

Report to	Planning Committee
Date	29 March 2017
By	Director of Planning
Local Authority	Chichester District Council
Application Number	SDNP/16/05377/FUL
Applicant	Mr Christopher Duncton
Application	Change of use from golf clubhouse and office to office (B1A).
Address	Petworth Downs Golf Course London Road Petworth West Sussex GU28 9LX

Recommendation: That the application be approved for the reasons and subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 10 of this report.

Executive Summary

Reason for Planning Committee referral - Applicant is related to a Council member

The application is to regularise the use of the former golf clubhouse and shop for B1(a) (Office) use. The building is modest in scale and the use is accommodated wholly within the building. Both national and local policies support economic diversification in the rural area and this proposal is considered to result in an appropriate, low-key re-use of the building, which would not have a detrimental impact on the character, appearance or special qualities of the South Downs National Park.

1 Site Description

1.1 The building subject to the application is situated on Osiers Farm, which is located approximately 3.6km north of Petworth to the east of the A285. Access is via a semi-metalled single track road serving the farm as well as the farm house and cottages.

1.2 The building in question is of traditional construction of brick elevations under a hipped, clay tiled roof. It is sited just to the south of the access track and built into gently rising ground. To the south of the building on slightly higher ground is Osiers Farmhouse, a Grade II listed building.

1.3 The building was originally constructed in 1998 as a clubhouse and shop in connection with the previous use of part of the farm as a golf course under planning permission PW/97/01170/FUL. The planning permission limited the use of the building for those purposes, although the golf course has been closed for a number of years and the land reverted to agriculture. The building is currently in use as the administrative centre for a transport company.

1.3 The surrounding landscape comprises gently undulating pasture, with dispersed blocks of woodland, one of which is to the north west of the building, on the margins of which is the former golf club car park.

2 Proposal

2.1 The proposal is for the change of use of the building from use as a golf clubhouse and shop to a use within Class B1(a) (office). The office use is already taking place and therefore the application is retrospective.

3 Relevant Planning History

PW/97/01170/FUL - Erection of new club house/golf shop building (together with ancillary facilities) and provision of associated car parking facilities. PERMIT 09.04.1998.

4 Consultations

Parish Council Consultee

None received.

5 Representations

None received

6 Planning Policy Context

Applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan in this area is the **Chichester Local Plan First Review (1999)** and the following additional plan(s):

- SDNPA Partnership Management Plan 2014
- South Downs National Park Local Plan - Preferred Options September 2015

The relevant policies to this application are set out in section 7, below.

National Park Purposes

The two statutory purposes of the SDNP designation are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage,
- To promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of their areas.

If there is a conflict between these two purposes, conservation takes precedence. There is also a duty to foster the economic and social well being of the local community in pursuit of these purposes.

7 Planning Policy

Relevant Government Planning Policy and Guidance

Government policy relating to National Parks is set out in English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010 and The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was issued and came into effect on 27 March 2012. The Circular and NPPF confirm that National Parks have the highest status of protection and the NPPF states at paragraph 115 that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in the national parks and that the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations and should also be given great weight in National Parks.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The following National Planning Policy Framework documents have been considered in the assessment of this application:

The following paragraphs of the NPPF are considered relevant to the determination of this application:

7, 14, 17, 19, 28, 115

The development plan policies listed below have been assessed for their compliance with the NPPF and are considered to be compliant with the NPPF.

The following policies of the **Chichester Local Plan First Review (1999)** are relevant to this application:

- RE1 - Development in the Rural Area Generally
- RE12 - Rural Diversification
- RE14 - Conversions in the Rural Area
- BE11 - New Development

The following policies of the **SDNPA Partnership Management Plan 2014** are relevant to this application:

- General Policy 1
- General Policy 50
- General Policy 55

The following policies of the **South Downs National Park Local Plan - Preferred Options September 2015** are relevant to this application:

- SD5 – Landscape character
- SD27 – Sustaining the rural economy
- SD49 – Conversion of redundant agricultural buildings

The South Downs Local Plan: Preferred Options was approved for consultation by the National Park Authority on 16th July 2015 to go out for public consultation under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The consultation period ran from 2nd September to 28th October 2015. The responses received are being considered by the Authority. The next stage in the plan preparation will be the publication and then submission of the Local Plan for independent examination. Until this time, the Preferred Options Local Plan is a material consideration in the assessment of this planning application in accordance with paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which confirms that weight can be given to policies in emerging plans following publication. Based on the early stage of preparation the policies within the Preferred Options Local Plan are currently afforded limited weight and are not relied upon in the consideration of this application.

8 Planning Assessment

8.1 The main issue is considered to be the effect of the proposed use of the building for office purposes on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

8.2 The B1(a) use is wholly contained within this existing, modestly sized building, with staff parking available immediately to the front of the building. The floorspace of the building totals 71.2 square metres, generating a requirement for 2 parking spaces. The modest size of the building determines that the level of activity associated with the use of the building for office purposes is considered to be relatively low-key and is unlikely to have an adverse impact on the immediate area or the highway network and is markedly less than the activity associated with its former use as a 'pay and play' golf course.

8.3 The building was originally purpose designed to service both the administrative and social requirements of the golf course and therefore it is considered that the change of use to an office use would represent the optimum viable use for the building. No external alterations are proposed by this proposal.

8.4 Both national and local planning policies support the appropriate re-use of buildings in the rural area and the diversification of the rural economy (NPPF paragraphs 7, 18 and 28; Local Plan policies RE12 and RE14). The building is currently in use as the administrative offices for a transport company.

9 Conclusion

9.1 The change of use of the building to enable its use as B1 (a) offices would represent an appropriate, low-key use of the building that would not result in harm to the character, appearance or special qualities of this part of the South Downs National Park by reason of the modest level of activity that would be associated with such a use. Therefore it is considered that the proposal would be in accord with national and local planning policies referred to above.

10 Reason for Recommendation and Conditions

It is recommended that the application be approved for the reasons and subject to the conditions set out below.

1. Notwithstanding the provisions of Part 3, Class O of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, the building shall be used for B1(a) (Office) and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class B1 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Order 2005 or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any other statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order).

Reason: To control the future use of the building in this sensitive rural location, where non-essential residential development is restricted and to ensure the use of the building does not have a harmful environmental effect in the interests of amenity.

11. Crime and Disorder Implications

- 11.1 It is considered that the proposal does not raise any crime and disorder implications.

12. Human Rights Implications

- 12.1 This planning application has been considered in light of statute and case law and any interference with an individual's human rights is considered to be proportionate to the aims sought to be realised.

13. Equality Act 2010

- 13.1 Due regard has been taken of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010.

14. Proactive Working

- 14.1 In reaching this decision the local planning authority has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the NPPF.

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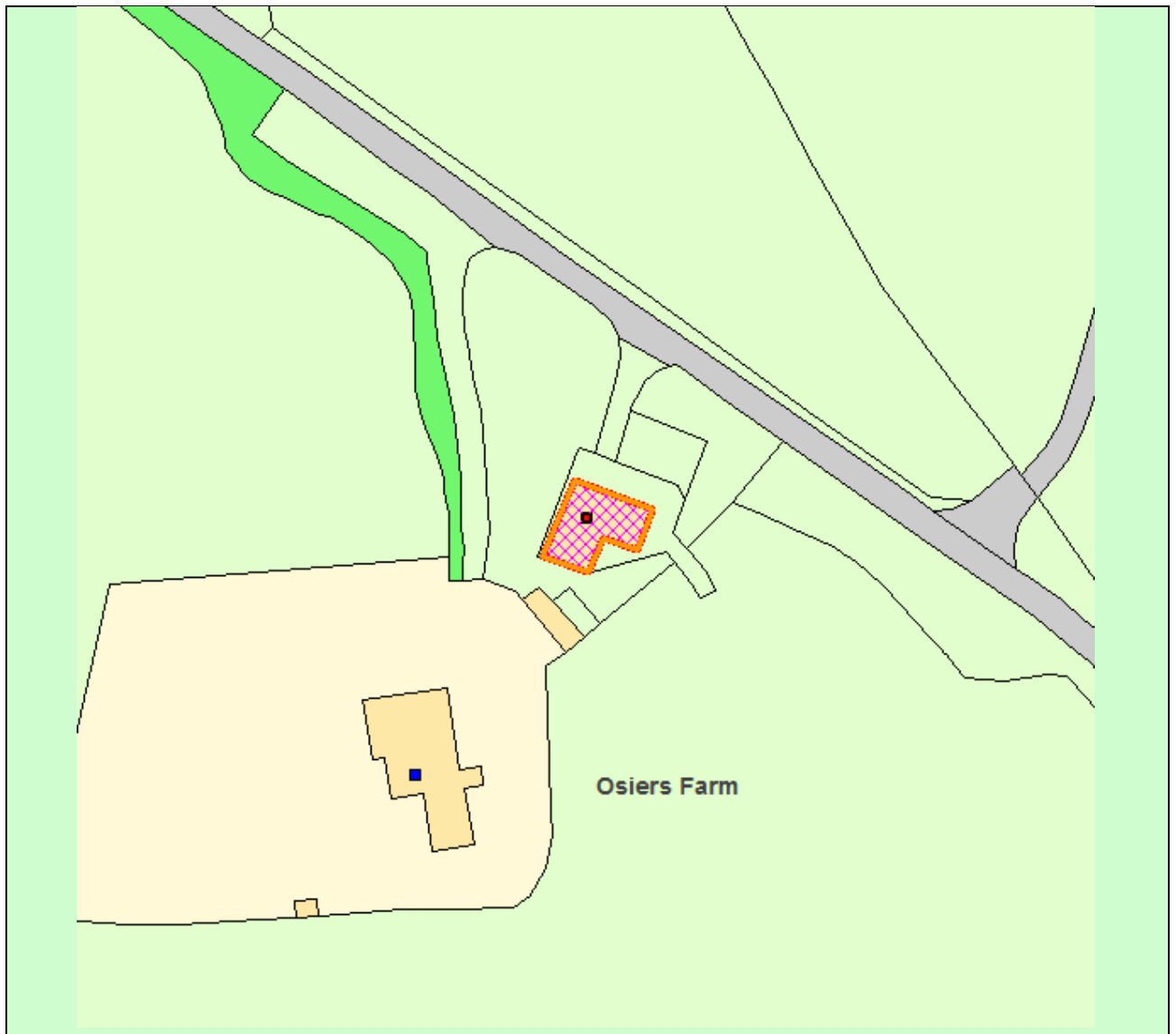
Appendices Appendix 1 - Site Location Map
Appendix 2 – Plans Referred to in Consideration of this Application

SDNPA Consultees None

Background Documents 1998 planning permission, CDLPFR 1999, South Downs Management Plan, Draft South Downs Local Plan 2015, NPPF, NPPG.

Appendix 1

Site Location Map



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Appendix 2 – Plans Referred to in Consideration of this Application

The application has been assessed and recommendation is made on the basis of the following plans and documents submitted:

Plan Type	Reference	Version	Date on Plan	Status
Plans - Location plan	001		25.10.2016	Approved

Reasons: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.