

NORTHERN PLANNING COMMITTEE – 31 JULY 2013

UPDATE TO AGENDA

APPLICATION NO: 13/0932M

**LOCATION THE HIGH LEGH PARK GOLF CLUB,
WARRINGTON ROAD, MERE, CHESHIRE,
WA16 0WA**

UPDATE PREPARED 29 JULY 2013

Letter of objection from Park Cottage on the following grounds:

- Consider position of new driving range further away to be worse
- Inappropriate development in the Green Belt
- Concerns regarding lighting and stray golf balls and impact on amenity
- Concerns regarding additional structures proposed

Letter of representation from UK coordinator of the British Astronomical Association's Campaign for Dark Skies raising the following concerns:

- Impact of light spillage on the night sky and the High Legh Community Observatory
- Suggest shielding of lighting or luminous golf balls as alternatives

Letter of representation from agent in response to the above comments making the following points:

- Response from UK coordinator of the British Astronomical Association's Campaign for Dark Skies is a generic comment made by someone who cannot be expected to have any knowledge of the site and fails to take account of the local opinions of persons with an interest in the night sky and also of concessions that have been made, both in the design of the lighting and in the removal of other lighting, within this application.
- Luminous golf balls are a novelty item and are totally unsuitable for the range that is being proposed.

OFFICER APPRAISAL

The comments from the neighbour Park Cottage are duly noted. The issues raised and the subsequent impact upon this property is set out on page 18 in the committee report.

The concerns expressed by the UK coordinator of the British Astronomical Association's Campaign for Dark Skies stem from the belief that floodlights would result in considerable harm as they tend to illuminate a much larger area than required and are often of considerable intensity with a wide beam.

Officers are sympathetic to these concerns. However, the applicant has endeavoured to minimise this impact.

The Lighting reports have been carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced lighting engineer and in accordance with the Institution of Lighting Professionals Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Lighting GN01: 2011 which is the definitive guidance on Sky Glow. Therefore the impact has been appropriately quantified.

The proposals utilise innovative berm lighting which is not a generic off the shelf solution and produces significantly less upward light than conventional lighting. This would not give rise to light overspill which is one of the concerns expressed by the UK coordinator of the British Astronomical Association's Campaign for Dark Skies.

In addition, the combination of the proposed screens for the Berm lights and angling and caps for the floodlights would mitigate the impact and represent the type of landscape mitigation suggested by the UK coordinator of the British Astronomical Association's Campaign for Dark Skies.

On that basis, officers are still of the opinion that the proposed lighting would not have an adverse impact upon the openness or visual amenity of the Green Belt by reason of sky glow.

The recommendation therefore remains for approval.