

## BOROUGH OF KETTERING

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Full Planning Committee - 11/02/2014</b>	<b>Item No: 5.3</b>
<b>Report Originator</b>	<b>Alan Davies Development Officer</b>	<b>Application No: KET/2013/0760</b>
<b>Wards Affected</b>	<b>Slade</b>	
<b>Location</b>	<b>Wheatfield Lodge Farm, High Street, Harrington</b>	
<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Full Application: Change of use from paddock to manege with associated landscaping and lighting</b>	
<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Mr D Drew</b>	

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- To describe the above proposals
- To identify and report on the issues arising from it
- To state a recommendation on the application

### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL MANAGER RECOMMENDS that this application be APPROVED subject to the following Condition(s):-

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this planning permission.

REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and to prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

2. The floodlights hereby approved shall only be switched on after 07.00 hours and switched off no later than 21.00 hours on any given day.

REASON: To ensure the lighting does not have a detrimental impact upon neighbouring residents in accordance with Policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

3. No development shall take place on site until details of the surface of the manege hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be constructed other than in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: In the interests of amenity in accordance with Policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

## **Officers Report for KET/2013/0760**

This application is reported for Committee decision because a ward member has asked for it to be considered.

### **3.0 Information**

#### **Relevant Planning History**

KET/2012/0470 – Change of use of land and buildings to equestrian use. Approved 07/12/2012.

#### **Site Description**

Officer's site inspection was carried out on 16/12/2013.

The application property is a former farm set in open countryside to the west of the village of Harrington, approximately 4 kilometres west of Rothwell. At the front of the site, facing onto High Street, is an area for parking in front of a stable block. On the east side of this stable block there is a track into the site. The site is a large collection of grassed fields separated by post and wire fences and used as horse paddocks. The site lacks mature vegetation such as trees and boundary hedges, resulting in an open, expansive character. The site slopes downward from east to west. There is also a significant dip in the land in between the application site and the village of Harrington to the east.

#### **Proposed Development**

It is proposed to construct a manege for the exercise of horses which will include (as amended and slimmed down) 8 steel lighting columns at a height of 5 metres to illuminate the yard. These will be pointed in a downward direction facing towards the west. The manege will be bounded by a 1.5 metre high post and rail fence and to the east of the manege a bund will be constructed with planting above in order to visually screen the site from Harrington. The surface of the manege will be constructed of a silica sand and rubber mix on top of an aggregate sub-surface.

#### **Any Constraints Affecting the Site**

C Road

### **4.0 Consultation and Customer Impact**

#### **Parish Council**

Objection: the site is in the open countryside and is visible from miles around. The manege is out of scale for the site and will involve substantial changes to the landscape. It is requested that should permission be granted a condition restricting the use of the manege to those using the existing 9 stables is imposed. The open countryside should be protected.

#### **Highway Authority**

No objection.

### **Environmental Health**

No objection.

### **Neighbours**

Three objections received relating to:

- The proposed manege is too large and thus unsustainable.
- Light pollution in the open countryside.
- The proposed bunds will not screen the site.
- The lighting columns are out of character.
- Increased traffic.

## **5.0 Planning Policy**

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

Policy 3. Supporting a prosperous rural economy

Policy 7. Requiring good design

Policy 11. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

### **Development Plan Policies**

#### **North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy**

Policy 13. General Sustainable Development Principles

#### **Local Plan**

Policy 7. Protection of the Open Countryside.

## **6.0 Financial/Resource Implications**

None

## **7.0 Planning Considerations**

The key issues for consideration in this application are:-

1. Principle of development
2. Amenity
3. Design, character and appearance
4. Lighting
5. Traffic/Highway safety

### **1. Principle of development**

The application site lies outside the designated village boundary for Harrington and thus within open countryside. Under the 1995 Local Plan for Kettering Borough development is prohibited in Policy 7, unless there is a justified exception. In this particular case planning permission for a change of use of this site (exactly the same site area) from agricultural to equestrian was granted in 2012 under permission KET/2012/0470. The officer's report stated this was an appropriate

location for such a land use due to the similar visual character such a land use would have when compared with the previous agricultural use. This application seeks to construct a manege on paddock land granted permission under the previous application.

The proposal involves the creation of a manege which will measure 25 metres by 62 metres. It will involve the levelling of ground, the creation of a bund, erection of 8 floodlights, post and rail boundary fencing and some planting/landscaping to soften the appearance of the manege when viewed from the village of Harrington. The manege will be located approximately 90 metres from the nearest public highway, High Street, and therefore will appear as just one element of several structures that have been previously approved for equestrian use. This manege will not alter that existing character.

Whilst the surface of the manege and the required groundwork and lighting will alter the appearance of the site and the degree of alteration is limited and it is considered that this location is the most appropriate for a use and associated development that is suitable for the open countryside. Given that the proposal involves the use of land previously granted permission to be used for equestrian activities, and the limited impact on the character of the open countryside which is discussed in further detail below, then the proposal is considered acceptable in principle in this instance and complies with Policy 7 of the 1995 Local Plan for Kettering Borough, Policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy and Sections 3, 7 and 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

## 2. Amenity

The proposal will be located approximately 80 metres from the nearest residential dwelling, Wheatfield Lodge, and over 500 metres from the closest dwellings to the east in the village of Harrington. Three objections from neighbouring residents have been received which raise the issue of amenity including the amount of lighting, the design of the lighting and the scale of manege. It is therefore considered appropriate to limit the hours of use of the lighting by condition to ensure that it does not result in a detrimental impact upon residential amenity and take account of the impact of the lighting in a rural area at night. In addition, an amended lighting design has been submitted, which is more appropriate in this location and this is discussed further in the subsequent section.

The scale of the manege has also been raised as an issue as it may attract horse owners who do not currently use the site to exercise/train their horses within the proposed manege. Attempting to limit the number of users is not considered to be appropriate in determining the application – the numbers of horses that can use the existing site is not restricted by condition and therefore the size of the manege will have no material impact upon the number of people who use the site or travel to

the site. In fact the applicant's own information states that the amount of trips to the site will decrease as existing liveries at the site are using manege facilities elsewhere. The proposal will therefore lessen the impact upon neighbouring residents in terms of disturbance caused by traffic movements. As such it is considered that the proposal will not have a significant detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents in accordance with Policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

### 3. Design, character and appearance

The Parish Council and three neighbours have objected to the proposal based on the visual impact it will have upon the open countryside and, at a more detailed level, the design of the proposed lighting columns. The character of the area is rural with large, undulating fields and a number of barns congregated around a non-traditional farmhouse. Given that the manege will be created by levelling an existing field and will comprise a surface built from hardcore, a porous membrane and a sand and rubber pellet surface it will not be easily visible from anywhere outside the site and the visual impact in any event will be very limited. The only elements that will be visible will be the lighting columns, the proposed bund to visually shield it and the post and rail fencing. It is therefore considered that the only uncharacteristic feature proposed is the 8 lighting columns.

As discussed above the design of the columns has been altered to ensure the columns are as slender as possible and therefore not easily visible from a distance. The proposed bund and vegetation above will further help to lessen the visual impact of the lighting columns and, as stated above, a condition restricting the hours of operation of the lighting will be imposed. Provided that this condition is adhered to the proposed will not only comply with Policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy in respect of design, but also Sections 7 and 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### 4. Lighting

Neighbouring residents have raised concerns about the proposed lighting as not only being uncharacteristic within the open countryside, but also has the potential to have a detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbouring residents. The issue of amenity and hours of operation, as discussed above, will be controlled by condition. The 8 lights have been designed so that the lighting column is as slender as possible, thus minimising their visual impact during daylight hours and the lights will point away from the houses on High Street and towards the surface of the manege, thus minimising light spill and ensuring that local residents do not experience glare from the lights.

Whilst it is accepted that the use of lighting in the open countryside is uncharacteristic there is a requirement to illuminate the manege during the winter months and given that this location is considered to be an appropriate site for equestrian use it is necessary to provide lighting for

the site to be used in the early evening during winter. Therefore to ensure this lighting is not used any more than is required a condition is proposed for the hours of operation to protect the character of this area in accordance with Policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

#### 5. Traffic/Highway safety

The application site is served by a separate access to the farmhouse. It is not proposed to alter the access from that approved under permission KET/2012/0470. The applicant's own plans state that there will be a reduction in the number of vehicles to the site following the construction of the manege as those horses that are currently stabled at Wheatfield Lodge will not longer have to be transported elsewhere to use such facilities. Whilst both the Parish Council and neighbours have raised concerns about the potential for increased traffic it is considered that the existing size of the site could also theoretically generate additional traffic if additional horses were to be kept in the previously approved paddocks. Therefore it is considered that the construction of the manege will not have an impact upon traffic generation at site any more than the existing paddocks could. The proposal is therefore considered not to have a detrimental impact upon local highway safety and thus complies with Policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

#### **Conclusion**

The proposal accords with national and local planning policy, has been designed to minimise its visual impact upon the surrounding area, will not have a detrimental impact upon the character of the area and is located in an area appropriate for equestrian use. It will not have a detrimental impact upon highway safety and through the imposition of conditions will result in a development appropriate within its setting. It is therefore recommended for approval.

#### **Background Papers**

Title of Document:

Date:

Contact Officer:

Alan Davies, Development Officer on 01536 534316

#### **Previous Reports/Minutes**

Ref:

Date:

