Expiry Date - 15/11/2012

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1157/12 **Recommendation – Approve**

Site: **Grazing Land East Of Marquis Of Granby West Street Sompting West Sussex**

Proposal: **Stationing of caravan used as tack room/storage and installation of garden shed for use as first aid point/rest room in south east part of field (both retrospective) and proposed replacement field shelter on southern boundary of field.**

Site and Surroundings:

The site is located in an area of open countryside, outside the defined built - up area, between Sompting village (Conservation Area) and the Sompting/Lancing urban area within the Sompting Estate.

The application site itself stretches from Church Lane to the west; West St and the housing at Malthouse Close to the south; the A27 to the north (and beyond this the South Downs National Park) and Dankton Lane/ Wildlife park/housing at St Marys Close to the east. Its area is given as 12.9 hectares. South of West St, the land is agricultural land.

The land is generally flat and put to use as a semi serviced livery paddock for horses. The site comprises three large, mainly open fields, with hedges. The most intensively used part is a rectangular shaped field bounded by Church Lane, West Street, the wild life park and a meadow to the south of the A27. This is accessed off West St adjacent to a pair of bungalows. The access leads to a gravelled car park some 70n or so ms in abutting the wildlife park taking a dozen or more vehicles. Beyond this is a linear collection of building/structures/vehicles, abutting the substantial historic flint wall and vegetation which mark the boundary at this point. These included 3 horse boxes; hay stack ;former summer house (garden shed) now used as first aid/tea making area/shelter ; ramshackle barn with hay stacks; small carriage used as a tack room and adjacent small timber shed; chicken run and collection of play and other equipment.

The large open field to the west is subdivided into smaller fields, partly by timber post and rail fences with wire meshes but also by plastic tapes and posts and electric fences. The individual paddocks so delineated number 10 and are sublet to equestrians to keep their horses (Shetland ponies). The proprietors keep their horse in the meadow to the north. Each of the paddocks contains a mono pitched shelter for the pony – either a timber structure or made from corrugated. These generally face east

Planning permission for the livery paddock was granted in 2003. Before that it was in agricultural use. Planning permissions (part retrospective) have subsequently been granted for a hay shelter in 2005; 3 field shelters and sheds in 2006 and a further 3 in 2009.

Description of Development

The application is partly retrospective to retain the former summer house building (3.2 ms long; 1.8 ms tall and 2.4 ms wide); the small caravan (3.6 ms long and 2.3 ms tall) for the livery support purposes outlined above and to build a replacement horse shelter by the southern boundary, 50 ms or so to the west of the entrance. The applicants report a previous shelter was blown away in the wind. The shelter is identical to one of the 3 field shelters approved in 2009 under ADC/0028/09- that previously approved 4.9 ms wide; 3.8 ms deep and 2.5 ms tall and stained green.

Date Of Site Visit:

3.9.12

Neighbours Checked:

Y / N

Representations and Relevant Consultation Responses:

Sompting PC: no objections

Environmental Health Officer: no objections

Relevant Planning Policies:

Saved Adur Local Plan Policies; AC1; AC4; AC15, AB4
Adur Draft Policy 13
South East Plan policies C4 and C5
Design Bulletin No 3: Development involving Horses in the Countryside
The National Planning Policy Framework

Planning Assessment:

The principal issues raised by this proposal are:-

Principle of development in the countryside
Impact on the amenity of neighbours
Visual impact
Access.

Principle of development

The principle of the use of this part of the countryside as livery paddocks was established in 2003 when planning permission was first granted. It makes effective use of an area of urban fringe, severed from the larger tracts of countryside still in agricultural use to the south by West St and to the north by the A27.

Since that time the use has intensified with planning permissions subsequently granted for an upgraded access, a gymkhana, a barn structure and a number of horse shelters and sheds.

The current application proposals add to these.

The use is now characterised by a significant linear collection of buildings/ structures on the eastern boundary adjacent to an extensive car park and large number of smaller structures dotted around the fields. The fields themselves have been subdivided in an intensive and anomalous manner.

All this suburbanises the appearance of the site, the impact of which on the surrounding countryside is aggravated by the open vehicular access and patchy hedging to West St in particular, allowing extensive views on to the site.

Planning policy resists degradation of the countryside generally but policy AC15 of the adopted Local Plan and allied Design Bulletin No.3: Development Involving Horses in the Countryside is most relevant. This policy states;

Planning permission will be granted for uses in the countryside involving horses where existing buildings are utilised. Where a new building or associated development is proposed permission will only be granted if:-

(a) the need for the development is compelling;
((b) it is located to cause minimal adverse effect on the landscape and its siting is, where practicable, well-related to existing buildings and does not result in sporadic development that erodes the open character of the countryside;
(c) its scale is appropriate to the locality and its design and construction are of a high standard and fit in sympathetically with the rural surroundings;
(d) the associated access and parking provision is acceptable under Policy AT12;
(e) in the case of developments involving horse riding in the countryside, reasonable access exists to existing bridleways;
(f) it would not cause unacceptable detraction from residential amenity; and
(g) it does not conflict materially with guidelines set out in the Council's Design Bulletin No.3: Development Involving Horses in the Countryside.

Unless it is evident that the need for any new buildings is long term, only temporary buildings of appropriate quality will be permitted and will be subject to conditions requiring their future removal.

Judged against this policy, a case can be made for the retention of the caravan and summer house on a temporary basis. Whilst they do suburbanise the site still further, they are small and are relatively well screened from the east at least by the existing building and adjacent boundary wall and vegetation. They meet an acknowledged demand for storing riding equipment; dispensing of first aid by vets/staff and a sheltered area for tenants and the proprietor to stay. However, it would not be appropriate to allow these rather ramshackle structures permanently with consequent long term harm and establishing a precedent for future urban consolidation. A five year temporary planning permission (or whenever the use ceases which ever is the sooner) is appropriate and has been discussed with the applicants and strikes an appropriate balance with the cost of the buildings.

The horse shelter replaces a previous structure and provides protection from the elements for the ponies. It does not allow any more ponies on site than the cap on the original planning permission (20 horses) and upgrades the appearance of the previous structure but is somewhat prominent on the boundary of the site where the hedge is discontinuous and the trees were reportedly cut back earlier this year due to infection.

A resiting in the NW corner of the sub paddock would reduce its prominence and has been discussed with applicant.

In any event, some supplementary hedge screening is required along a length of 70 metres or so to the west of the entrance to block views of the new shelter and the caravan and summer house as well as the accumulating unsightly collection of existing building /structures from existing open views from the south. Sompting Estates report such screening is already planned independent of this current application along Church Lane and this would complement this improvement explain. This has been discussed with the applicants and Sompting Estates, though the latter are resistant to the proposal.

No harm to the wildlife park (nature reserve) arises from the proposals.

Impact on the amenity of neighbours

The new structures are remote from the nearest houses and the level of intensification associated with these is minimal.

Visual impact

The works are small and remote from the Conservation Area and South Downs National Park and with the safeguards proposed would not harm visual amenity.

Access

No change is proposed and no significant intensification is anticipated.

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APPROVE for the reason:-

The proposal adds to the existing array of buildings and structures but would not unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the countryside with the safeguards imposed and no harm to neighbour amenities or the visual qualities of the area would arise. As such, the proposal complies with Saved Adur Local Plan Policies; AC1; AC4; AC15, AB4; South East Plan policies C4 and C5; Adur Local Plan Draft Policy 13 and Design Bulletin No 3: Development involving Horses in the Countryside and the National Planning Policy Framework

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Implement new shelter 3 years
2. This permission relates to the following approved plans:-

Items 1 and 2
Un-numbered site plan 1: 3000 and photographs
Location plan: Map 1 (excluding no 3 horse shelter)
Un-numbered site plans 1:500 (excluding no 3 horse shelter)

3. Caravan and garden shed removed by 31.10.17

4. New horse shelter to be stained green to match existing and notwithstanding the approved plans the shelter shall be sited in the NW corner of the relevant paddock.

5. A landscaping scheme to supplement the existing hedge along the southern boundary with West Street from a point to the east of the vehicular access to a point to be agreed with Local Planning Authority to the west shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and implemented by the end of the next planting season. It shall be retained thereafter.

Is recommendation contrary to any representations? N

Case Officer signed:P. Devonport Date: 26.10.12

Authorised and signed by: Gary Peck Date: 30.10.12

IS RECOMMENDATION CONTRARY TO LETTER(S) OF REPRESENTATION? y