

**APPLICATIONS REQUIRING REFERENCE TO
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PANEL
(Reports by Development Control Manager)**

Case No: 0900130FUL (FULL PLANNING APPLICATION)
Proposal: CONSTRUCTION OF SAND ARENA
Location: LAND NORTH WEST OF NEW MANOR FARM SAWTRY
WAY WYTON
Applicant: MR S WRIGHT
Grid Ref: 528834 272897
Date of Registration: 13.02.2009
Parish: HOUGHTON & WYTON

RECOMMENDATION - REFUSE

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

- 1.1 The site is bounded by hedgerow. To the south east of the site lies a public footpath and beyond this a number of buildings associated with New Manor Farm. The land slopes away to the south and south west.
- 1.2 The proposal seeks the construction of a sand arena approximately 30 metres in width by 60 metres in length. The arena would be enclosed by a 1.3 metre high fence, constructed with 250mm x 2m boards on 1.5m x 1.5m posts, set in concrete.

2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE

- 2.1 **PPS1: "Delivering Sustainable Development" (2005)** contains advice on the operation of the plan-led system.
- 2.2 **PPS7: "Sustainable Development in Rural Areas" (2004)** sets out the Government's planning policies for rural areas, including country towns and villages and the wider, largely undeveloped countryside up to the fringes of larger urban areas.

For full details visit the government website <http://www.communities.gov.uk> and follow the links to planning, Building and Environment, Planning, Planning Policy.

3. PLANNING POLICIES

Further information on the role of planning policies in deciding planning applications can also be found at the following website: <http://www.communities.gov.uk> then follow links Planning, Building and Environment, Planning, Planning Information and Guidance, Planning Guidance and Advice and then Creating and Better Place to Live

3.1 East of England Plan - Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (May 2008)

East of England Plan - Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (May 2008) Policies viewable at <http://www.go-east.gov.uk> then follow links to Planning, Regional Planning then Related Documents

- **ENV7:** "Quality in the Built Environment" - requires new development to be of high quality which complements the distinctive character and best qualities of the local area and promotes urban renaissance and regeneration.

3.2 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003)

Saved policies from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk> follow the links to environment, planning, planning policy and Structure Plan 2003.

None relevant

3.3 Huntingdonshire Local Plan (1995)

Saved policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 are relevant and viewable at www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan95

- **En17:** "Development in the Countryside" - development in the countryside is restricted to that which is essential to the effective operation of local agriculture, horticulture, forestry, permitted mineral extraction, outdoor recreation or public utility services.
- **En18:** "Protection of countryside features" – Offers protection for important site features including trees, woodlands, hedges and meadowland.
- **En25:** "General Design Criteria" - indicates that the District Council will expect new development to respect the scale, form, materials and design of established buildings in the locality and make adequate provision for landscaping and amenity areas.

3.4 **Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alterations (2002)**

Saved policies from the Huntingdon Local Plan Alterations 2002 are relevant and viewable at www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan - Then click on "Local Plan Alteration (2002)

None relevant

3.5 **Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007**

Policies from the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> click on Environment and Planning, then Planning then Planning+Policy then Informal policy statements where there is a link to Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007

- **P8** – Development in the Countryside – Outside the existing built framework of the Smaller Settlements development will be restricted to: that which is essential to the efficient operation of agriculture, horticulture or forestry, or required for the purposes of outdoor recreation; the alteration, replacement or change of use of existing buildings in accordance with other policies; limited and specific forms of housing, business and tourism development, as provided for within the Local Development Framework; or land allocated for particular purposes.
- **G2** – Landscape Character - development proposals should respect and respond appropriately to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape
- **G3** – Trees, hedgerows and Other Environmental Features - development proposals should minimise risk of harm to trees, hedgerows or other environmental features of visual, historic or nature conservation value.
- **B1** – Design Quality - developments should demonstrate a high quality of design in terms of layout, form and contribution to the character of the area.
- **B4** – Amenity - developments should not have an unacceptable impact upon amenity of existing or future occupiers.
- **T3** – Rights of Way and Other Public Routes - Lists the criteria which should be considered in relation to Rights of Way.

3.6 **Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework submission Core Strategy 2008**

Policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework submission Core Strategy 2008 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> click on Environment and Planning then click on Planning and then click on Planning Policy where there is a link to the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

- **CS1:** “Sustainable development in Huntingdonshire” – all developments will contribute to the pursuit of sustainable development, having regard to social, environmental and economic issues. All aspects will be considered including design, implementation and function of development.

3.7 **Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007)**

4. **PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 **0900132FUL** - Provision of vehicular access, car parking area and erection of stables – pending consideration

4.2 **0802943FUL** - Erection of building and change of use of land from agricultural to paddocks for livery purpose and construction of new access – permission granted

4.3 **0704036FUL** - Erection of building and change of use of land from agricultural to paddocks for livery purposes and construction of access – refused

5. **CONSULTATIONS**

5.1 **Houghton & Wyton Parish Council – recommend APPROVAL (copy attached)**

5.2 **CCC Highways – NO OBJECTIONS**

5.3 **CCC Countryside services – no comments received**

6. **REPRESENTATIONS**

None

7. **SUMMARY OF ISSUES**

7.1 The main issues to considered are the principle of the development, the impact on the character and appearance of the area, the impact on the existing landscape features, the impact on the public footpath, the impact on highway safety and impact on amenity.

History

7.2 Planning permission has been granted on this site for the erection of a stables, provision of vehicular access and turning and parking.

Principle

7.3 This proposal seeks the construction of a sand arena approximately 30 metres by 60 metres in area.

7.4 PPS7 recognises that ‘horse riding and other equestrian activities are popular forms of recreation in the countryside that can fit in well with farming activities and help to diversify rural economies’. This proposal is not part of a farming activity, required only for personal use. Whilst there were no objections to the erection of stables, due to the reasonable size and siting of the building, the addition of this

arena is not considered acceptable in this instance. The scale of the proposal would not seem appropriate in this rural area and would appear large for personal use.

Character and appearance of the area

- 7.5 The site lies within the Central Claylands landscape, which is characterised by 'gentle undulating arable farmland with large scale field pattern with few hedgerows or hedgerow trees, giving rise to a predominantly open landscape'. The Landscape and Townscape Assessment seeks to prevent the further deterioration of the landscape through greater controls on siting and design.
- 7.6 It is acknowledged that the equestrian centre to the south east of the site contains a large number of buildings and as such alters the appearance of the area. Notwithstanding this, it is not considered that this should preclude to any development in this area being acceptable. In addition, there remains an existing field between the sites, which allows for a visual separation between these two sites and as such they would not be read in association with one another.
- 7.7 This application seeks to alter a large area of land to a sand arena, this would substantially alter the character of this rural area. At present, it is possible to gain glimpse views through the hedgerow and over the hedgerow into the site, whilst not in leaf. A change in the appearance of this land would become visible from the public viewpoint at certain times of the year, fundamentally altering the appearance of the area, to its detriment and introducing a large incongruous feature into the landscape. It is not considered that this would be acceptable.
- 7.8 Whilst there are concerns over the scale of the proposal, it may be possible to consider a smaller scale arena, subject to its siting to ensure it does not form an incongruous addition in this rural landscape.

Highway safety

- 7.9 Comments received from the Highways Authority indicate that there are no objections to the proposal. This would not harm highway safety.

Residential amenity

- 7.10 Having regard to the location of the site, which is surrounded by agricultural land with the equestrian centre to the south east, it is not considered that the proposal would harm residential amenity.

Conclusion

- 7.11 In conclusion, the proposal is not considered to be acceptable. There are no objections in principle to equestrian activities in the countryside, this proposal however would be of a relatively large scale for a personal use and would alter the character of a large area of land in this rural area, to its detriment. In light of this, it is recommended that the application be refused.

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8. RECOMMENDATION - REFUSE for the following reason:

- 8.1 The proposed sand arena fails to protect and enhance the natural environment and the quality of the countryside. The proposal would result in the introduction of an incongruous element into the landscape, by reason of its size and siting. Mitigation methods would not overcome the harm caused by this proposal. The proposal is contrary to PPS1, PPS7, policy G2 of the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement, policy CS1 of the Submission Core Strategy and the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment 2007.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Planning Application File Reference: 0900130FUL
East of England Plan – Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy May 2008
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan, 2003
Huntingdonshire Local Plan, 1995
Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration, 2002
Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007
Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Submission Core Strategy 2008
Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007)

CONTACT OFFICER:

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