Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0534/23 Recommendation – Temp PP

Site: **Land at Sompting Brooks Part of Sompting Estate South of Test Road, Sompting**

Proposal: **The erection of a Mongolian Yurt, known as a Ger. 18ft diameter and 10ft height (including the wooden base) to be placed in the well-being garden at The Fen Farm - Sompting Community Farm. The Ger is a wooden framed structure with an outer canvas covering. The aim is for the Ger to be in place all year round to serve as a dry area for volunteers on the farm to gather for meetings and food growing, craft and mindfulness and well-being activities. The Ger is an original Mongolian Yurt that travelled from Mongolia to France about 30 years ago. It has been in situ in Northern France for many years and it has recently been gifted to the charity to be used at the farm. The plan is to restore the Ger to its original splendour. A small solar panel will be ground mounted for lighting. A small ramp will be created for wheelchair access.**

Date of site visit: Visited previously

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The site sits to the south of Test Road in Sompting and is accessed via existing metal gates and a laid trackway. The site is being used by the charity Sustainable Sussex (in connection with Sompting Estate) as a community farm, nature trail and community orchard. Current activities include food growing, animal management, wool processing, woodwork, mindfulness and wellbeing activities.

It is proposed to erect a Mongolian Yurt, known as a Ger. It will measure 5.5m diameter and 3.5m high (including the wooden base) and is to be placed in the well-being garden at the farm. It is a wooden framed structure with an outer canvas covering (predominantly white but with decorative door and pattern) and the aim is for it to be on the site all year round to serve as a dry area for volunteers on the farm to gather for meetings and food growing, craft and mindfulness and well-being activities. The yurt is an original Mongolian Yurt that travelled from Mongolia to France about 30 years ago. It has been in situ in Northern France for many years and has recently been gifted to the charity to be used at the farm. A small solar panel is to be ground mounted for lighting. A small ramp will be created for wheelchair access.

The site lies within the countryside and Local Green Gap.

Relevant Planning History

AWDM/0323/19 - Hybrid planning application. (1) Outline planning permission (all matters reserved with the exception of access) for the erection of up to and including 520 dwellings, community orchard/growing space, non-vehicular links between the site and Worthing, traffic calming measures, associated landscaping, open space / recreation areas, provision of formal playing pitches, ecological enhancements including improvements and extension to Cokeham Brooks Local Wildlife Site, and all other associated development works. (2) Full planning permission for 96 dwellings (part of the overall 520 dwellings comprising 2 no 1-bed, 37no. 2-bed, 38 no. 3-bed and 19 no 4-bed homes, including 30 affordable housing units) and all other associated development works (Phase1). (3) Change of use of land south of Hamble Recreation Ground to community/education and agricultural/horticultural uses associated with a new Community Farm. (Development site includes Land West of Dankton Lane Leading from the East of Upper Brighton Road Sompting) - pending consideration

AWDM/1375/17 - Restoration of upper section of the Broadwater Brook tributary of the Teville Stream involving the excavation of a new channel, construction of three silt traps, part infill of existing channel and restoration of surrounding land (EPIC project) – approved and under construction

AWDM/2022/20 - The installation of three shipping containers and a disabled access toilet used as a temporary base for volunteer activities by Sustainable Sussex and the Ouse & Adur Rivers Trust's 'EPIC Project' on land to the south of Test Road and provision of 6no. car parking spaces and 6no. cycle spaces

NOTICE/0035/22 - Application for Prior Notification of agricultural development for proposed Poly tunnel for agricultural use

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The **Highways Authority** has no objection. The Yurt is not anticipated to give rise to a material number of additional trips given its purpose to serve existing volunteers of the site.

Adur and Worthing Councils: Public Health: No adverse comments

Sompting Parish Council: No objection

Representations

None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policy 13, 14, 15, 30, 31, 32, 33, 36
National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

Planning Assessment

Principle

The site is within the Local Green Gap between Sompting and Worthing. The preamble to Policies 13 and 14 of the Local Plan advises:

"*Given the limited amount of countryside in Adur, it is important that the few uses allowed in the countryside and gaps genuinely require a countryside location and cannot be located elsewhere. The countryside is generally unsuitable for active recreation or leisure uses requiring permanent built facilities*"

The yurt will be used by Sustainable Sussex in connection with the community farm on the site, which forms part of the wider West Sompting development. As such, the development is considered to be acceptable in principle. However, given the nature of the development (i.e. a tent-like structure), and its location, it is recommended that any permission be temporary only.

Visual amenity

The yurt has a tent-like appearance and is predominantly white in colour. It will be more noticeable than if it was a darker colour but it is to be located within a secluded farm site and will not be particularly visible in the wider landscape. The site has recently been tidied up following previous unauthorised use of the land and it has undergone a significant visual improvement.

In view of the community benefits of the farm project, it is considered that a temporary permission can be granted without causing serious harm to the wider countryside or undermining the Gap policy, particularly as it is a non-permanent structure.

Residential amenity

The yurt is considered to be sufficiently distant from the nearest dwellings to not cause a loss of amenity. Activity associated with the buildings is not expected to be particularly intrusive or noisy and will be used by existing volunteers. Subject to appropriate controls on the use, there are no amenity concerns.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Approved Plans
2. Temp PP 5 years
3. Use restriction – to be used in connection with Sompting Community Farm only

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

This permission is for a temporary period only and does not in any way suggest that the location would be suitable for more permanent buildings in the long term.

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 9 October 2023

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 9 October 2023