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Sent: 10 December 2024 12:44:10 UTC+00:00
To: "planninginfo" <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Consultee Comments for Planning Application
DM/24/2874

Consultee comments

Dear Sir/Madam,

A consultee has commented on a Planning Application. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 10/12/2024 12:44 PM from Oliver Benson on behalf of Contaminated Land.

Application Summary

Reference:	DM/24/2874
Address:	Twineham Court Farm Bob Lane Twineham Haywards Heath West Sussex RH17 5NH
Proposal:	Proposed removal of the modern disused and redundant agricultural buildings and creation of an events venue through the erection of an events barn and open barn. Proposed use of redundant Grade II Listed farmhouse and Curtilage Listed Building to provide ancillary accommodation to serve the events venue. Proposed erection of estate barn to assist with operation of events venue and retained agricultural land. Creation of new vehicular access onto Bob Lane and provision of driveway and parking area, plus ancillary infrastructure including surface and foul water drainage strategy. Provision of ecological enhancements and hard and soft landscaping.
Case Officer:	Rachel Richardson

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Comments Details

Comments:	After reviewing the application and accompanying Noise Assessment Report prepared by Phlorum, I have the following observations and comments: General Observations • Noise Survey Data (Section 4.8): The report includes background and ambient noise level measurements for two days, with the third day excluded due to high
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wind speeds. While I understand the challenges posed by adverse weather conditions, two days of data may not provide a sufficiently robust baseline. Could Phlorum confirm whether they consider this data sufficient for an accurate and reliable assessment, or if additional measurements are recommended to enhance the reliability of the baseline data?

- Assessment Methodology (Table 5.8):

The estimated noise levels are compared to the existing ambient noise levels. However, in a rural setting where background noise levels are typically much lower than ambient levels, would it not be more appropriate to assess the estimated noise against the background noise levels? I do note that Sections 5.13–5.15 look at background noise levels and acknowledge that noise beyond 11 PM could be problematic, particularly if music is played at 90 dB at 5m from the dance floor's centre.

- Open Windows and Noise Impact (Section 5.8):

The report presents noise levels with windows closed but notes that noise would increase by 15 dB with windows open, which would be unacceptable. This raises concerns regarding the practical implementation of this mitigation measure, as there is a risk that guests or staff may inadvertently open windows, undermining noise control.

Mitigation Measures

I broadly accept the proposed mitigation measures outlined in Section 6.1, specifically:

- Ensuring all windows and doors are closed when music is playing.
- Controlling music noise levels up to 23:00 hours to ensure they do not exceed LAeq,15min 90 dB at 5m from the speakers or adjusting levels based on event-specific sound tests.
- Controlling low-frequency content in line with the Code of Practice on Environmental Noise at Concerts.
- Orientating speakers to face away from the nearest residential properties.
- Ensuring the building structure has no acoustically weak elements, with sound insulation matching or exceeding the performance of closed windows and doors.

However, I do not accept the recommendation that music played after 23:00 hours must merely be "not audible just outside the nearest residential property." This is vague, unenforceable, and insufficient for a newly constructed building designed to host events.

Noise during the Day

Music noise during the day may be audible at times in nearby residents' gardens; however, it is unlikely to be significant, provided that all windows and doors at the venue remain closed during events.

I note that the design of the events barn includes a reception area that could be utilized as a buffer zone for ingress and egress. This would create a lobby between the main events area and any open doors, which is an effective measure to minimise noise escape.

However, I recommend that the applicant address how the venue will manage cooling during warmer months, particularly as

weddings and other events are more popular in summer. Without appropriate cooling systems, there is a risk that windows may be opened, compromising noise control measures. Incorporating solutions such as air conditioning or mechanical ventilation should be considered to ensure that the venue remains compliant with noise mitigation requirements while maintaining guest comfort.

Late-Night Noise Concerns

For a newly built structure, it is reasonable to expect it to be designed with sufficient sound insulation to allow for reasonable noise levels internally without disturbing nearby residents.

Expecting paying guests to tolerate sound levels below 90 dB for a wedding or similar event is unrealistic and unlikely to meet customer expectations.

I recommend:

1. Enhanced Mitigation: Additional improvements to the building's sound insulation should be proposed to better manage noise impacts from late-night music.

2. Alternative Management Strategies: The applicant could consider alternative approaches to managing late-night music. From experience, granting permission for a late-night music venue without robust noise control measures can lead to conflicts between the need to safeguard residential amenity and the expectations of event attendees. It is crucial to address this balance in the design and operation of the venue.

Traffic and Plant Noise

I agree with the assessment that traffic noise is unlikely to present a significant issue and that noise from plant equipment can be adequately controlled with appropriate conditions.

Conclusion

While I broadly accept the proposed mitigation measures for events ending by 23:00 hours, I do not support the current recommendations for noise management beyond this time. The applicant should provide further details or propose additional measures to ensure the venue can operate late-night events without causing unacceptable noise impacts on nearby residents.

Recommendation: Seek further clarification and amendments before granting approval.

Kind regards