



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

DEV/SE/15/69

Development Control Committee

3 December 2015

Planning Application DC/15/1303/FUL

Land at Meadow Farm, Sharp's Lane, Horringer

Date: 2 October 2015 **Expiry Date:** 1 January 2016
Registered:

Case Officer:	Charlotte Waugh	Recommendation:	Approve
Parish:	Horringer Cum Ickworth	Ward:	Horringer and Whelnetham
Proposal:	Planning Application - Indoor equestrian school and storage barn		
Site:	Land at Meadow Farm, Sharp's Lane, Horringer		
Applicant:	Mr Richard Ames		

Synopsis:

Application under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Associated matters.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Committee determine the attached application and associated matters.

CONTACT CASE OFFICER: Charlotte Waugh
Email: charlotte.waugh@westsuffolk.gov.uk
Telephone: 01284 757349

Background:

This application is referred to the Committee as it is a major application and the Officers' recommendation of approval is contrary to the views of the Parish Council.

It is proposed that Members visit the site on Thursday 26 November 2015.

Proposal:

1. Planning permission is sought for the erection of an indoor equestrian school and a storage barn.
2. The equestrian school would measure approximately 50 x 24 metres with an eaves height of 4.5 metres and a ridge height of 6.6 metres. The building would be constructed of blockwork with olive green boarding above and a grey profiled sheet roof. Full height doors would be located on each end and on the northern side elevation.
3. The storage barn would measure approximately 24.5 x 10.7 metres with an eaves height of 4.6 metres and a ridge height of 6.4 metres. The building would be constructed of profiled metal sheeting with green elevations and a grey roof with roof lights.
4. Amended plans were submitted during the course of the application which in addition to the above, included the replacement of an existing timber stable block containing 3 boxes with a new block of 3 boxes and a covered wash down area.

Application Supporting Material:

5. Information submitted with the application as follows:
 - Location plan
 - Site layout plan
 - Proposed plans and elevations
 - Plans of replacement stables – received 13.11.15
 - Landscaping plan – received 16.11.15
 - Landscape Appraisal
 - Planning Statement
 - Planning Assessment
 - Ecological Scoping Survey

Site Details:

6. Meadow Farm is an established equine facility which is used by the applicant as part of his equine enterprise, including equine eventing team and training.
7. The applicant's land extends beyond the application site to 325ha, some of which is being operated as an equestrian enterprise with other land

being in agricultural use. The existing buildings include 2 stable blocks, a barn, a groom's dwelling (known as Stable Barn) and the main dwelling, Meadow Cottage, which is a Grade II listed building. The building is located within the countryside, outside of the Housing Settlement Boundary of Horringer.

8. The application site is located to the south of the site adjacent to an existing ménage and stable block and currently comprises paddocks. It is accessed via a track which runs from the stables and dwelling at the top of the site right through to these rear paddocks.

Planning History:

9. The site has an extensive planning history, including enforcement related matters, with the below being considered relevant:
- 10.E/89/3348/P – Erection of hay barn – Approved
- 11.E/89/3347/P - Retention of stables and change of use of agricultural land to garden/paddocks - Approved
- 12.E/95/2817/P - Erection of stable block and tack room (following demolition of existing stables) – Refused – Allowed on appeal
- 13.SE/05/02602 - Retention of horse exerciser - Approved
- 14.SE/06/2151 – Erection of single storey dwelling to be used as grooms accommodation - Refused
- 15.SE/07/0251 Erection of single storey dwelling to be used as grooms accommodation – Refused – Allowed on appeal
- 16.SE/10/1004 - Retention of 1 ½ storey dwelling for groom's accommodation - Approved
- 17.SE/12/0994/FUL - Planning Application - Retention of replacement barn – Withdrawn
- 18.ENF/11/0235: Enforcement notice issued for the erection of a building without planning permission:22.05.2013 – giving 4 months from the 1st July 2013 to remove the unauthorised structure unless an appeal is made
- 19.SE/13/0826 – Retention of replacement barn (resubmission of SE/12/0994/FUL) – Refused – Dismissed on appeal
- 20.APP/E3525/C/13/2200691 – Appeal against enforcement notice ENF/11/0235: Removal of an unauthorised structure – Dismissed 26/03/2014
- 21.DC/14/1117/FUL Planning Application - Extension to existing barn following demolition of 3 bays – Refused – Appeal dismissed

22.DC/14/1307/FUL - Planning Application - Proposed equestrian building incorporating indoor school, boxes and hay store – Withdrawn

Consultations:

23.Highway Authority: No objection.

Environmental Health (Land Contamination): No comment.

Public Health and Housing: No objections.

Natural England: No objections.

Landscape and Ecologist: No objections.

Conservation Officer: No objections.

Representations:

24.Horringer Parish Council: Object on the following grounds:

- *The application is contrary to Policy DM13. The site is located within a Special Landscape Area and involves large scale buildings of industrial design and appearance, which would be a dominant and intrusive feature in an area of attractive countryside*
- *The application does not comply with Policy DM32 which requires (inter alia) that new equine development in the countryside should not have a significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the locality and new buildings should be located within or adjacent to an existing group of buildings and have a minimal visual impact within the landscape. In this case the proposals would encroach substantially into the surrounding countryside and are poorly related to nearby buildings.*
- *The development represents a significant intensification of the existing equine activities on the site. It is likely to give rise to increased nuisance to local residents in terms of noise, lighting and substantially increased vehicular activity both within the site and in Sharpes Lane itself.*
- *Inadequate information has been provided to illustrate the full impact of the proposals on the local landscape generally and nearby residential properties in particular. Similarly, the application also provides inadequate information on traffic generation and vehicular movements arising from the development.*

25. Representations have been received from three local residents raising the following summarised objections:

- No further development should be considered until the illegal building is

- removed
- The equine business is growing at a rapid rate – increased traffic and noise
- Inaccuracies on location plan
- Noise generated by heavy machines, generator leaf blower, quad bikes, reversing horns
- Traffic creation – access and parking
- Invasive lighting has increased over the years
- Contrary to adopted policies
- No landscaping proposed between the development and Sharpes Barn
- Loss of amenity
- Restrictive covenant precludes commercial use
- Intensification of use in rural area

Policy: The following policies of the Joint Development Management Policies Document 2015 and the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy December 2010 have been taken into account in the consideration of this application:

26. Joint Development Management Policies Document 2015:

- Policy DM1 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy DM2 Creating Places
- Policy DM5 Development in the Countryside
- Policy DM11 Protected Species
- Policy DM13 Landscape Features
- Policy DM32 Business and Domestic Equine Related Activities in the Countryside
- Policy DM46 Parking Standards

27. St Edmundsbury Core Strategy December 2010

- Policy CS3 Design & Local Distinctiveness
- Policy CS13 Rural Areas

28. Rural Vision 2031

- RV1 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

Other Planning Policy:

29. National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

- core principles
- Section 7 – Requiring Good Design

Officer Comment:

30. The planning issues to be considered in the determination of the application are:

- Principle of Development
- Impact on Visual Amenity/Listed building/Landscape
- Impact on Residential Amenity
- Impact on Ecology

Principle of Development

31. The applicant runs a 3 day eventing team which competes at major events including the Olympics, as well as running a breeding programme to rear and train horses for this team. This is well established on the site, with the equine operation commencing in 2001. This establishment is evidenced in the appeal decision for the groom's house in 2008 where the planning inspector acknowledges the unique nature of the enterprise and affords considerable weight to the contribution the enterprise makes to the country's sporting life.
32. The site benefits from an existing ménage, however this is outside and unlit which means its use is limited to daylight hours and good weather. The proposal for an indoor riding area will allow training to continue in all seasons and will mean horses do not need to be exercised on the road. In addition, the storage barn will replace that existing at the northern boundary.
33. The NPPF and Development Management Policies encourage the creation and expansion of rural businesses and agricultural diversification and the application gains support from the provisions of this local and national policy. The principle of further equine development on the site is considered acceptable subject to satisfactory impacts on the landscape, listed building and residential amenity.

Impact on Visual Amenity

34. This application is submitted following withdrawal of the previous application which has allowed discussion with Officers in order to address the previous concerns raised. These concerns related to the impact of the buildings (previously 1 building) on the surrounding landscape as well as on the grade II listed host dwelling. This revised proposal is to construct an indoor equestrian school and storage barn within the countryside to the south of the existing cluster of buildings at Meadow Farm but closely related to the existing ménage and stable block. Therefore, whilst the buildings are proposed behind existing built development and as such, on land which is currently open, it is adjacent to existing facilities.
35. The proposed position of the structures now respects the strategic gap between the residential properties to the west and Meadow Farm. This gap is part of the setting of the listed farmhouse which will remain open and unchanged. The proposed buildings are unlikely to be visible from Sharpes Lane and will be sufficiently distant from all neighbouring properties such that they will not be overbearing. The buildings will not be visible from Meadow Cottage or in views with it and will allow the retention of the open aspect the listed building currently enjoys. On this basis, the Conservation Officer is satisfied that the proposed development will not adversely affect the setting of the listed building.
36. Adopted landscape policies allow development which respects the local landscape character and setting. The proposal is supported by a landscape appraisal as well as a landscape plan which has been revised during the course of the application. The landscape appraisal includes an assessment of the likely impact of the proposals from the B1066 and also identifies

that there is potential for the buildings to be partially visible from some areas to the south, particularly the ridge line of the structures which would be the most visible element especially in winter.

37. The landscape plan proposes a 10 metre wide woodland belt which would surround the indoor riding area and would give the appearance of a small plantation when viewed at a distance from the countryside. In addition, a tree and hedge border would be planted to surround the western paddock and would provide a degree of screening to views from Glebe Close. Whilst the top of the buildings would remain visible, due to the separation distance and the softening provided by the planting the development is not considered to appear dominant in views. A condition is recommended to ensure that the landscaping scheme is implemented in accordance with the plans submitted.

Impact on residential amenity

38. The buildings themselves are located to the south of the site where they are not visible from Sharpes Lane. The closest dwellings to the development are Sharpes Barn, which is to the north east of the application site where the storage barn will be approximately 140 metres away and the indoor riding area behind this at approximately 165 metres away. 1 Glebe Close is located to the north west of the application site and will be approximately 130 and 125 metres away respectively. Whilst views from Glebe Close are currently open, the boundary between the site and Sharpes Barn is already planted with trees and hedging, albeit they are not yet fully established, which is in the neighbours ownership. Whilst this landscape buffer will not completely screen views of the proposed buildings, it will ensure they are not overly dominant as well as help to contain any activity associated with the proposal.
39. Concerns have been received from neighbouring occupants and the Parish Council regarding the intensification of the use of the site. At present, the site has sufficient stabling to accommodate 21 horses. No further stables are proposed as part of this development and as such, this number is unlikely to increase as a result of this proposal. The facilities proposed will enable the horses to be exercised and trained year round and through inclement weather. Therefore, whilst it would be fair to say that activity on the site may increase, this activity will take place within the proposed building where it will have no impact on residential amenity and will mean horses do not need to otherwise leave the site for this purpose.
40. A barn has been erected at the northern end of the site, close to the access with Sharpe's Lane which does not benefit from planning permission. Members may be aware that this building is subject to an extant enforcement notice which has not been complied with, and in such case non-compliance constitutes a criminal offence. This is currently being progressed by the Enforcement team and at the time of writing there is no further information that can be put into the public domain. The applicant claims that the storage barn proposed will replace that existing, albeit on a smaller scale. However, these issues need to be resolved independently.

41. Furthermore, Environmental Health are currently investigating a noise complaint, largely due to the use of a leaf blower at the northern end of the site. It is not considered that this impacts on the consideration of this application and the Environmental Health Officer is satisfied that the proposed development is acceptable in all regards. Statutory noise nuisances can be dealt with under Environmental Health legislation and as such, this issue can be pursued independently from the planning process.
42. At present the majority of activity within the site is focused at the northern end, where the site adjoins the residential curtilages of two separate dwellings. The intention to relocate the storage barn to the southern end of the site will take the current activity (vehicle movements, movement of straw bales, hay and feed, loading of horses for transportation, use of horse treadmill etc) away from the adjacent residential dwellings and as such, reduce the noise and activity which neighbouring occupants endure currently.
43. Parking spaces have been shown on the submitted site layout to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority. The development proposed should not increase the amount of vehicle movements to the site and will re-locate vehicles and horse transporters to the new storage barn, thus allowing horses to be loaded and vehicles to be stored at the southern end of the site.
44. Consequently, it is appreciated that neighbouring occupants have experienced difficulties in the past due to the close proximity of development to common boundaries. However, the development proposed will re-locate the main activities of the enterprise to the rear of the site where it will enjoy a larger separation distance from residential dwellings and on that basis, will improve residential amenity.

Impact on Ecology

45. An ecological scoping survey was undertaken which concluded that no species were using the site and there was low potential for bats or other protected species to be affected as a result of this development.

Conclusion:

46. The buildings proposed have a large footprint and will undoubtedly be seen in the landscape, especially whilst landscaping is maturing. However, their impact on wider countryside views is mitigated by the substantial woodland belt proposed. Additionally, due to their proposed location the buildings will not affect the setting of the listed building or residential amenity but will re-locate the hub of the enterprise further from adjacent dwellings.
47. In conclusion, the principle and detail of the development is considered to be acceptable and in compliance with relevant development plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Recommendation:

48.It is **RECOMMENDED** that planning permission be **Granted** subject to the following conditions:

1. Time limit (01a)
2. Landscaping to be implemented in accordance with plans
3. Details of lighting to be submitted and approved prior to installation
4. Development to be in accordance with approved plans (14FP)

Documents:

All background documents including application form, drawings and other supporting documentation relating to this application can be viewed online:

http://svr-plandms-02:8080/IDOXSoftware/IG_search?app_id=1002&FormParameter1=DC%2F15%2F1303%2FFUL