

**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

**COMMITTEE DATE: 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

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<b>APPLICATION REF. NO:</b>	<b>15/00251/FUL</b>
<b>STATUTORY DECISION DATE:</b>	<b>18/06/15</b>
<b>WARD/PARISH:</b>	<b>Barmpton</b>
<b>LOCATION:</b>	<b>Haughton Grange</b>
<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	<b>Golf Driving Range Building plus fencing and external spotlights.</b>
<b>APPLICANT:</b>	<b>Darlington Golf Club</b>

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**APPLICATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION**

This application relates to the erection of an eight bay all weather driving range building measuring some 6m by 30m together with perimeter fencing and ground based lighting. It will be single storey some 3 metres high.

It is to be located on agricultural land adjacent the existing club house and golf course at Haughton Grange on the northern edge of Darlington.

Access to the proposal will be via that which exists for the golf club, no new roads are proposed.

**PLANNING HISTORY**

The most recent application related to the re-roofing and cladding of the green keepers store approved in December 2014 – No 14/01067/FUL.

11/00705/FUL – New link Road to Golf Club approved December 2011.

**PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND**

Core Strategy Policy CS18 – Promoting Quality, Accessible Sport and Recreation Facilities.

**RESULTS OF CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY**

Local residents were consulted and comments were received from five individuals raising the following issues:

- Increase in traffic from proposal will cause road safety problems in the area
- Lighting will cause nuisance to residents near the Golf Club

- Lighting will cause problems to local wildlife.

**Environmental Health Officer** – Is satisfied that the lighting will not cause an unacceptable nuisance, but some residents will see sky glow as the lights will be angled upwards to illuminate golf balls. He has suggested latest time of 21:00hrs for the operation of the driving range lighting.

**Highways Engineer** – Satisfied that the proposed eight bay driving range will not significantly increase traffic to the Golf Club and that there will be no road safety issues arising directly from the proposed development.

**Northumbrian Water** – No objections.

**Ecology Officer** – No objections subject to new hedge planting in accordance with submitted plans. Lighting scheme is sufficient distance from mature trees not to cause problems to wildlife.

## PLANNING ISSUES

There are two main issues that have arisen in relation to this planning application:

- Potential road safety problems from increased traffic to the locality
- Nuisance caused from the proposed lighting of the development

**Road Safety** The proposal is for eight driving bays only, which in itself restricts the potential increase in traffic to quite low levels. The applicants state that in daylight hours customers tend to practice on the driving range first ( there is an existing outdoor driving range) and then go on to play the main course, thus there is no material increase in vehicular traffic above the normal course player traffic. In winter months however there will be an increase in traffic generated by the driving range as customers can use it in the hours of darkness.

It is considered that the limited amount of extra traffic generated by the proposal is not such as to cause an unacceptable increase in problems related to road safety and officers agree with the comments of the Highway Engineer.

**Lighting Nuisance** The submitted plans show the lighting system to be ground based in “bunkers” directed upwards away from the nearby housing to the south. There will be twelve sets of lights and details of their location and luminance impact have been submitted and evaluated by the Environmental Health Officer. His comments are outlined above. It is not considered that the lights at the distance from residential property as proposed would have an effect on the residential amenity.

The nearest dwellings will be some 300 metres away to the south east of the site, and whilst light glow will be seen, it is not considered that it will be of sufficient nuisance to warrant a refusal of planning permission in this instance. In order to restrict the impact of the lighting it is proposed to limit its use to no later than 21:00.

The proposed lighting is sufficient distance from mature trees not to impact on wildlife such as bats and owls.

A number of hedgerows are proposed to be removed to accommodate the development but this is being mitigated by the planting of new hedgerows around the perimeter of the area as shown on submitted plans.

In summary it is considered that the scale of the proposal is limited and that any increase in impacts on the local population from light pollution or traffic generation will not be such as to cause unacceptable harm sufficient to refuse planning permission.

### **SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998**

The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Planning permission be **Granted** subject to the following conditions:

1. A4 – Time limit
2. B4 – Materials
3. B5 – In accordance with plans
4. E2 – Landscaping
5. This permission shall relate to the perimeter hedge planting scheme received by the Local Planning Authority on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015, which will be included within any scheme implemented in accordance with the landscaping condition above.

Reason For the avoidance of doubt.

6. E6 – Boundary treatment
7. The lighting system hereby approved shall not be operated between the hours of 21:00 and 07:00. Reason –

Reason In the interests of residential amenity.