

FERRING CONSERVATION GROUP

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FG/26/15OUT

Ferring Conservation Group objects to this application, which is the latest in a long string of applications in which the applicant has sought to establish and extend a large business (and now a 4-bedroom house) on open countryside, in what is now designated the Angmering Gap.

The Council refused one of the applications for a foaling unit (FG/76/09) for the following reasons:

'The site lies in a rural area and the proposal, being unrelated to the needs of agriculture, forestry, recreation, the extraction of minerals or disposal of waste, conflicts with policies GEN2, GEN3 of the Arun District Local Plan which seeks to protect the countryside, safeguard agricultural land, and ensure that the amount of land taken for development is kept to a minimum, consistent with the provision of high quality and adequate space within the built environment and to resist the consolidation of linear or sporadic development.'

'The proposal would result in an inappropriate use within the countryside and would generate a level of activity and traffic which would adversely affect the rural character of the area. The proposal would have an adverse effect on the rural character of the area in conflict with policies DEV1 and GEN7 of the Arun District Local Plan.'

The next application for the foaling unit was FG/84/09. The Officers' Report on that application concluded:

'MOBILE HOME

The mobile home previously forming part of the proposal has now been deleted. The applicant has demonstrated that there is no essential need for a home to be permanently located on site to provide 24-hour care of horses and security. Instead this will be undertaken by staff rotating on an 8 hour shift basis. A staff room with w.c. and office with w.c. are included in the layout. The average length of stay for a horse would be 12 months (6 months of pregnancy and 6 months with a weaning foal).

'SUMMARY

'It is therefore concluded that the proposed development would be acceptable in terms of compliance with development plan policy and its impact on the visual amenities of the locality and is recommended for approval subject to the following conditions'.

The application was approved – with a condition that no residential caravan or mobile home would be allowed on the site. Another condition was that there should be no exterior lighting.

The residential condition was challenged in an application (FG/41/14) arguing that the accommodation was needed while the stables were under construction, for security and other reasons. That argument was accepted and permission was given for such accommodation to remain on site only during the construction period and on condition that it was removed within one month of the stables commencing commercial operations. The lighting condition was also challenged, in a retrospective application that has now been withdrawn. A retrospective application for a gazebo and two car ports (FG/110/14) was refused in October 2014. The Officers' Report said, *'The proposed structures are linked with the residential occupation of the mobile home which has been granted permission subject to removal on completion of the foaling unit and there is no agricultural or equine justification for their retention.'*

The applicant sold his house and original stables at the end of 2013. That house was adjacent to the original stables and is no more than 500m from where he has applied to build a new house. If the applicant wished to live close to his new stables, it is difficult to see why he sold the first house.

It is clear that the applicant obtained approval for his new stables on the basis that there would be no need for any residential accommodation on the site but now seeks approval for a four-bedroom house on the site on the basis that there is an essential need for residential accommodation on the site. His previous reliance on the proximity of his existing house has now been negated by his decision to sell that house. Ferring Conservation Group concludes that these are not material considerations to justify a departure from the development plan, which, in the Local Plan and Ferring's Neighbourhood Plan, seeks to protect the countryside from inappropriate development.

We trust the Council will refuse planning permission. – Ed Miller (Vice-Chairman), 17 West Drive, Ferring, WORTHING BN12 5QZ