

PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT**REF NO:** FN/83/10/**LOCATION:** Soldiers Field Stables
Soldiers Field Lane
Findon**PROPOSAL:** Regeneration of dilapidated stable yard & associated buildings comprising 3no. holiday cottages & a new residential dwelling (together with replacement dwelling & ancillary stable yard & storage barn as previously permitted under ref FN/37/09) in lieu of 2no. detached dwellings & to include revised vehicular access arrangements to provide separate access to serve stables - Departure from the Development Plan**SITE AND SURROUNDINGS****DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION**

The proposal relates to part of the site which comprised planning permission FN/37/09. The area to the north where a 4 bed farmhouse, annexe, 8 x stables, and ancillary staff accommodation were approved is excluded from this application.

This application involves repositioning of the approved storage barn to the east, deletion of stables to serve the holiday lets, change in shape and design of holiday cottages, deletion of detached garages and 3 bed cottage and amendment of 4 bed barn to form a 5 bed dwelling and garaging. The development is now located further from the western boundary in order that a new vehicular access and drive can be provided to serve the earlier approved development to the north.

SITE AREA

0.215 hectares

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT DEN

18.6 dwellings per hectare

TOPOGRAPHY

On slightly rising land. Land continues to rise gently outside of the site up to Cissbury Ring.

TREES

None of any significance affected by the proposed development.

BOUNDARY TREATMENT

Trees around boundary and on the periphery mainly Cupressus type trees to front boundary area. Gates to the site are approximately 2.5 metres high. There is some walling to the site entrance. Otherwise the existing buildings form boundaries of the site.

SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Former stable yard fallen into disrepair, informally occupied. Dwelling on site and many stables, the entrance to the site enters onto a courtyard. Buildings number

some 14 on the site and nigh on fill the whole site with built form. Indeed, the areas between the buildings are generally concrete paths/access. Existing vehicular access into the site off of Soldiers Field Lane. One of the buildings on site fronts onto the Lane, also in poor condition. Most of the buildings are single storey although there is a two storey barn structure in the centre of the site which has vehicular access and walk way through it to the northern part of the site. The buildings effectively are on four sides of the site. Most are blockwork with corrugated roofs. Site very visible from the public right of way and in particular from Cissbury Ring.

CHARACTER OF LOCALITY

Within National Park and located outside the Built Up Area Boundary, adjacent to rights of way. However the site reads as if it were in the Built Up Area Boundary as the road that leads to the site has residential properties off to the south and west of the site. Most of the dwellings within the near locality are generally large, detached and 2 storey properties. There are public rights of ways and bridle ways leading off the site and close to the site. Cissbury Ring lies to the east of the site.

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

FN/59/01/	Outline application for redevelopment of part redundant racing stables with 5 No. detached dwellings (Departure from the development plan)	Withdrawn 12-12-2001
FN/39/02/	Outline application for redevelopment of part redundant racing stables with 5no. detached dwellings (Departure from the Development Plan)	Withdrawn 11-12-2002
FN/14/03/	Demolition of a six bedroom detached dwelling and 1.605 sq mtrs (17.276 sq ft) of commercial buildings and the erection of four detached dwellings (Departure from the Development Plan).	Refused 10-09-2003
FN/74/03/	Change of use for the conversion of former stables and storage buildings to B1 business use and B8 storage use	Refused 27-01-2004
FN/74/04/	Demolition of a 6 bedroom detached dwelling and 1.605m2 of commercial buildings and the erection of 4 detached dwellings. Departure from the Development Plan.	Refused 11-05-2005 Appeal: Dismissed 24 07 2006

FN/37/09/	Regeneration of dilapidated stable yard and associated buildings comprising replacement dwelling with ancillary stable yard and storage barn, 3 no. holiday cottages and 2 no. residential dwellings. (Departure from the Development Plan)	Approve Cond 12-08-2009
FN/6/67	Block of 6 stables	Approve 10-03-1967
FN/4/70	Stable boys accommodation	Approve 24-04-1970
FN/24/70	Racing stables	Approve 05-06-1970
FN/28/70	Racing stables	Approve 10-07-1970
FN/34/71	Staff accommodation	Approve 24-07-1971
FN/41/72	Additional stabling	Approve 04-08-1972
FN/5/73	Racing stables	Approve 02-03-1973

REPRESENTATIONS**Representations received:**

Findon Parish Council

No objection.

One letter of representation:

Request pitched roof of garage is hipped at south to reduce impact of new building on boundary. Concern regarding potential overlooking from first floor windows in southern gable. Question treatment of boundaries. Concerns relating to horse traffic and drainage.

Comments on Representations received:

The proposed garage building would have a height to ridge of 4.8m and is located 500mm from the boundary, it would be overbearing on the adjacent property Soldiers Field House. It is agreed that a hipped roof would reduce the impact. The gable end of the proposed dwelling would have two first floor windows facing onto the curtilage of Soldiers Field House at a distance of some 10m from the boundary. This distance is considered acceptable to prevent any material loss of privacy to the adjoining property.

CONSULTATIONS

WSCC Local Development Divis.

Consultations responses received:

County Highways:

No highway objections. Alterations do not affect the approved access onto Soldiers Field Lane. Informations and conditions should be applied as suggested under FN/37/09.

Comments on Consultation responses:

Comments noted.

POLICY CONTEXT

Designation applicable to site:
National Park
Outside the Built-up Area Boundary
Public Right of Way

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

South East Plan:	SEPTSR2 SEPTSR5	Rural Tourism Tourist Accommodation
Arun District Local Plan:	GEN3 GEN7 GEN12 DEV5	Protection of the Countryside The Form of New Development Parking in New Development Horse Related Development

PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE

PPS1	Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS3	Housing
PPS7	Sustainable development in rural areas

SUPPLEMENTARY POLICY GUIDANCE

XXX3	Good Planning Practice Guide on Tourism
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POLICY COMMENTARY

The above policies combine to describe the criteria against which the application will be assessed particularly with regard to visual and residential amenity.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND/OR LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:-

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

The proposal is considered to conflict with relevant Development Plan policies in that it would have a materially adverse effect on the visual amenities and character of the National Park and countryside in general.

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is considered that there are no other material considerations to warrant a decision otherwise than in accordance with the Development Plan and/or legislative background.

CONCLUSIONS

PRINCIPLE:

The site lies within a National Park and outside the Built-up Area Boundary as defined by the Arun District Local Plan, where development not essential for agriculture, forestry, mineral extraction or disposal of waste, quiet informal recreation, rural diversification or essential community needs would likely be refused.

The current application will provide a mix of residential and tourism, in the form of a new 5 bed dwelling and 3 no. holiday cottages. The dwelling would have a detached garage and parking for the holiday cottages is in the form of parking spaces. The proposal is in line with the quiet informal recreation, and rural diversification matters as outlined within the related policies.

PREVIOUS USES:

The site history is of importance for the determination of the proposal, for as can be seen, the original use related to a racing stable use. Indeed the site is laid out with and is virtually all covered with related stable buildings and structures. Areas not covered with buildings being concreted/tarmacked generally for access links.

The racing stables use has ceased some years ago and in consequence, the buildings have fallen into a poor condition. Since 2001, applications have been submitted to redevelop the site and have either been withdrawn or refused. The proposals for each of the applications were considered not to offer any benefits from the development, particularly in relation to the landscape of the National Park to outweigh any harm to the countryside location.

The Inspector in the 2004 appeal for 4 no. large residential dwellings with no associated tourist, agricultural or forestry use, considered that the existing buildings would be readily noticeable in the mid distance views from Cissbury Ring and at other viewpoints along adjoining bridleway network, and that the proposed dwellings would benefit the mid-distant views such as Cissbury Ring. However he concluded that the proposal conflicted with the development plan policies for residential development in the countryside and that the small benefits arising from the scheme were insufficient to outweigh this harm and conflict with policy.

Subsequent to the 2004 appeal an application was approved to regenerate the dilapidated stable yard and associated buildings comprising replacement dwelling with ancillary stable yard and storage barn, 3 no. holiday cottages and 2 no. residential dwellings (FN/37/09).

VISUAL AMENITY AND IMPACT ON LANDSCAPE AND COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS APPROVAL FN/37/09:

This current application seeks to amend the 2009 approval by changing the southern section of the site.

The existing development on the site currently covers the land with hard surfacing and buildings. From public footpaths including the important views from Cissbury Ring, the buildings have a utilitarian appearance and detract from the natural beauty of the landscape. The removal of these buildings would enhance both the landscape and the National Park.

In the previous scheme the design of the proposed buildings reflected typical rural structures and

the use of materials such as clay roof tiles, flint or timber weather boarded elevations, also enhanced the locality. The rear perspective of the roofs of the buildings generally had no windows, preventing glare onto the countryside views and this continued the appearance of typical rural structures.

However, the scheme now proposed seeks amendment to part of the original application site only.

Whereas the previously approved buildings were mainly single storey and distinctly separate. Whilst the amount of development has now been reduced it no longer reflects the existing built form on the site or contributes positively to the visual amenities and rural character of the area. The large dwellings now proposed, in a linked 'U' shape, are considered excessive in its surroundings and would be prominent and obtrusive in the wider landscape. Further, its design would not be compatible within its rural setting. The dwelling would be urban in form and its elongated length would add to the bulk and massing of the development which would be readily visible from the adjacent rural area and unacceptably heighten its visual presence of built form within the countryside.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY:

Findon village lies within the National Park and contains many residential properties which contribute to the ambience of its setting. The proposal is accessed off an existing lane which has residential properties off of it. The minimum distance of these dwellings from those proposed is some 20m and in many instances considerably further.

A 20m separation has been provided to the rear of the site and 'Stables'; the 'Holiday Cottages', and 'Storage Barn' section all respect this distance. All are principally single storey and will be screened by a landscaped section. Thereby it is not considered that the buildings would result in unacceptable overshadowing, or overbearing on the residential properties to the west. The amended plans show the roof to be hipped to reduce its impact on the neighbour and this element of the proposal is now acceptable.

CONCLUSION:

The site is a brownfield site as defined in Annex B of PPS3 within the National Park and countryside, and will be providing a linked group of buildings comprising 1 no. dwelling and 3 tourist related cottages with an equine link. There is an existing sand school and grazing paddocks to the north and east will remain (these are outside of the application site).

The single storey tourist part of the proposal conforms with development plan policies as it provides horse related tourist accommodation which would need a countryside location. However, by moving the built form over to the east in order to enable an access to the unchanging part of the development to the north of the site and linking the new tourist building to the large new dwelling, combines to provide an unsatisfactory visual dominance within this rural countryside setting.

It is accepted that the previous approved application provided a similar amount of built form on the site, but these were by way of generally separate buildings with amenity land around each. The current application provides a 'U' shaped linked form of development, thereby, resulting in an excessively bulky, continuous built form, incongruous in its setting.

Whilst a benefit can be argued for the replacement to the run down and inappropriate buildings on the site, but when viewed in from outside of the site, particularly Cissbury Ring, it would not be a visual improvement. The five bed dwelling in particular, would be eminently prominent and obtrusive in the landscape and would adversely affect the rural character of the National Park.

It is therefore recommended for refusal for the following reasons.

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE

- 1 The proposed 5 bedroom dwelling by reason of its length, massing, height, lack of spacing and visual relief, together with its design, would result in a building which is obtrusive and damaging in the landscape and harmful to the visual quality and essential characteristics of the designated South Downs National Park in conflict with Planning Policy Statement 7 and Local Plan policy GEN7

- 2 The physical linking of the tourist buildings with the large dwelling combine to provide an unsatisfactory continuous visual dominance within the rural countryside setting thereby resulting in an excessively bulky built form, incongruous in its setting and is therefore in conflict with Planning Policy Statement 7 and Local Plan policy GEN7