

6 DCSW2005/0924/F - RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION FOR ENGINEERING OPERATIONS TO CREATE A 60M X 20M RIDING ARENA, THE WOODLANDS, ORCOP, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR2 8SE

For: Mrs. J.A. Childs, The Woodlands, Orcop, Herefordshire, HR2 8SE

Date Received: 24th March, 2005

Ward: Pontrilas

Grid Ref: 48095, 27763

Expiry Date: 19th May, 2005

Local Member: Councillor G.W. Davis

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 The Woodlands, Orcop comprises a red brick bungalow, two sets of stables, a 40 x 20m fenced all-weather arena and the 60 x 20m riding arena, the subject of this application.
- 1.2 The site is set on Orcop Hill within the open countryside. The land slopes downwards from the east to the west towards the U71419. The land to the south and west of the site is well screened with mature trees.
- 1.3 The proposal relates to the provision of an all-weather riding arena for Dressage tests to replace an existing grass arena. The grass arena was not level, sloping downwards to the north-west and west of the site, therefore earth was excavated at the eastern end and the soil used to build up the western end. This has created a bank of soil on both sides at the western end.
- 1.4 The arena has been constructed using a geotex membrane overlaid with 18cm of 40mm clean washed drainage stone. A drainage pipe has been inserted around the inside edge of the arena and three pipes laid across north to south at equal intervals. The pipes exit at the bottom of the bank at the western end and drain onto the adjacent paddock. The drainage stone is overlaid with an additional geotex membrane. The final surface consists of chopped hardwood. The arena is edged in railway sleepers stacked one above the other.

2. Policies

2.1 Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan

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|---------------|---|---|
| Policy CTC.2 | - | Development in Areas of Great Landscape Value |
| Policy CTC.9 | - | Development Requirements |
| Policy CTC.11 | - | Trees and Woodlands |

2.2 South Herefordshire District Local Plan

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|-------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Part 1 | | |
| Policy GD.1 | - | General Development Criteria |
| Policy C.1 | - | Development within Open Countryside |

Policy C.8	-	Development within Area of Great Landscape Value
Policy C.17	-	Trees/Management
Policy C.45	-	Drainage

3. Planning History

- 3.1 SH870293PF Erection of 3 stables, tack room, hay store and all-weather menage - Approved 07.05.87
- SH890134SZ Erection of wooden building for storage of garden tools, firewood, coal, etc. - Approved 27.02.89
- SH891503PF Block of 4 stables on concrete base - Approved 13.10.89
- SH910779PF Retain block of stables without complying with condition no. 2 on SH891503PF and giving of riding tuition - Approved 10.07.91
- SH920770PF Stable block of 3 loose boxes to extend livery space - Approved 08.07.92

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 No statutory or non-statutory consultations required.

Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 Traffic Manager raises no objection.
- 4.3 Conservation Manager raises no objection subject to a suitably designed landscaping scheme.

5. Representations

- 5.1 Llanwarne Parish Council raise no objection.
- 5.2 Orcop Parish Council raise no objection.
- 5.3 One letter of objection has been received from:

B. Thomas, Wood Cottage, Little Hill, Orcop, Hereford, HR2 8SE

raising the following concerns:

- muddy bank - a blot on the landscape
- noise pollution from riding instructors shouting commands
- inadequate drainage.

The full text of this letter can be inspected at Southern Planning Services, Blueschool House, Blueschool Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

6. Officers Appraisal

- 6.1 The proposal is retrospective and for a riding arena constructed on the site of an existing grass arena in the open countryside. The arena will be used for dressage training, specialising in teaching dressage to children mainly from the Pony Clubs, Hereford Under 21s UK and British Young Riders Dressage Scheme. The clubs use the facilities free of charge.
- 6.2 The main issues for consideration are the visual impact of the development within an Area of Great Landscape Value and the impact on residential amenity of surrounding properties.
- 6.3 The site is in a sensitive landscape location, due to its hillside location and its designation as an Area of Great Landscape Value. Local Plan Policies aim to protect the landscape and proposals should be small in scale and sensitively designed and must not adversely affect the landscape.
- 6.4 The Conservation Manager does not object to the proposal subject to a scheme of landscaping which includes re-grading of the embankment to seamlessly marry in the new levels to the existing, seeding with an amenity grass mix, additional hedge planting and six Silver Birch trees. The applicant has indicated in writing her agreement to additional planting to screen the arena. Additional planting will soften the visual impact of the development when viewed from the surrounding area.
- 6.5 An existing belt of mature trees further screen the arena and it is not considered prominent from surrounding viewpoints. The size of the arena is not considered unduly large and it will replace an existing grass arena. Taking the above factors into account, the proposal is not considered to have an adverse impact upon the landscape such that would warrant refusal.
- 6.6 The concern raised by a local resident concerning noise pollution from activity at the site is noted. However, the lawful use of The Woodlands as a commercial riding centre has been established since 1991. The arena is a significant distance, being some 50 metres from the neighbouring dwelling, but it is elevated above the property due to the slope of the land. Although the arena will intensify the commercial use at the site it is considered that this should not result in an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring property.
- 6.7 The Traffic Manager has visited the site to inspect any damage that may have appeared in the embankment and paddock as a result of the drainage. At the outlet points there was no evidence of scouring and no sign of damage to the lower paddock from any water discharge. The drainage system is considered adequate for the proposed works, however it is recommended that some form of outfall structure be constructed around the outlets to prevent possible future damage to the pipes.
- 6.8 Overall the scheme is considered to satisfy the relevant local plan policies and conditional permission is recommended.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1. **G04 (Landscaping scheme (general)) (within one month)**

Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.

- 2. **G05 (Implementation of landscaping scheme (general)) (before the end of 2005)**

Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.

- 3. **G10 (Retention of trees)**

Reason: In order to preserve the character and amenities of the area.

- 4. **There shall be no external lighting/illumination of the riding arena hereby permitted.**

Reason: In order to preserve the character and amenities of the area.

- 5. **Within one month of the date of this planning permission details for the construction of outfall structures around the outlets of the drainage pipes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented within one month of the date of its approval.**

Reason: In order to ensure that satisfactory drainage arrangements are provided.

Informative:

- 1. **N15 – Reason(s) for the Grant of Planning Permission.**

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.