

13/00056/FUL
RYEDALE DAM

22 JAN 2013

DEVELOPMENT
MANAGEMENT

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Our Ref: NOR.J 2012.02

17 January 2013

Dear Shaun

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE SITING OF FIVE TIMBER CAMPING PODS AND AN ABLUTIONS POD AT JAMIE'S CRAGG HOLIDAY PARK, WELBURN, YO60 7EW

Introduction

I would be grateful if you would regard this letter as comprising the required Planning and Design and Access Statement in respect of the Full Planning Application for the development proposals described above. Please forward to Consultees as you consider appropriate.

This statement should be considered in conjunction with the attached Arboricultural Report by Mark S Feather dated October 2012.

Summary

This is a Full Planning Application for the siting of five timber camping pods and an ablutions pod at Jamie's Cragg Holiday Park, Welburn, YO60 7EW.

The proposals consist of a small scale expansion to an existing, well established, and well managed holiday caravan park.

The application is a small scale proposal consisting of the siting of five timber pods and an additional pod to be used for toilet facilities for staying guests. The application proposals are located within an area of the existing caravan park which has historically been used as an ad-hoc over flow car parking area for guests.

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The proposed pods will be set in amongst an existing mature woodland and therefore will be well screened from public view. Careful consideration has been given to these existing trees and the accompanying Arboricultural Report demonstrates the proposals can be satisfactorily accommodated without adverse impact on the long term health and welfare of the trees and their visual contribution to the area.

The proposals are small scale in nature and seek to diversify the existing established caravan park, offering a different type of accommodation. Given that only five pods are proposed there should be no material impact on the general visual amenities and residential amenities of the locality, as any additional noise, activity and disturbance is anticipated to be minimal and should be judged in relation to the application site's close proximity to the existing caravan park and the busy A64 to the North.

National and Local Plan Policies actively support the creation and diversification of tourism accommodation in sustainable rural locations. The application site is considered to be located in a sustainable and highly accessible location given its position next to the primary A64 route which links York to Scarborough and the East coast. The site is also located within close proximity to the North Yorkshire Moors National Park.

Overall it is considered that the application proposals are small in scale and low in terms of the intensity and can be satisfactorily accommodated on the application site without detriment to interests of acknowledged importance. The application is therefore considered to be in accordance with National Planning Policy and the Council's Local Plan Policies.

Site Location and Description

The application site is located in the open countryside to the South of the A64 and to the East of Castle Howard Station Road.

The existing Park consists of up to 105 static holiday homes set within the attractive cragg walls and woodlands of the historic Jamie's Cragg Quarry.

The application site comprises a small pocket of land near the junction of the A64 with Castle Howard Station Road, lying outside of the historic walls of the former Jamie's Cragg Quarry. It is currently an area of mature trees but there is a narrow access of crushed asphalt construction leading up a short incline to an area of off street parking set in amongst and beneath the existing mature trees.

The application site is irregular in shape and amounts to 0.1 hectares.

The existing car park area is well screened from view from the A64 and from Castle Howard Station Road, albeit glimpses up the short incline are possible from Castle Howard Station Road to the West.

There are two adjacent residential properties to the West and South West of the application site. These are Welburn Lodge located immediately West of the application site entrance and Paddock View, located approximately 70 metres South-west of the application site.

Immediately to the North of the application site is an additional small area of woodland which abuts the A64. To the East and North-east of the application site is open agricultural land. To the South and South-east of the application site is the existing caravan park. There is an area of land between the existing caravan park and the application site which is presently used as a play and recreational area set in amongst the mature trees.

The existing Jamie's Cragg Holiday Park site entrance is located approximately 15 metres to the South of the access point of the proposed application.

The application site is situated within a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; however this is clearly a developed part of that designation.

The River Derwent is located approximately 500 metres or so to the South-east of the application site.

The Centenary Way, a notable local Public Right of Way skirts around the application site to the South and East routing along the River Derwent and then North to Crambeck. There are no Public Rights of Way within the application site itself.

The Proposals

The proposals seek to utilise an existing area of the Park, which is currently used for overflow parking, for the siting of 5 No timber camping pods and 1 No timber ablutions block and associated access and parking.

The proposed pods are to be located in an irregular fashion, set in amongst existing mature trees. The pods will be located under a number of the canopies to the existing woodland, however there will be no ground disturbance or impact on the roots of these existing trees as the pods will comprise above ground structures.

A small area of off street parking is to be provided to the East of the small cluster of pods. This will include 1 No disabled parking space. The parking area is to be constructed of the existing crushed asphalt surface, which will remain.

Guests will park their cars in the proposed parking area and will walk to the individual timber pods using narrow footpaths of a suitable finish.

A new hedgerow is to be planted to the West side of the proposed pods to supplement the existing mature trees in order to help screen and soften the visual impact of the introduction of the 5 No pods and 1 No ablutions pod.

Foul drains associated with the proposed ablutions pod will be routed away from existing tree roots and will connect to the systems associated with the existing caravan park to the South.

There will be no impact on the existing play and recreational areas located immediately to the South of the application site.

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Amount

The application site area amounts to 0.1 hectares. The red line application site boundary is shown on drawing number 001.

The proposals involve the siting of 5 No timber camping pods and 1 No timber toilet block.

The individual pods measure approximately 4.8 mtrs long x 2.9 mtrs wide x 2.5 mtrs high. Each pod will have a small decking area measuring 2.8 mtrs x 1.5 mtrs.

The proposed toilet block will be a marginally larger structure measuring 4.8 mtrs in length x 3.0 mtrs in width x 3.1 mtrs in height. The toilet pod will house a toilet with wash basin, a wet room, a shower and a disabled toilet.

6 No off street parking spaces are proposed, one of which will be a disabled parking space.

Layout

The proposed layout is to be informal in nature. The proposed site plan, drawing no 101, shows the location and the layout of the proposed pods relative to the existing caravan park, which is located to the South. The proposed pods will be located within an existing area of trees within which there is an historic overflow car parking area next to the Park's play and recreational areas.

The pods will be arranged in an informal nature, clustered in an irregular circle shape.

There will be a small area of parking to the West side of the proposed pods where there will also be turning space and access onto Castle Howard Station Road.

Small, narrow, intimate pathways are proposed leading from the parking area to the individual pods.

A linear new hedgerow is proposed to the West of the proposed pod toilet facility.

Scale

The dimensions of the individual timber pods and the timber pod toilet facility have already been set out above in the 'Amount' section of this statement. It is therefore not necessary to repeat these details here.

In terms of scale, the red line area amounts to 0.1 hectares. This is considered to be small in scale relative to the land area of the existing well established caravan park, which amounts to 3.2 hectares.

A development of 6 pods and 6 parking areas combined with a small associated turning area is not considered to be large in nature. The scale of the proposals should reasonably be judged in relation to the scale of the existing caravan park.

Appearance

The proposed pods are to be of a moulded slender shape, and constructed of timber facing materials. They will be placed on moveable blocks. The timber is to be stained and treated in a brown colour.

The proposed pods are modest in terms of their size, scale and appearance and therefore will not appear as large structures within the landscape. The pods will be set in amongst and beneath the canopies of mature trees and therefore will be well hidden and screened from view. Their dark appearance and natural timber colour and texture will further ensure that the pods are not highly visible from either the A64, from Castle Howard Station Road or from the two neighbouring properties, Welburn Lodge and Paddock View located to the West and the South-west of the application site.

The existing access road and car parking area are constructed of a crushed asphalt material which is considered to be appropriate in this open countryside location and reflective of the choice of hard materials and finishes already utilised elsewhere on the main caravan park.

Landscaping

There are no significant landscaping proposals as part of this application, due in large to the fact that the existing site benefits from considerable existing mature trees and landscaping. The application proposals seek to offer a scheme designed to nestle in amongst these existing trees in order to benefit from this woodland setting. The dark colour and timber texture of the pods will ensure that they appear as part of this existing woodland. It is also the case that they will be constructed of non dig foundations and therefore there will be no impact on the root systems of these trees and no effect in terms of their long term health, structure and integrity.

To supplement the existing screening qualities of the trees it is proposed to plant a new native species hedge to the Western side of the application site between the proposed parking area and the area for the pods. This can be secured by way of a suitably worded planning condition.

Access

Access to the application site will be via an existing historic access off Castle Howard Station Road. This existing access is constructed of crushed asphalt which leads to a small area of crushed asphalt surface which has been historically used for an over flow car park to serve guests of the Park.

The scheme proposes six off street parking spaces, one of which will be a disabled parking space, and associated turning and manoeuvring space to cater for the needs of the pods and their guests.

The application site is relatively level and therefore access for disabled guests will be available. Access to the main caravan park and its onsite facilities will be available via a short walk along Castle Howard Station Road to the main Park entrance, approximately 15 metres to the South.

The pod area will be highly accessible to the existing play and recreational areas which are located directly to the South of the application site.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND KEY ISSUES

Planning Policy and Principles

The principle of the proposed application is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with both National and Local Development Plan Policies.

The proposals consist of a small scale diversification and expansion of an existing, well established caravan park located in a highly sustainable and accessible location between York and Malton and lying directly along side the A64, which is a principal route linking West Yorkshire to the East Coast and settlements in between.

The National Planning Policy Framework, introduced by the National Government in March this year places a positive presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be approved without delay. The Government has, through its National Planning Policy Framework, made a clear commitment to the identification and definition of sustainable development which should be appreciated in terms of three core dimensions: social, economic, and environmental.

Economic Dimension

In terms of the economic dimension of sustainability the current application is considered to respond favourably, in that it will help an existing caravan park to grow in a small but beneficial way and diversify its appeal to its existing and future customer base. This will help to sustain the continued viability of this existing rural business.

Social Dimension

In terms of the social dimension of sustainability the application proposals also respond positively, as they will increase opportunities for good quality holiday and recreation experience. It is clear that the socio-economic implications of the proposals are highly intertwined, as opportunities to increase the number of guests at the Park will have added benefits for the wider local economy as guests will naturally spend their money when visiting other local services and facilities and businesses.

Environmental Dimension

In terms of the environmental dimension of sustainability it is considered that the application proposals will have no adverse impacts on the character and appearance of the open countryside in this location, which consists and is part of a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Despite being located within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the open countryside the application site itself is by no means open in nature, as it is well screened by existing mature trees which line the boundaries of the site and which can be found within the main body of the site itself. The proposed pods will be nestled in amongst and will utilise the presence of these trees to create an attractive sylvan environment, which will be one of the key attractions and characteristics of the site. The accompanying Arboricultural Report confirms that the pods and the car parking area can be accommodated without threat to the well established trees.

The application site comprises an existing made up area of ground beneath the canopies of the existing mature trees, which will remain and therefore there should be no material impact on any existing wildlife habitat. Given that the application site consists of ground that is already made up there should be no effect on undisturbed ground or habitat. In particular, the retention and safeguarding of the existing mature trees should ensure that the habitat value of this part of the caravan site is relatively undisturbed.

Paragraph 17 of the NPPF sets out a number of core planning principles. Of particular relevance to this application are the principles which encourage planning to be about a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives and not simply be about scrutiny. In addition, these

core planning principles seek to proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to help business growth and respond positively to the business needs of local plan areas.

Paragraph 28 of the NPPF is of relevance to this application. It states that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new developments. To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should amongst other things support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, and in particular to this application, support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations. The current application responds positively to these particular objectives as it comprises a small scale sustainable development in an appropriate and accessible location and it will help an existing business to meet its business growth aspirations in a carefully managed fashion.

Ryedale Local Plan – Policy TM3

The key policy of the existing Ryedale Local Plan, which gives active support to the application proposals, is Policy TM3, which relates to chalet, cabin and static caravan development.

Policy TM3 states that new chalet, cabin and static caravan development or the extension of existing sites will not be permitted within or where they would materially adversely affect the landscape setting of the Howardian Hills AONB, the green belt, the setting of any historic park or garden, listed building, conservation area or scheduled ancient monument.

The application site is located within the Howardian Hills AONB, however, it is not located within any of the other specific landscaped settings described above.

It is considered that the nature and scale of the application proposals are such that they would not have a material adverse effect on the landscape setting of the AONB. The application site is located along side a busy and major, man made feature: the A64. Notwithstanding the close proximity of this significant man made feature within the landscape, the application site itself is nestled discreetly and out of public view, due in large by the combination of the natural landform of the historic Jamie's Cragg Quarry and by the mature trees and landscaping which bounds the site. The application proposals seek to work with this existing mature landscape and given that there are clear assurances that the existing trees will be safeguarded and unaffected by the proposed pods, which will not have invasive foundations, it is considered that the landscape and visual impact of the application proposals on the AONB, and the wider landscape in general, will not be significant or materially harmful.

Set out within Policy TM3 of the Local Plan are a number of key criteria which individual development proposals must accord with. The compatibility of the application proposals with these particular criteria is considered below.

Criteria 1 – Screening and Impact on the Countryside

Criteria 1 of Policy TM3 requires that application sites are well screened by landform and/or existing landscaping from roads, elevated view points and other public spaces and the development will not have a material adverse effect on the character and appearance of the countryside.

It has already been described above and explained in detail that the application site is not highly visible within the wider surrounding countryside. It is located alongside the significant man made structure (the A64) and benefits from considerable existing landscape screening by way of the mature trees. These trees will be safeguarded and the proposed timber structures, to be stained dark brown, will appear as part of this wood and will not be highly obtrusive within the immediate landscape setting.

There are no local opportunities for elevated views of the application site and any views from the neighbouring A64 would be from fast moving traffic and therefore would not be substantial. In any case, combination of the trees and bunding in place makes the application site almost imperceptible when viewed from the A64.

When viewed from the adjacent minor road, Castle Howard Station Road to the West, there may be some glimpses into the application site up the narrow access track, however, the development would be framed within the existing mature trees and therefore would not be highly visible from this local road. In addition, there are two residential properties in reasonably close proximity to the application site, however, again, views from these properties to the application site would be screened and softened by the existing mature trees.

Criteria 2 – The Scale of Development

Criteria 2 of Policy TM3 requires that the scale of development relates sensitively to its surroundings. A scheme of six pods and six off street car parking spaces set within the context of the existing Park, which comprises in excess of 100 static caravans, is considered to be small scale. Moreover it is considered that a scheme comprising of slender, moulded, dark stained, timber structures would relate sensitively to the prevailing woodland surroundings.

Criteria 3 – Layout, Design and Landscaping

Criteria 3 of Policy TM3 of the Local Plan requires that the layout, design and landscaping of new sites and chalets, cabins or caravans satisfactorily blends into the landscape in terms of siting, design, colour and materials.

It has already been set out above in the Design and Access Statement, particularly with regards to the sections relating to scale, appearance and landscaping why it is considered that the proposed development would blend satisfactorily with its host environment. The combination of the small number of chalets, combined with their dark timber appearance and texture set within a safeguarded sylvan setting will ensure that the development proposals will be virtually hidden and imperceptible from public vantage points.

Criteria 4 – Location

Criteria 4 of the Policy TM3 of the Local Plan requires that new sites are located in areas with local opportunities for informal countryside recreation, but will not in themselves become detrimental to such attractions. The application site comprises an extension to an existing holiday caravan park located between the A64 and the River Derwent. The main Park is set within the historic Jamie's Cragg former quarry and is very well placed in terms of sustainability to a range of local services and facilities and attractions. These include principal settlements such as Malton, York, Helmsley, Pickering and the North York Moors National Park and the East coast. Moreover, and more locally, there are a number of well known Public Rights of Way and footpaths including The Centenary Way. There are also a number of local settlements where guests are within easy reach of a range of local services and facilities. The scale of the application is such that there will be no perceptible impact in terms of visitor numbers or pressure to these local centres.

Criteria 5 – Impacts on the Character and Setting of Settlements and the Amenity of Local Residents

The application site is located in the open countryside. The nearest local settlements are Welburn to the North-west, approximately 1 km away and Cranbeck located approximately 500 mtrs to the North-east. The application proposals will have no material impact on the setting, character or amenity of these particular settlements.

There are two adjacent residential properties within reasonably close proximity of the application site. These are Welburn Lodge which is located immediately to the West of the application site access and Paddock View located approximately 70 mtrs to the South-west.

The impact of the application proposals on these two residential neighbours should be judged taking into account their established proximity to and relationship with the existing caravan park, which is not insignificant in size. Jamie's Cragg Caravan Park consists of more than 100 static caravans and therefore there will already be a degree of activity, nuisance and disturbance to both Welburn Lodge and Paddock View as a consequence of their close proximity to the existing caravan park. Nevertheless, it is important to ensure that any growth and development of the Park does not compound any adverse effects or materially harm the residential amenities of these two properties.

Whilst there may be some perception, both visual and in terms of increased activity associated with the proposed pods, it is considered that the impacts on the residential amenities of Welburn Lodge and Paddock View will not be significant or material in nature and certainly not significant enough to warrant refusal of the application on the basis of adverse affects on these properties. This judgement is reached taking account of the very small scale nature of the application proposal, combined with the fact that the pods are constructed of dark stained timber and set within a well screened and heavily landscaped setting. It is also the case that the application site has historically been used as an intermittent ad-hoc over flow car park and therefore will have experienced the ingress and egress of some traffic. Whilst the application proposals will seek to formalise the use of this part of the site, the amount of traffic associated with five pods is unlikely to be significant and would be staggered and therefore would not be of a scale and intensity which would materially harm the residential amenities of neighbouring properties.

Criteria 5 – Traffic Generation and Highway Safety

Criteria 5 of Policy TM3 requires that the traffic generated by new chalet, cabin and static caravan developments are satisfactorily accommodated on the local highway network and sufficient off road vehicle parking can be provided.

It is the case that the existing caravan park is served off of Castle Howard Station Road which has a T junction with the busy A64 route. Whilst the proposals will increase the amount of traffic entering and leaving the A64 at this junction it is not considered to be materially different or significant. Whilst speeds are high on the A64 visibility is good and therefore it is considered that there will be no material change to local highway safety.

In relation to the other criteria set out within Policy TM3 of the Local Plan, the proposals do not affect wildlife or biodiversity habitats will not result in the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land, are of a timber cabin design and construction and are not located within a flood plain or susceptible to flooding or local drainage problems.

In terms of plan area precedence for similar pod style development permissions we are aware of at least one recent planning permission, reference 11/01158/MFUL for change of use of land for the siting of 13 No holiday lodges, 10 No timber camping pods, 2 No group holiday lodges, erection of amenity building, etc at Willow Dene, Upper Carr Lane, Pickering, North Yorkshire, YO18 7JP, which was approved by the Local Planning Authority on the 31 January 2012.

This current application proposal is significantly smaller in terms of its scale and nature than the approved application referred to above. The critical issue is compliance with Development Plan Policy and in this particular case it is considered that the application proposals do accord with both National Planning Policy and Policy TM3 of the Ryedale Local Plan.

The Regional Spatial Strategy

The Government has set out its intention to revoke the Yorkshire and Humber Plan, therefore it is considered that limited weight should be attached to the policies contained therein. It is considered more reasonable to assess this application proposal against the National Planning Policy Framework and the policies contained within the Ryedale Local Plan. Nevertheless, if the Local Authority is minded to continue to make reference to the Regional Spatial Strategy it is considered that there are a number of policies contained therein which would offer support to the current planning application proposals, notably Policies E6 and E7 which actively encourage and support proposals for sustainable tourism and development of the rural economy respectively. In addition, Policies ENV8 and ENV10 seek to ensure that development proposals are satisfactory with regards to their impacts on biodiversity and landscape; however it has been explained above why the application proposals will have no material adverse affects on biodiversity habitats and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty within which the application site lies.

Planning Policy and Principle Summary

In conclusion, it is considered that the principle of the development is acceptable in policy terms and supported by both national planning policy guidance and the Council's own development plan policies and recent planning permissions issued by the Local Planning Authority.

The section above in relation to compatibility with Policy TM3 of the Local Plan has explained in detail why the planning application is considered to be acceptable particularly in relation to critical issues such as landscape and visual impact, impact on local and general visual amenity, impact on highway safety, impacts on local settlements and acceptability in terms of accessibility and sustainability. Overall there is not considered to be any material incompatibility with the criteria set out within critical Policy TM3 of the Local Plan.

Impact on Trees

This application is submitted with an Arboricultural Report prepared by Mark S Feather, dated October 2012, who is a qualified Arboriculturalist and Landscape Consultant. This report confirms that a qualified Arboriculturalist has visited the site and undertaken a thorough inspection and assessment of the existing trees which occupy the site. This report includes plans which indicate the root protection areas for these existing trees.

The tree report confirms that the proposed development will not involve the removal of any existing trees. Moreover, the character of this form of holiday accommodation is such that the pods are located close to the trees however, given that the proposed pods will sit on top of the ground with no below ground foundations, it is considered that there would be no root disturbance associated

with this development. The only potential impact on the roots of the existing trees would be in relation to the proposed drainage runs and it is confirmed within the tree report that these can be carefully rooted to avoid all tree roots.

The tree report confirms that there may be a requirement for some pruning or even re-coppice of some of the existing trees on the site however, the general concept of the application proposals is to work with and retain and safeguard in perpetuity the existing mature trees which will contribute to the creation of an attractive landscape setting for the application proposals and ensure that, in the long term, there will be no adverse landscape or visual impact.

Conclusion

This application seeks full planning permission for the siting of 5 No timber camping pods and 1 No ablutions pod and associated access and off street parking facilities at Jamie's Cragg Holiday Park.

Jamie's Cragg Caravan Park is well established, and well managed existing Park consisting of in excess of 100 static caravans set within a Park which benefits from excellent and significant landform and landscape screening.

The existing Park is located at a sustainable and accessible location in close proximity to the A64 between York and Malton. The application proposals seek a very small scale expansion and diversification of the tourism accommodation product currently available at the existing Park and are considered important to ensuring that the existing rural based tourism business can respond to the continuing and changing demands of its existing and future customer base.

The application proposals are considered to be in accordance with the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development in that they respond positively and favourably to the three key dimensions of sustainability: economic, social and environmental.

Careful consideration has been given to the siting of the proposed lodges and their impacts on the existing woodland setting within which they are to sit. An Arboricultural Survey and Report confirms that these existing mature trees will be safeguarded in perpetuity. This should ensure that the proposal will be well screened and there will be no material or adverse impact on the landscape character and quality of the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty within which the application site is located.

Furthermore, careful consideration has been given to the impact of the proposals on the local highway network and neighbouring residential amenity. Clearly the application is very small in terms of its size and scale, consisting of only 6 pods. As a consequence it is considered that there would be no material difference and/or harm in combination with the existing caravan site and therefore impacts on local highway safety and residential amenity are considered to be acceptable.

Overall, the application is considered to be in accordance with adopted National Planning Policy and the Council's own Local Planning Policies, and in addition there are a number of plan area precedents for similar proposals for pod development, which give further support to this application.

It is hoped that Officers will be supporting this proposal. Please do not hesitate to contact either Roy Edwardson or myself should you require any additional information or clarification.

Yours sincerely

Thorfinn Caithness BA(Hons); MA(Town & Reg Plng); Cert MS; MRTPI