

Planning Summary

Proposed alterations for fencing at existing Golf Driving Range.

Rustington Golf Centre, Golfers Lane, Angmering, BN16 4NB.

Rustington Golf Centre offers a combination of facilities for golfers. There is a 18 hole golf course, Par 3 and foot golf course, academy course, adventure mini golf and the 30 bay floodlit driving range. The golf centre has been established for 27 years.

The driving range is currently enclosed by fencing which is either 6m high or 10m high. The existing layout plan drawing AE01 indicates where the different heights occur.

Running outside of the fence line is screen planting consisting of a range of species including pines, poplars, oak and birch.

The planting is well established and still growing. Existing photographs are included with the application which illustrates that existing fencing is well screened and almost invisible from the A259 road to the south of the range.

The proposals are to increase the height of some sections of the existing fencing as shown on proposed drawings AP01, 02 and 03.

There are serious Health and Safety concerns about the height of the existing fencing and its ability to contain the golf balls being struck from the range bays.

There are around 6 million golf balls struck on the range each year which equates to more than 115,000 per week. The Driving range staff have to collect on average 2 percent of the balls struck from outside the range fencing.

Surrounding the driving range fencing is the golf course. Holes 4 and 5 of the golf course and the public footpath are in the most vulnerable area at the end of the range.

Advances in technology have meant that golfers are able to achieve greater distances with all clubs but in particular with the driver. Most golf professionals are now averaging over 300 yards (275m) which was not possible 10 years ago. Wind assistance makes even greater distances possible. Many amateur golfers can also get near to these distances.

The quality and prestige of the golfing driving range is shown by the fact that it is now the southern region training location for the England squad.

There have been near misses reported and luckily up to now there have been no injuries. The management believe that it is only a matter of time before this occurs and that to fulfil their obligations under Health and Safety that the fencing must be increased in height now.

The proposals are for some sections of the fencing to remain a 6m height. These sections are nearest to the driving range bays where there is the least risk of balls being hit over the fence.

Other sections of 6m fencing are proposed to be increased in height up to 10m. The most vulnerable sections are to be increased from the existing height to 10m to 20m. This is shown on the layout plan as proposed AP01. The style of the fence netting will be very similar to the existing.

It is very common now for golf driving ranges to have 20m high fencing. Some even go as high as 35m.

The proposed fencing elevation drawing AP02 show that the existing tree/screen planting will still be effective with the increased height of fencing proposed.

The adopted Local plan states that the object is to “promote strong well integrated and cohesive communities through the promotion of healthy lifestyles, provision of accessible community facilities and a safe environment which delivers an enhanced quality of life for all”.

Both National and Local policy encourages outdoor sport and recreation and protecting green spaces.

Driving ranges are an effective way of introducing people, and particularly young people to the game of golf and it is one of few sports where participation is possible up to old age, which should be encouraged.

The implementation of the proposed alterations will ensure the long term future of this valuable facility within the first leisure facilities which already exist on this site.