenity will not be significant meaning the application complies with policy B3 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan.

The other key consideration is the impact on the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Paragraph 115 of the NPPF states that "great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty." A similar ethos is found at local level where Policy C4 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan requires that proposals preserve or enhance the AONB.

The floodlights, at just five metres high, are relatively low level and will be located adjacent to the stable building that is a comparable height owing to the change in ground levels (ménage was dug into the ground). On the opposite side there is a low level but long chicken shed and the location of the floodlights between these buildings helps to contain the development within the existing facility. Given the location, coupled with the restrictions on hours of use, it can be concluded that in this case the proposal accords with local and national policy in that the character of the AONB will be preserved.

The Parish Council comments are noted. However, having assessed the application on its own merits, it has been concluded that the floodlights are an acceptable height and that the proposed hours of use will not prejudice residential or visual amenity.

CONCLUSION

The floodlights will not significantly affect neighbouring residential amenity and the character of the surrounding area of outstanding natural beauty will be preserved. As a result the proposal complies with Policies C1, C4, R12, B1 and B3 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan as well as the NPPF requirements.

Decision: PERMISSION

Case Officer: Mr Stuart Malcolm