



Briony Farmer
Planning and Strategic Housing
West Oxfordshire District Council
Elmfield, New Yatt Road
Witney
OX28 1PB

By email only to: briony.farmer@westoxon.gov.uk

15 March 2022

Dear Briony,

APPLICATION NO: 22/00513/FUL

DESCRIPTION: Installation of all weather riding arena.

LOCATION: 1 Priory Lane, Ascott Under Wychwood, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 6AX

Thank you for consulting the Cotswolds Conservation Board ('the Board') on this proposed development, which would be located within the Cotswolds National Landscape.¹

In reaching its planning decision, the local planning authority (LPA) has a statutory duty to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape.² The Board recommends that, in fulfilling this 'duty of regard', the LPA should: (i) ensure that planning decisions are consistent with relevant national and local planning policy and guidance; and (ii) take into account the following Board publications:

- Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2018-2023 ([link](#));
- Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment ([link](#)) particularly, in this instance, with regards to Landscape Character Type (LCT) 16 (Broad Floodplain Valley);
- Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines ([link](#)) particularly, in this instance, with regards to LCT 16 ([link](#)), including Section 16.6;
- Cotswolds AONB Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change ([link](#));
- Cotswolds Conservation Board Position Statements ([link](#)) particularly, in this instance, with regards to The Keeping of Horses and Ponies ([link](#)) and Dark Skies and Artificial Light Position Statement ([link](#)) and its appendices ([link 1](#), [link 2](#), [link 3](#)).

The Board's Management Plan 2018-2023 and guidance documents are material considerations in the determination of planning applications within the National Landscape. The Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines ('LS&G'), referenced above, relating to LCT 16 identify the proliferation and concentration of equestrian establishments as a 'local force for change' with the proliferation of stables and other visual clutter including arenas such as this and the subdivision of fields using non-characteristic field boundary treatments such as post and rail fence identified as having potential adverse landscape implications.

Whilst the Board does not wish to object to the application and recognising that the applicant's stables are sited next to the proposed arena at the lower end of the site, the LS&G make the following recommendations which the LPA should take into account in its determination:

Cotswolds Conservation Board

The Old Prison, Fosse Way, Northleach
Gloucestershire GL54 3JH
01451 862000
info@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk

The Cotswolds National Landscape is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), managed and looked after by the Cotswolds Conservation Board.

cotswoldsaonb.org.uk

Chairman:
Brendan McCarthy
Vice Chair:
Rebecca Charley

- The creation of horse paddocks in visually prominent locations such as...valley side locations should be avoided;
- Take into account proximity to bridleways etc. (Footpath 111/12/10 lies immediately adjacent to the western boundary of the site, albeit screened by trees and hedgerow);
- Where possible, existing buildings should be utilised and new stables and other structures kept to a minimum;
- New structures should be carefully sited and designed to minimise their impact on the landscape. Wherever possible they should be located close to existing buildings...and should follow the form of the landscape, avoiding prominent locations;
- Jumps, temporary fences and other equipment should be well maintained and removed when not in use;
- Any lighting should be designed to minimise light pollution, e.g. low level and directed downwards and fitted with timers.

Further recommendations are contained within the Board's Position Statement on The Keeping of Horses and Ponies, also referenced above.

It is noted that no lighting is proposed for the arena. Dark skies are one of the 'special qualities' of the Cotswolds National Landscape and the conservation of dark skies is particularly important in areas such as this which feature relatively low levels of light pollution, as indicated in Appendix 1 of the Board's Dark Skies and Artificial Light Position Statement Position Statement, referred to above.

Therefore, and without prejudice, if the LPA is minded to grant planning permission, we recommend that planning conditions should be imposed which seek to mitigate any potential adverse impacts on the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB. These would include conditions restricting the use of lighting and requiring the removal of any jumps, fences or other equipment when not in use to minimise the potential visual impact of the development and any potential adverse impact on dark sky quality.

If you have any queries regarding this response, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,



Simon Joyce

Planning Officer

simon.joyce@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk | 07808 391227

NOTES:

- 1) Cotswolds National Landscape is the new name for the Cotswolds Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The new name takes forward one of the proposals of the Government-commissioned 'Landscapes Review' to rename AONBs as 'National Landscapes'. This change reflects the national importance of AONBs and the fact that they are safeguarded, in the national interest, for nature, people, business and culture.
- 2) Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/section/85
- 3) The documents referred to in our response can be located on the Cotswolds National Landscape website under the following sections
 - a. Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2018-2023
www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/management-plan
 - b. Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment
www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/lca
 - c. Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines
www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/lsg
 - d. Cotswolds AONB Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change
www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/ldlc
 - e. Cotswolds Conservation Board Position Statements
www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/ps1
www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/ps2