

App.No: 150594 (PPP)	Decision Due Date: 28 October 2015	Ward: Meads
Officer: Jane Sabin	Site visit date: 2 October 2015	Type: Planning Permission
Site Notice(s) Expiry date: 2 October 2015 Neighbour Con Expiry: 27 September 2015 Press Notice(s): 22 September 2015		
Over 8/13 week reason: N/A		
Location: Moira House School, Upper Carlisle Road		
Proposal: Installation of manege on existing playing field.		
Applicant: Moira House Girls School		
Recommendation: Approve		

Executive summary:

The proposed development would have no adverse impact on visual or residential amenity, the character and appearance of the conservation area, or on highway safety. As such it complies with local and national policies.

Constraints:

Meads Conservation Area
Source Protection Zones

Relevant Planning Policies:

National Planning Policy Framework

Eastbourne Core Strategy Local Plan Policies 2013

B1: Spatial Development Strategy and Distribution

B2: Creating Sustainable Neighbourhoods

C11: Meads Neighbourhood Policy

D1: Sustainable Development

D9: Natural Environment

D10: Historic Environment

D10A: Design

Eastbourne Borough Plan Saved Policies 2007

NE14: Source Protection Zone

NE28: Environmental Amenity

UHT1: Design of New Development

UHT2: Height of Buildings

UHT3: Setting of the AONB
UHT4: Visual Amenity
UHT5: Protecting Walls/Landscape Features
UHT15: Protection of Conservation Areas
HO20: Residential Amenity
LCF2: Resisting loss of playing fields
LCF8: Small Scale Sport & Recreation Facilities
LCF18: Extension of Educational Establishments

Site Description:

Moira House Girls School is located on the north west side of Carlisle Road, and extends beyond the junction with Upper Carlisle Road. The site slopes steeply up from the road to the rear boundary with the Downs (close to Paradise Reservoir) in a series of terraces. The school comprises a wide range of building types (largely pre-1948) set in a site which hosts a significant number of mature trees and vegetation. The application site is comprised of part of one of the playing fields on the opposite side of the road from the main buildings.

Relevant Planning History:

EB/1995/0509 (950536)

Erection of a single-storey stable block comprising eight loose boxes, feed store, WC and tack room at the rear of the main school building in Carlisle Road and the provision of a 40 m x 20 m fenced manege (outdoor riding school) on land at the rear of 22-26 Denton Road

Approved conditionally 21 December 1995

Proposed development:

Permission is sought to construct a manege (sand school) on part of the middle field, 9m from the boundary with 22, 24 and 26 Denton Road. It would measure 40m by 20m, enclosed by a 1.5m high timber post and rail fence with a sand and PVC granule finish. To the rear would be an area surfaced with wood chip where horses and pupils would assemble to enter and exit the gate, and where jumps would be stored when not in use. A beech hedge is proposed along the boundary with the properties in Denton Road (it is understood that the species is at the residents request).

The manege would serve the stables which is the subject of the previous item on this agenda (150585). Ponies would be led across the road from the main school site outside Dunn House, where there are already double yellow lines and zig-zag markings for safe crossing.

Consultations:

Internal:

Specialist Advisor (Arboriculture) – there are no tree related issues from the siting of the manege, although the route of any drainage (as noted on the plan) will need to be controlled.

Highways ESCC - considers that the main issues are access to and from the site, traffic generation and ponies/horses crossing Carlisle Road.

It is intended for the ponies and manege to be used exclusively by pupils and staff from the school. The traffic generation will be limited to construction vehicles, servicing vehicles and on occasion horse boxes. The main traffic generator will be from construction and as this is fairly minor the amount of traffic generated will be low and would not create significant issues.

It is noted from the submitted drawing that it is planned for ponies to cross to and from the manege at an existing access in Carlisle Road. This access is located in a section of road that provides adequate visibility and is approximately 90m from the junction with Upper Carlisle Road and Link Road. Double yellow lines and school keep clear markings also help to keep sections of the road clear of parked cars although they are parked on at school pick up and drop off times. Although the visibility is acceptable, there is still concern with horses crossing the road as drivers will not be expecting to meet horses in this urban area. In order to warn drivers it is suggested that warring signs are installed at the applicant's expense on the approaches to the crossing on lamp columns 11 & 13. It is also suggested that a condition is attached to ensure that this is the only access that horses can use to cross to and from the manege.

Specialist Advisor (Open Spaces) – no comment to make on the manege.

Specialist Advisor (Planning Policy) - Details submitted with the application indicate that the playing field is currently underused for formal sports, and utilizing a part of that field for a manege would represent an efficient means of using the land to its greatest potential, whilst retaining the remainder for informal sports and games. The use will remain for open and outdoor recreation and the land can be returned readily to a playing field in the future if required. It is therefore considered that this is consistent with Borough Plan LCF2, particularly given that the site could easily revert back to a playing field should this activity cease in the future.

In conclusion, the applications are consistent with planning policies set out in the Borough Plan and Core Strategy, including Borough Plan Policy LCF8, LCF18 and LCF2, as well as Core Strategy Policy C11. Therefore, there are no planning policy objections to these applications.

Specialist Advisor (Conservation) - Due to the siting and design associated with the manege its introduction into the Meads Conservation Area would result in little or no harm to the historic and architectural character and appearance of the immediate and wider area.

External:

South Downs National Park Authority – no response

Neighbour Representations:

Thirteen objections have been received and cover the following points:

- The manege will result in dust and dirt, which will result in an adverse impact on health (particularly for those already with respiratory problems) as well as maintenance issues, such as blocked drains and air vents, and would prevent the windows facing the playing field being opened
- The manege should be on the same site as the stables – specifically on the area known as Top Lawn

- Concerns regarding the safety of pupils, pedestrians, motorists and horses crossing the road
- Strong objections on the grounds of impeding traffic flow along Carlisle Road, and adding to the huge congestion in the area; parking restrictions are generally ignored; Carlisle Road is used as a rat run to and from Beachy Head Road by cars and commercial vehicles.
- It is simply a serious, if not fatal, accident waiting to happen.
- Horses should not be accommodated in an urban area
- The construction of a car park on the field would be a far better use
- Possible use of floodlighting, or for use by non-Moira House students
- Not suitable use for evenings or weekends

Eleven emails of support have been received and cover the following points:

- No objection provided the works are minimal and kept tidy
- Fantastic opportunity for the school; excellent for pupils
- Horses are not noisy animals
- Sure that the school have the safety of children and horses at the forefront, and the scheme will have been well thought through
- A wonderful sight to see on the beautiful South Downs; the National Park should be used for such activities
- Will attract more students and boost the local economy
- The crossing is already used by pupils to access the playing fields – 22 girls probably take longer than four horses would to cross

Appraisal:

The main issues to take into account in determining this application are the impacts on visual, residential and environmental amenity, and highway safety.

Principle of development:

There is no objection in principle to the provision of additional sports facilities within educational establishments. The area proposed for the manege is currently little used, as it is sited between two sets of tennis courts, and it is understood that most of the athletics which were formerly carried out here are now undertaken at the Sports Park on full sized facilities. There would be no loss of existing formal sports facilities, as this part of the field is not lined or marked out. Its proposed use would remain for an outdoor activity, and the manege could easily revert to grass if it were no longer needed.

Visual amenity:

The field is at a much lower level than Carlisle Road, although it is higher than the properties in Denton Road. The public viewpoints would be from Carlisle Road, but only when looking over the boundary wall directly into the field. The visual impact of the manege would be minimal, given its location to the rear of the field, its open nature and lightweight (post and rail) screening. It is therefore considered that there would be little or no impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Residential amenity:

The manege itself would have no impact on residential amenity. The usage is likely to be low when compared to the length of the school day; no floodlighting – or any other type of lighting – is proposed, therefore the only impact would be from noise. Given the location of the manege amongst tennis courts and playing fields, it is unlikely that the

noise would exceed that of team games. It is possible that there would be some droppings, but it is intended that this would be taken away with the ponies when they return to the stables. Noise is rarely an issue with ponies as they are generally quiet, and not given to increased noise during this type of exercise. With regard to issues raised in respect of dust and dirt, whilst it is considered that this would be a most unlikely consequence, the objectors property is 140m away, and it is likely that the plans have been misread. It is therefore considered that the impact on residential amenity would be acceptable.

Environmental amenity:

No alterations involving trees are proposed; the only loss would be closely mowed grass. Materials can be brought into the site via the enlarged entrance on the adjacent field and moved over a collapsed wall relatively easily. It is concluded there would be no impact on environmental amenity.

Highway safety:

The main source of objection is the issue of parking and safety. Given the information provided in the application, it is not considered that the development would result in a significant increase in traffic on a daily basis. It is unlikely that the busiest times for traffic, i.e. the start and finish of the school day, would coincide with the times horses would be led across the road. The safety of pupils would be of paramount importance for the school, and it is clear that this has been thoroughly considered. Officers (including Highways) have visited the site and carefully walked all the routes, and have concluded that the existing crossing point outside the main entrance where the double yellow lines and zig-zag markings are already in place for pupils is a safe place for horses to cross. The only issue raised by the Highway Authority is the provision of standard highway warning signs for road users and the route for the ponies, and these can be controlled by condition.

Human Rights Implications:

The impacts of the proposal have been assessed as part of the application process. Consultation with the community has been undertaken and the impact on local people is set out above. The human rights considerations have been taken into account fully in balancing the planning issues; and furthermore the proposals will not result in any breach of the Equalities Act 2010.

Conclusion:

The proposed development would have no adverse impact on visual or residential amenity, the character and appearance of the conservation area, or on highway safety. As such it complies with local and national policies.

Recommendation: Approve

Conditions:

1. Commencement within three years
2. Compliance with approved plans
3. Submission of details of drainage/services
4. Submission of details of site office, storage area for materials, and access route.
5. Provision of traffic signs
6. Restriction of route for horses in and out of the site

7. Restriction on times the manege is used

Appeal:

Should the applicant appeal the decision the appropriate course of action to be followed, taking into account the criteria set by the Planning Inspectorate, is considered to be **written representations**.