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Planning Enquiries

From: Donotreply
Sent: 11 March 2013 21:36
To: Planning Enquiries
Subject: Comment on Application 130245/F - All weather ménage, improvement to access + new field access

Importance: High

The following comment has been made on planning application: 130245/F - All weather ménage, improvement to access + new field access

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Comment Type Objection

Comment

The National Trust considers that this development would be harmful to the heritage significance of the grade II* registered historic park and garden of Croft Castle and that permission should, once again, be refused. This application is a resubmission following the dismissal of an appeal against the refusal of planning permission for previous proposals for a manège on this site. We believe that it is now the fourth application that has been made for this proposal. The National Trust objected to all the previous applications. The previous refusals and appeal decision letter refer to the grade II* registered historic park and garden of Croft Castle, which is owned and cared for by us and part of which is adjacent to the site. We are surprised and disappointed not to have been consulted on this application. The proposed development is on sloping fields below the Lucton Drive of Croft Castle. The drive was laid out in around 1800 as a long carriage drive leading to Croft Castle from the west. It was part of the improvements to the park carried out by Somerset Davies using the principles of the Picturesque movement. The improvements took advantage of existing historic features within a framework that avoided obvious design and which counterpoised the sublime with the beautiful. The drive passes close to the Spanish Chestnut Avenue, which is at least 150 years older than the drive. It also provides a view towards Lucton School amidst a wider setting of Herefordshire countryside. The main building of the school is around 100 years older than the drive. Although diminished by later changes, that view is still there. In the terms of the English Heritage Conservation Principles, it has aesthetic and historical value that contributes to the significance of the historic park. The appeal Inspector concluded that the manège in isolation would not harm the setting of the registered historic park to Croft Castle or the setting of Lucton School either visually or through noise and disturbance. However, he decided that he did not have sufficient information on the proposed parking areas to be able to conclude that the development as a whole would have a benign effect on the setting of the registered park and garden (paragraphs 10 and 15 of the decision letter). The new application shows a hardened area for parking 14 cars close to the stables, with an area for trailers alongside the manège and a 40-car overflow at the bottom of the drive. The surfacing details of the trailer parking area are not clear but look from the drawings to be reinforced grass with rolled stone access points. The National Trust considers that the overall scheme which is now shown would have a harmful effect on the setting of the registered park. While cars parked near the

stables would be relatively well hidden in views to and from the drive, the trailers on the trailer park would be intrusive as would the overflow parking. The application is silent on how frequently these areas would be used or for what duration, for example, whether trailers would be parked for extended periods of time. However the nature of use outlined in the application make us concerned that trailers would make frequent and/or prolonged use of this area and that the overflow car park would also be regularly used. The design and access statement, which is dated May 2011 and does not reflect the latest drawings states, "It is not intended to floodlight the manège. Should floodlighting become necessary for safety or other reasons then this would be the subject of a separate planning application." It makes no mention of the floodlighting installed on the stable buildings. There is also no mention of whether public address systems would or would not be used, despite this issue having been raised by the Trust several times over the past few years. With the proposed holding of events at the site and the increased popularity of dressage to music we are concerned that PA, which would detract from the tranquillity of the drive, would be regularly used if permission is granted. The Inspector also considered that the manège had the potential to create an unsustainable pattern of use. We would question whether the latest proposals for a 20-mile radius of users, while overcoming the lack of a clear definition of local equestrian community, have addressed the sustainability of the pattern of use that would arise if permission were given. The National Planning Policy Framework creates a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 14 advises that this means approving developments unless the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits or specific policies of the NPPF indicate development should be restricted. Protection of the historic environment is identified as part of sustainable development in paragraph 7 of the NPPF. Paragraph 9 states that pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the historic environment. In paragraph 17, conserving heritage assets in a manner consistent with their significance is identified as one of 12 national planning principles. Part 12 of the NPPF sets out policies in relation to heritage assets. Paragraph 129 requires local planning authorities to identify and assess the significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset. It also requires planning authorities to take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset. Paragraph 131 states local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets. Paragraph 132 states great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 134 advises that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.