

13/00029/MFUL
RYEDALE DAM

28 JAN 2013

Planning Statement

**DEVELOPMENT
MANAGEMENT**

for

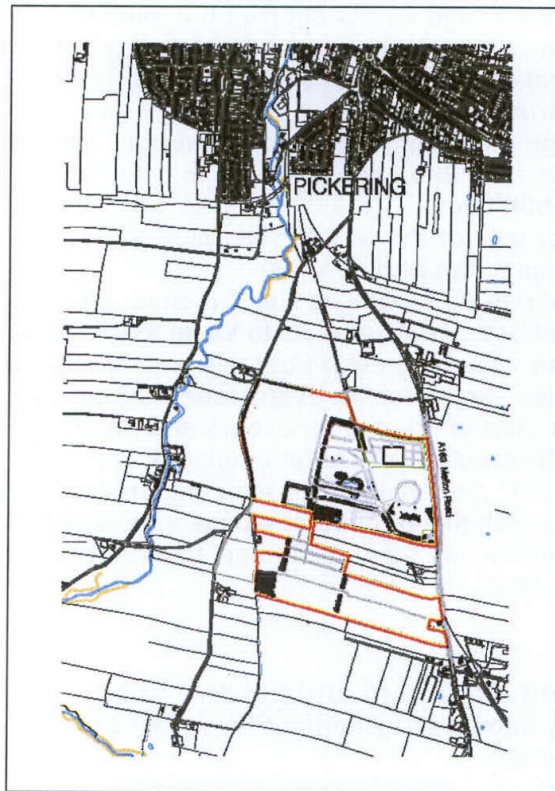
1. Erection of 58 holiday lodges in two main locations and a manager's lodge;
2. Erection of a restaurant building and a building to house a small convenience shop, storage room and a specialist outward-bound sports shop with a toilet block attached;
3. Construction of new accesses to Malton Road and associated internal access roads;
4. Construction of lake;
5. Change of use of part of site to touring caravan park with the erection of 2no. shower/toilet blocks and a reception/site shop building;
6. Use of part of the site for camping including the erection of 15no. camping pods;
7. Use of part of the site as a nature area; and
8. Shared use of part of the site as an event field and for football pitches with the erection of a pavilion for toilets and changing facilities – joint use for events and football matches.
9. Use of part of the site for events and outward bound activities with the erection of a toilet block building;
10. Use of part of the site for car parking and a park & ride facility with the erection of a passenger shelter with toilets.
11. Erection of 2 no. buildings to house biomass boilers & pellet store.

Pickering Exhibition and Leisure Village
(formerly known as Pickering Showground)
Malton Road,
Pickering

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1 The Site

- 1.1 The application site extends to 43 hectares of land on the west side of the Malton Road (A169) just 2 miles south of Pickering. It is in two parcels joined by a narrow strip and separated by land in different ownership. (see location plan below) The northernmost parcel accommodates a large building (4425 sqm) which is used with the remainder of the site (in whole or in part) as an event venue and is known locally as Pickering Showground. The southern parcel is also used for the larger events.



- 1.2 The site is generally flat with a slight gradient falling from the north-west corner to the south and east. Several road tracks and drainage ditches cross the site. There are also boundary and internal hedgerows and trees. (see aerial photo below)



2 Planning History

- 2.1 03/00183/MFUL – Erection of events arena with associated landscaping and parking. Granted - 17.05.2004. Conditions 4 and 18 control the operation of the premises. Condition 4 specifies that there shall be no vehicular access other than from the A169 unless otherwise agreed; and condition 18 specifies that the use shall only be as an exhibition/conference centre and any retail use shall be ancillary to that use. Formal consent will be required for other uses within Use Class D (Non Residential Institutions [D1] & Assembly & Leisure [D2]).
- 2.2 The permission was also accompanied by a s.106 legal agreement relating to safeguarding the railway line for possible future railway purposes.
- 2.3 07.00458.73 – Variation to condition 18 of approval 03/00183/MFUL to allow activities within use class D2 in addition to the existing use as exhibition/conference centre with ancillary retail. Temporary permission granted 12.09.2007.

2.4 12/01204/MFUL – A current planning application for the recladding of the building in timber and for the laying out of associated car parking areas, a service area, an amenity/play area and associated landscaping. It also includes the erection of a new gatehouse building at the main entrance.

3 The Proposal

3.1 The proposal is to increase the range and frequency of events within the building and adjoining land, under the existing planning permission and to use the rest of the site for related tourism and recreation uses. This involves:

- Erection of 58 holiday lodges in two main locations and a manager's lodge;
- Erection of a restaurant building and a building to house a small convenience shop, storage room and a specialist outward-bound sports shop with a toilet block attached;
- Construction of new accesses to Malton Road and associated internal access roads;
- Construction of lake;
- Change of use of part of site to touring caravan park with the erection of 2no. shower/toilet blocks and a reception/site shop building;
- Use of part of the site for camping including the erection of 15no. camping pods;
- Use of part of the site as a nature area; and
- Shared use of part of the site as an event field and for football pitches with the erection of a pavilion for toilets and changing facilities – joint use for events and football matches.
- Use of part of the site for events and outward bound activities with the erection of a toilet block building;
- Use of part of the site for car parking and a park & ride facility with the erection of a passenger shelter with toilets.
- Erection of 2 no. buildings to house biomass boilers & pellet store.

3.2 The application is supported by a number of reports:

- A Planning Statement;
- A Design & Access Statement – by Graham Binnington Architects;
- A Phase 1 Habitat Survey Report – by Wold Ecology Ltd;
- A Great Crested Newt Report - by Wold Ecology Ltd;
- An Arboricultural Report - by Wold Ecology Ltd;
- A Breeding Bird Survey Report - by Wold Ecology Ltd;
- A Transport Assessment – by Local Transport Projects;
- A Flood Risk & Drainage Assessment – by Alan Wood & Partners.

3.3 The proposals were the subject of Public Exhibitions in October 2012 and a report on these and including the comments received is also submitted.



4 Planning Policy

- 4.1 Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 The Development Plan comprises the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) 2008 and the Ryedale District Council Local Plan (2002/2004 – saved policies 2007). The Ryedale Plan – Local Plan Strategy (2012), the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) April 2012 and the Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism (2006) are material considerations.
- 4.3 RSS policies YH4 to YH7 set out the strategy for the location of new development. Policy YH6 states that local service centres and rural areas will be protected and enhanced as attractive and vibrant places and communities, providing quality of place and excellent environmental, economic and social resource. Through decision making it seeks to achieve a high standard of design that protects and enhances landscape diversity and character; supports innovative means of accessing and delivering services; retains and improves local services and facilities; and supports economic diversification.
- 4.4 The Remoter Rural Subarea policy RR1 states that plans strategies, investment decisions and programmes should (amongst others):

Economic Development

- Foster economic diversification which does not damage the sub area's built and natural features;
- Encourage creative, diverse and low impact enterprises which provide employment opportunities and contribute to meeting local needs;
- Encourage tourist – and sport/recreation - related development which diversifies the local economy and creates jobs but which does not compromise the environmental, landscape and heritage interests of the sub area.

Environmental quality

- Encourage appropriate planting and management measures in the sub area to ameliorate downstream flood risk and enhance biodiversity.

Transport

- Encourage innovative public transport initiatives – both road and rail and new cycling and walking facilities for residents and visitors to improve access to service centres and to more distant larger centres.

4.5 RSS policy ENV8: Biodiversity states that biodiversity shall be retained and incorporated in development to encourage networks of green infrastructure and ecological corridors identified in the Strategy (Figure 10.3 and Table 10.3).

4.6 RSS policy ENV10: Landscape seeks to safeguard and enhance landscapes that contribute to the distinctive character of Yorkshire and the Humber.

4.7 RSS policy ENV11: Health, recreation and sport states that plans, strategies, investment decisions and programmes should (amongst others) should improve the health of residents by providing, safeguarding and enhancing high quality facilities for sport and recreation; and maximise opportunities to develop walking and cycling routes and other green infrastructure.

4.8 RSS policy E1: Creating a successful and competitive regional economy states that plans, strategies, investment decisions and programmes should help deliver (amongst other matters): the potential of the 'non-business class' sectors such as sport, leisure and tourism as key economic and employment generators and ICT infrastructure and take-up of broadband, particularly as a priority in rural areas.

4.9 RSS policy E6: Sustainable tourism promotes and encourages tourism and advocates an overall approach which:

1. Recognises the sustainable growth of tourism as an integral contributor to the economy and makes best use of indigenous resources and existing tourism infrastructure;

2. Promotes responsible investment in the quality of the tourism and related services in order to provide a high quality experience, throughout the year for all segments of the market;
3. Secures investment in local people skills and capacities in Yorkshire's tourism industry, making full use of the local labour supply to fill a range of existing and new high quality jobs in the tourism sector;
4. Supports local cultural distinctiveness and contributes to the quality of life of in the communities in the Region;
5. Conserves and enhances the built and natural environment....through effective visitor management;
6. Integrates tourism activity with a viable transport infrastructure that enables a realistic choice of travel mode to and within the region, supported by a management regime that encourages greater use of public transport by visitors.

4.10 It states that plans, strategies, investment decisions and programmes should promote tourism in certain priority areas which include rural areas – where tourism and recreation can provide jobs for local residents of a scale and type appropriate to their location.

4.11 Ryedale Local Plan policy TM3 states that chalet, cabin and static caravan developments will be permitted provided:

- (i) The site is well screened by landform and/or existing landscaping from roads, elevated viewpoints and other public places and development will not have a material adverse effect on the character and appearance of the countryside;
- (ii) The scale of the development relates sensitively to its surroundings;
- (iii) The layout, design and landscaping of the site and the chalets, cabins or caravans satisfactorily blend into the landscape in terms of their siting, design, colour and materials;
- (iv) The site is in an area with local opportunities for informal countryside recreation, but will not itself become detrimental to such attractions;
- (v) The site will not have a material adverse impact on the character or setting of settlements or the amenity of local residents;

- (vi) The traffic generated can be satisfactorily accommodated on the local highway network and sufficient off-road vehicle parking can be provided;
- (vii) The proposal will accord with the provisions of policies ENV10 and ENV20;
- (viii) The proposal will accord with the provisions of policy AG1 regarding the best and most versatile agricultural land;
- (xi) That, where the proposal is sited within a floodplain or other area liable to flood, it would comply with the provisions of policy ENV25.

4.12 Local Plan policy TM4 states that proposals for the establishment or extension of camping and touring caravan sites will only be permitted where:

- (i) The site is well screened by landform and/or existing landscaping from roads, elevated viewpoints and other public places and development will not have a material adverse effect on the character and appearance of the countryside;
- (ii) The scale of the development relates sensitively to its surroundings;
- (iii) The site is in an area with local opportunities for informal countryside recreation, but will not itself become detrimental to such attractions;
- (iv) The site has good access to the road network, will not cause significant traffic congestion and safety problems, and sufficient off-road vehicle parking can be provided;
- (v) The proposal will not have a material adverse impact on sites of nature conservation value or archaeological or historic importance;
- (vi) The site will not have a material adverse impact on the character or setting of settlements or the amenity of local residents;

4.13 Local Plan policy TM5 states that outside the Green Belt, the proposals for buildings to be provided in association with camping, caravanning or chalet development will be permitted only where it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that they:

- (i) Are necessary for the operation of the site, and the size and nature of the buildings are commensurate with the scale of the enterprise;

- (ii) Would not have a material adverse effect on the character and appearance of the countryside;
- (iii) Are of a good standard of design and satisfactorily blend into the landscape in terms of their siting, design and materials;
- (iv) Are compatible with policies ENV2 and ENV3.

4.14 Local Plan policy L1 states that outdoor sports facilities will be permitted outside the development limits of settlements defined on the Proposals Map where the proposal:

- (i) Cannot reasonably be accommodated within an existing settlement;
- (ii) Would not have a material adverse effect upon the character or appearance of the countryside;
- (iii) Is accessible to pedestrians, cyclists or those who rely on public transport (exceptions will be made for those facilities dependent on a unique natural resource or feature);
- (iv) Does not result in a volume of traffic which exceeds the capacity of the surrounding road network or requires changes to the road network which would have a material adverse effect upon the character of the area and where sufficient off-road parking can be provided;
- (v) Does not involve the construction of large buildings or structures;
- (vi) Would not have an unduly detrimental effect on the character or setting of settlements or the amenities of people living nearby;
- (vii) Would not have a material adverse effect upon sites of nature conservation value, landscape value or archaeological or historic importance;
- (viii) Would comply with the provisions of policies L4 and L5;

4.15 Local Plan policy T3 requires all new development to be served by a local road network that can be satisfactorily accommodate the traffic it will generate. It states that proposals that would be unacceptably detrimental to road safety, public amenity or road congestion levels by virtue of the traffic they will generate and/or their access points with the highway network will not be permitted. Where

highway objections can be overcome through off-site improvement works, these must:

- (i) Be developer funded;
- (ii) Be completed before the use of the development commences;
- (iii) Not adversely affect sites or areas protected through other policies contained in this Local Plan;
- (iv) Not be detrimental to the rural character of the District;
- (v) Not unacceptably prejudice the safety of cyclists or pedestrians.

4.16 Local Plan policy T4 specifies that development which requires the creation of a new access, or that will materially intensify the use of an existing access, onto an 'A' road (including trunk roads) will only be permitted where:-

- (i) It is located within a built-up area where speed limits are 40 mph or below, and it would not interfere with the free flow of traffic on the 'A' road or create conditions prejudicial to highway safety; or
- (ii) It is located outside a built-up area, where speed limits are above 40 mph, and it would be possible and appropriate to improve the highway to accommodate the traffic generated by the development such that it would not impede the flow or safety of traffic on the open highway.

4.17 Improvements to the highway network in order to comply with the above criteria will only be permitted where these improvements would not detract from the character and appearance of the area. In all situations where it is considered appropriate and necessary to carry out improvements to the highway network, these must be fully funded by the developer and be completed before the development takes place.

4.18 Local Plan policy T7 states that proposals for new development, redevelopment and changes of use (other than those specific situations outlined below) will be required to make adequate provision for off-street parking on or near the site in general accordance with the parking standards. These standards will, however,

be relaxed when their imposition would prejudice an otherwise acceptable scheme which:-

- (i) Would secure the future of a listed or other important building, or
- (ii) Would make a positive contribution to the appearance and character of a Conservation Area, or
- (iii) Involves the residential use of upper floors in town centres (in accordance with Policy H8), or
- (iv) Would provide quality and affordable high density residential development in areas of good access to other means of travel than the private vehicle, or
- (v) Would significantly enhance the character and appearance of the local environment, or
- (vi) Involves a change of use that would not exceed the parking requirements of the previous use, provided that it can be demonstrated that the previous under-provision of parking did not materially impair or detract from safety levels, traffic flow, residential amenity and environmental quality.

- 4.19 Wherever necessary, secure and convenient cycle parking facilities must be provided of an amount and type commensurate with the size and nature of the proposed development. In appropriate circumstances, adequate provision should be made for the parking of motorcycles.
- 4.20 Local policy T8 states that the District Council will continue to encourage and support proposals for improvements to public transport and rail services in the Plan area, encouraging and supporting measures to investigate the practicability of establishing innovative solutions to enhance public transport and rail service provision.
- 4.21 Local Plan policy T9 seeks to improve the safety, convenience and attractiveness of cycling by ensuring, where appropriate, new developments include appropriate measures to make access by cycling, both within the development itself and to the surrounding road and cycle network, safe and convenient.
- 4.22 Local Plan policy T11 states that development will not be permitted that would prejudice the future use of disused railway lines as possible cycle/footpath/horse-riding routes or for potential public transport.

- 4.23 Local Plan policies U2, U3 and U4 require an adequate water supply; no adverse impact on the water environment due to additional surface water run-off and appropriate attenuation or mitigation measures; and adequate and appropriate treatment/disposal of foul drainage.
- 4.24 Local Plan policy ENV7 requires developments to respect landscapes and to incorporate high quality landscaping. Policy ENV18 seeks to protect ponds that are known to contain or provide a habitat for protected species.
- 4.25 The Ryedale Plan – Local Plan Strategy (2012) vision in relation to Pickering is that it will be the main service centre serving northern Ryedale. Its local facilities and services will be improved and the Town's historic fabric and wider historic setting will be retained. It will continue to be an important visitor destination in its own right as well as a gateway to the North York Moors National Park and to tourist attractions and recreation opportunities in northern Ryedale.
- 4.26 The Strategy summary explains that support will be given for sustainable travel initiatives for Pickering to reduce congestion; new and improved sport and recreation facilities for residents and visitors; the town's regional tourism role, Pickering Castle, North York Moors Railway and the steam rally and wartime weekend events; and the town's gateway to tourist attractions and recreational activities in the North York Moors National Park, northern Ryedale, including Dalby Forest, the Vale of Pickering and the Coast.
- 4.27 Appropriate uses at the Pickering Showground/events arena site and strengthening connectivity of the site with the town is one opportunity for Pickering identified in the Plan. A priority is the provision of additional visitor car parking and/or a park and ride facility to support the town and in response to the increasing attractiveness of the steam railway and annual events.
- 4.28 The Local Plan Strategy acknowledges that tourism is an integral and valuable part of the District's economy with visitor's contributing an estimated £390 million to the local economy each year and generating a value equivalent to 8,500 jobs. Approximately 15 million visitors are attracted to Ryedale annually.

- 4.29 The Council recognises that in a rural area such as Ryedale, new tourist attractions, facilities and accommodation cannot be restricted to the more sustainable locations in the District. This could stifle opportunities to develop the District tourism base and diversify the wider rural economy. Equally however, it is important that a balance is struck and that new tourist accommodation, attractions and facilities are located in places where the scale, nature of activity and visual intrusion can be accommodated, for example, in terms of the character and sensitivities of the locality, wider landscape and the road network.
- 4.30 Whilst Ryedale experiences approximately 1.9 million day trips each year, over half a million trips each year are made by people who stay in the District for a short break or holiday. The provision of a wide range and choice of tourist accommodation in a choice of locations is an important way in which staying visitors can be attracted to Ryedale throughout the year.
- 4.31 This strategy supports the provision of a range of tourist accommodation across the District. The District has experienced a growing interest in the provision of self-catering, chalet holiday home parks that are available for use throughout the year. The Council will support, in principle, the provision of this form of accommodation but will restrict the occupancy of these units to ensure they cannot be used as residential accommodation. In many instances proposals will come forward in locations where residential development would not be supported under this plan. Self-catering holiday chalets are supported by this plan on the basis that they will support the tourism industry in Ryedale. For this reason, occupancy conditions will be imposed to ensure such accommodation is not used as a sole or main place of residence and to ensure the accommodation is available for holiday lettings for a prescribed period of the year.
- 4.32 Local Plan Strategy SP8 Tourism states that

"Tourism in Ryedale will contribute to a sustainable and diverse economy. The Council will seek to encourage sustainable tourism which minimises its environmental impact on the District.

This will be achieved by supporting:

- *the provision of a range and choice of quality tourist accommodation*

- *the business plans and operational requirements of existing tourist and visitor attractions, and event arenas where appropriate**
- *encouraging all year round tourism subject to the occupancy conditions set out in Policy SP20*
- *tourism in areas where potential is significantly underdeveloped, in particular, Malton and Norton and the Wolds*
- *cultural and creative businesses in Ryedale inspired by Ryedale's unique environment*
- *the role of Pickering, Helmsley and Thornton-le-Dale as key visitor destinations as well as gateways to tourism and recreational*
- *opportunities in northern Ryedale including the North York Moors National Park.*

The impact of tourism on these communities will be managed particularly in relation to car parking, traffic management, local facilities and services and by maximising the opportunities to further develop tourism, outdoor education and recreation using the District's natural, cultural and historic assets as an economic driver, including the potential provided by:

- *The archaeological landscapes of the Vale of Pickering and the Yorkshire Wolds*
- *The protected landscapes of the North York Moors National Park and Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty*
- *Ryedale's Religious and Medieval history*
- *Malton's Roman, Medieval and Georgian heritage*
- *Malton and Norton's longstanding association with horse racing*
- *Outdoor adventure in northern Ryedale including Dalby Forest – the great Yorkshire Forest*
- *Local food production*
- *Farm and rural diversification*
- *Biodiversity and the development of nature tourism*

New tourist attractions will be supported where they do not undermine the character of the area or prejudice the quality of the natural or built environment.

Attractions that will attract large numbers of visitors should be accessible by a choice of means of transport."

- 4.33 The policy lists the certain types of tourist accommodation which will be supported. In Pickering this would be touring caravan and camping sites and static caravan and chalet self-catering accommodation of an appropriate scale and in appropriate locations on the edge. In the wider countryside this will be new touring caravan and camping sites and static caravan and chalet self-catering accommodation and extensions to existing facilities that can be accommodated without an unacceptable visual intrusion and impact on the character of the locality.
- 4.34 Policy SP10 states that the Council will support the provision (amongst other matters) of the following:
- *The continued provision of demand responsive transport initiatives.*
 - *The provision a network of safe cycling and walking routes linking residential areas with employment sites, town centres, schools and recreational facilities and requiring new development schemes, where appropriate, to improve connectivity with existing footpaths, cycle routes, public rights of way and public transport facilities.*
 - *The use of former railway lines and tracks for recreational purposes (including walking, cycling and horse riding) or for potential public transport use should the opportunity arise in the longer term. Development which may prejudice the ability for former railway lines/tracks to be used or reused for these purposes will not be supported.*
 - *Ensuring an appropriate level of car parking is provided as part of any development scheme in consultation with the County Council and that Town Centre car parking is managed to ensure an appropriate level of provision of long and short stay spaces as set out in the Council's latest Car Parking Strategy.*
 - *Provision of broadband equipment, including improvements to the speed and quality of existing broadband across the District, subject to the provisions of SP19.*

4.35 Policy SP13 Landscapes requires the quality, character and value of Ryedale's diverse landscapes to be protected and enhanced.

4.36 Policy SP14 Biodiversity expects that biodiversity will be conserved, restored and enhanced by various measures:

- *Co-ordinated and targeted activity by public, private, voluntary and charitable organisations to support the implementation of the Yorkshire and Humber Biodiversity Strategy and Delivery Plan; the Ryedale Biodiversity Action Plan and the Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan*
- *Providing support and advice to landowners to encourage land management practises that support the objectives, priorities and targets of these plans and strategies*
- *Minimising the fragmentation of habitats and maximising opportunities for the restoration and enhancement of habitats and improving connectivity between habitats through the management of development and by working in partnership with landowners and land managers.*
 - *Maintaining, creating and improving ecological networks and green infrastructure routes to assist the resilience of habitats and species in the face of climate change*
 - *Supporting, in principle, proposals for development that aim to conserve or enhance biodiversity and geodiversity through the prevention of loss of habitat or species and the incorporation of beneficial biodiversity features*
 - *Requiring a net gain in biodiversity to be provided as part of new development schemes*
 - *Resisting development proposals that would result in significant loss or harm to biodiversity in Ryedale*
 - *Encouraging the use of native and locally characteristic species in landscaping schemes.*

In considering proposals for development – Proposals which would have an adverse effect on any site or species protected under international or national

legislation will be considered in the context of the statutory protection which is afforded to them.

Proposals for development which would result in loss or significant harm to:

- Habitats or species included in the Ryedale Biodiversity Action Plan and priority species and habitat in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan*
- Local Sites of Nature Conservation Importance or Sites of Geodiversity Importance*
- Other types of Ancient Woodland and ancient/veteran trees*

will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there is a need for the development in that location and that the benefit of the development outweighs the loss and harm. Where loss and harm cannot be prevented or adequately mitigated, compensation for the loss/harm will be sought. Applications for planning permission will be refused where significant harm cannot be prevented, adequately mitigated against or compensated for.

Loss or harm to other nature conservation features should be avoided or mitigated. Compensation will be sought for the loss or damage to other nature conservation features which would result from the development proposed.

Protected sites, including internationally and nationally protected sites and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation are identified on the Proposals Map.

4.37 Policy SP 15 Green Infrastructure Networks states that a network of green open spaces and natural features will be created and managed across Ryedale to support biodiversity and environmental systems to enhance the attractiveness of places and to support healthy lifestyles by providing opportunities for activity and relaxation. This will be achieved by protecting certain specified corridors and by:

“protecting, enhancing, creating and connecting wider elements of green infrastructure including:

Protecting and enhancing:

- Public rights of way and open access land*

- *Informal open spaces, allotments, street trees, hedgerows, stream corridors and beck sides, woodlands, formal public open spaces, recreational and play space;*
- *Biodiversity , wildlife corridors and buffer zones necessary to support these features or areas*
- *The quality and usability of public open spaces*

Creating:

- *Improved access to existing public open spaces and to and along river corridors*
- *New open spaces, sport and play spaces, allotments and outdoor sports sites in areas of deficiency*
- *New habitats which reflect the locally distinctive habitat types included in Policy SP 14*

Improving connectivity by creating links between:

- *Publicly accessible open spaces and green spaces within built up areas to key destination points such as Town Centres and Schools*
- *Towns, villages and the wider countryside beyond*
- *Habitats to support the resilience of biodiversity.*

4.38 Policy SP 16 Design states that

Development proposals will be expected to create high quality durable places that are accessible, well integrated with their surroundings and which:

- *Reinforce local distinctiveness*
- *Provide a well-connected public realm which is accessible and usable by all, safe and easily navigated*
- *Protect amenity and promote well-being*

The design of new development will also be expected to:

- *Incorporate appropriate hard and soft landscaping features to enhance the setting of the development and /or space*
- *Contribute to a safe and well connected public realm by respecting and incorporating routes, buildings and views which create local identity and assist orientation and wayfinding; creating public spaces which are safe*

and easy to use and move through by all members of the community; facilitating access by sustainable modes of travel including public transport, cycling and walking

- *Reduce crime and the fear of crime through the careful design of buildings and spaces*
- *Provide, where appropriate, active and interesting public frontages, clearly defined public spaces and secure private spaces.*
- *Make efficient use of land and to be built at a density which is appropriate to its surrounding context. In general new housing development*
- *should not be built below an indicative density of 30 dwellings to the hectare unless this can be justified in terms of the surrounding context.*

4.39 Policy SP 17 Managing Air Quality, Land and Water Resources expects:

- land resources to be protected and improved by supporting new uses for contaminated and degraded land, prioritising the use of previously developed land;
- water resources to be managed by supporting water efficient development minimising water consumption and the use of sustainable drainage systems and techniques where feasible and reducing flood risk; new development not to result in unacceptable deterioration of water quality; protect surface and groundwater from pollution; ensuring the necessary sewerage and water treatment infrastructure to be provided in tandem with new development; undertake a risk based sequential approach to allocating land and in the consideration of new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding.
- Air quality by locating and managing development to reduce traffic congestion, promoting the use of alternative forms of travel to the private car and reducing air quality emissions from buildings through renewable energy provision and sustainable building standards.

4.40 Policy SP 18 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy expects that all new developments in Ryedale to be built to as high a standard as is available nationally and deliver on-site decentralised renewable and low carbon energy.

4.41 Policy SP 19 Generic Development Management Policies specifies that developments will respect local character; follow design principles of policy SP16, will not have a material adverse impact on the amenity of present or future occupants, users or occupants of neighbouring land and buildings or the wider community, or on health and safety; and provide access to and movement within sites without a detrimental impact on road safety, traffic movement or the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.

4.42 Policy SP20 Occupancy Conditions states that occupancy conditions will be used to ensure that developments are occupied for the purpose for which they are intended and justified. In relation to time limited occupation the following circumstances will be applied:

"New un-serviced holiday accommodation (holiday cottages, caravan parks (static and touring), log cabins and holiday chalets) will be subject to the following conditions:

- *The accommodation is occupied for holiday purposes only; and not as a person's sole, or main place of residence; and*
- *It shall be available for commercial holiday lets for a least 140 days a year and no let must exceed 31 days; and*
- *The owners/operators shall maintain an up-to-date register of lettings/occupation and advertising will be maintained at all times and shall be made available for inspection to an officer of the Local Planning Authority on request."*

4.43 The Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism (2006) is a material consideration. It is designed to ensure that planners understand the importance of tourism and fully take this into account when taking planning decisions. It encourages local planning authorities to support rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors. It states that the provision of essential facilities for visitors is vital for the development of tourism in rural areas.

4.44 It advises that there are 3 main considerations that apply to most tourism developments:

- Where the development is located – developments need to be located where they are accessible to visitors (and for many, but not all developments, by means other than just by private car) and where they do not have an adverse impact upon sensitive environments;
- How they are designed – developments should be attractive to users, they need to work well in functional terms and they need to use natural resources in an efficient manner; and
- How they fit into their surroundings – developments need to respect their environs and complement them rather than detract from them. They should be designed to have a positive impact upon the landscape, the historical setting and upon ecology.

4.45 The Guide expands on how these principles can be put into practice. It also has appendices that give guidance on tourist accommodation and on the likely considerations to be taken into account in assessing planning applications.

4.46 The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) is also a material consideration. The NPPF explains that at its heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means:

- Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless;
 - Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the framework taken as a whole; or
 - Specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.

4.47 Policies adopted before 2004 should only be given weight according to their degree of consistency with the Framework. Emerging policies should be given weight appropriate to their position in their progress to adoption.

4.48 The NPPF explains that delivering sustainable development means:

- building a strong, competitive economy;
- ensuring the vitality of town centres;
- supporting a prosperous rural economy;
- promoting sustainable transport;
- supporting high quality communications infrastructure;
- delivering a wide choice of high quality homes;
- requiring good design;
- promoting healthy communities;
- protecting green belt land;
- meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change;
- conserving and enhancing the natural environment;
- conserving and enhancing the historic environment; and
- facilitating the sustainable use of minerals.

4.49 The NPPF expects local planning authorities to approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. They should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. Local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

4.50 The Framework explains that the Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity generally. It explains that in rural areas a strong rural economy can be promoted by the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise, both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings; and by supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres.

5 The Proposal Set against Planning Policy

- 5.1 ***The Principle of the Development:*** The application site is an existing destination for leisure and tourism events. The 2004 planning permission relates to the erection and use of the large events building and the use of land immediately to its south as an events field. However, the actual usage extends to the whole of the application site when the two large annual events – the steam engine rally and the war weekend – are held. Smaller events generally tend to be accommodated within the events building.
- 5.2 However, the site has been considerably underused as an events facility and its full potential to contribute to the local tourism industry and thereby the economy of Pickering and Rydale has never been fully realised. This proposal, which involves a mix of increased use of the building and field (including the area to the west of the main spine road/former rail line) for events and activities, and complementary tourist accommodation, offers that potential.
- 5.3 The Ryedale Plan (2012) acknowledges that potential, and promotes appropriate uses at the site with a strengthening of connectivity between it and the town of Pickering. A priority is noted as additional visitor parking and/or a park and ride facility to support the town and in response to the increasing attractiveness of the steam railway and annual events.
- 5.4 National guidance (Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism 2006) and planning policy (The Framework 2012) encourage local planning authorities to support rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors. The Framework explains that the Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity generally. It explains that in rural areas a strong rural economy can be promoted by the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise, both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings; and by supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres.

- 5.5 The RSS and the RDC Local Plan also promote and encourage economic development, tourism and recreation development as it provides jobs and economic activity.
- 5.6 This development involves a substantial investment in the local economy expressing confidence in the tourism and leisure opportunity that Pickering and the wider Ryedale area offers. It will create new jobs on site - both during construction (approx.. 25) and in its operation (30) and through a multiplier effect in the local economy of Pickering.
- 5.7 The Local Plan Strategy acknowledges that tourism is an integral and valuable part of the District's economy with visitor's contributing an estimated £390 million to the local economy each year and generating a value equivalent to 8,500 jobs. Approximately 15 million visitors are attracted to Ryedale annually.
- 5.8 It also acknowledges that tourist attractions, facilities and accommodation cannot be restricted to the more sustainable locations which would stifle opportunities to diversify the wider rural economy. Similarly it advocates a wide range and choice of tourist accommodation in a choice of locations to attract staying visitors throughout the year, and supports the provision of self-catering, chalet holiday home parks that are available for use throughout the year subject to occupancy conditions to ensure they cannot be used as residential accommodation.
- 5.9 The proposed development would help deliver the Strategy's vision for Pickering namely that it continues to be an important destination in its own right as well as the gateway to the North York Moors National Park and to tourist attractions and recreation opportunities in northern Ryedale.
- 5.10 Consequently the principle of the proposal and its contribution to the local economy through the further development of tourism, recreation and leisure uses and the provision of quality visitor accommodation is supported by the national Framework and the Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism, RSS policies YH6, RR1, E1 and E6, the Ryedale Local Plan policies TM3 and TM4, and Local Plan Strategy policy SP8 which commits the Council to supporting the business plans and operational requirements of existing tourist and visitor attractions, and events arenas where appropriate.

- 5.11 ***Leisure & Recreation Use – Events:*** Planning permission already exists for the building and a large part of the site to be used for events, conferences and exhibitions. This uses' contribution to the wider economic and social benefits of the economy of the Ryedale area, and in particular nearby Pickering, was acknowledged in the wording of the reasons for granting the conditional planning permission in 2004 and, as explained above, the Local Plan Strategy promotes appropriate uses at the site.
- 5.12 When the applicant acquired the site in mid-2012 it had become rundown and its infrastructure and facilities were either lacking or inadequate to support a venue of this size. Since acquisition significant investment has been carried out within the building to upgrade or provide that infrastructure, so that now in the supporting areas to the large arena space there is a proper electricity supply and toilets. Ancillary management offices, reception area, bar and conference rooms have also been upgraded or provided.
- 5.13 A planning application is currently pending for the recladding of the building in timber with stone feature panels, improved car and coach parking, servicing and landscaping around the building.
- 5.14 Already, because of the improved facilities and a limited marketing exercise, the calendar of events for the next twelve months is filling up. It is likely that 4 small events per month will be realised. The existing two large events are also retained. With further improvements to the internal and external facilities and more extensive and prolonged marketing this should increase. The intention is to use the building and grounds for smaller but more frequent events to take full advantage of the opportunity the venue offers for local, regional and national groups, bodies and organisations.
- 5.15 The extent of the area to hold events outside the building is increased through this application to include the area immediately to the west of the area that already has planning permission. This partly reflects what has been happening when the larger events have been held – but not to the same extent – and will only be used for the more land hungry smaller events. This then will allow a dual use of this space for a different type of recreation and leisure use.

- 5.16 **Leisure & Recreation Use – Outward Bound Activity:** The above events uses fall within the ambit of the existing planning permission. However, the Local Plan Strategy explicitly acknowledges that further appropriate uses at the site are an opportunity for Pickering.
- 5.17 It is therefore intended to broaden the use of the events building and land to its west to include participative recreation/leisure land and water based activities of an outward-bound theme. This will involve a base within part of the arena building as management space and activity space (the latter doubling up with the events use), the creation of an equipped play/activity space immediately to the building's west and the formation of a new lake. Activities currently under investigation are: Kayaking, Canoeing, Raft Building, Wind Surfing, Paddle Boarding, Open Water Swimming; Zip Wire, Bike Hire, Child Activity Sessions and Corporate Team Building Sessions.
- 5.18 This use will complement the recreation and leisure use of the site as a whole and broaden its appeal and customer/visitor base. Interest in these uses was shown at the recent exhibitions by local people and a scout group. Outward bound operators have also shown interest. It is possible that the site could be used as a base for additional outward bound activities off-site in conjunction with a stay and use of those on site.
- 5.19 Basing the use on this rural activity principle, it is also proposed to create cycle ways and walks through the development and establish linkages further afield – see later section.
- 5.20 The proposal, which builds on the original planning permission, is therefore supported by RSS policies YH6, RR1, E1 and E6, Local Plan Strategy policy SP8, the national Framework and the Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism.
- 5.21 **Accommodation** – Somewhere to stay is a particular requirement when events are held. The participants of the two large events currently either camp, caravan or motor home on the site and in adjacent fields or use local hotels and B&B establishments or nearby camping and caravan sites. This application proposal

involves providing complementary accommodation on site of various forms and standards;

- A touring caravan and motor home area of 125 pitches;
- A camping area;
- A camping pod area (15 pods); and
- Two areas of timber lodges – one in the south-western part of the site for 26 lodges (ultimately 51 are proposed) and one in the north-western part of the site for 32 lodges (ultimately 50 are proposed). These vary in design and size in order to cater for various accommodation markets.

5.22 All of the accommodation will be for short stay, limited time periods and not for permanent living. All will be self-catering. It is not proposed to provide hotel or B&B facilities. Therefore they will not compete with such accommodation within Pickering town.

5.23 When not occupied by people attending events or taking part in on-site outward-bound activities, the accommodation will be available for visitors to the Ryedale and wider North Yorkshire areas to take advantage of the numerous tourist and leisure attractions. This will mean that instead of 'day trippers' visitors will be encouraged to stay for short breaks boosting the contribution they make to the local economy. A combination of the quality of the lodges and the proposed layout, and the location will also mean that currently taken short breaks can be converted to medium or longer stay breaks and for more months of the year for the benefit of local business facilities – tourism, restaurants and shops – and the local community in economic and employment terms.

5.24 The site is well placed to provide a base for trips to explore Pickering town and other local towns and tourist attractions such as Helmsley and Thornton Dale; the North Yorkshire Moors railway, the North Moors National Park, Dalby and Cropton Forests; Castle Howard, Eden Camp and Flamingo Land; the Howardian Hills; and the Yorkshire Coastal resorts of Whitby, Robin's Hood Bay, Scarborough and Filey.

5.25 The importance of these types of accommodation and their rural location, close to a market town, to those seeking to enjoy the natural environment through

walking, cycling and outdoor recreation is acknowledged in Annex A to the Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism.

- 5.26 Local Plan policies TM3, TM4 and TM5 are permissive policies that allow for the provision of the sort of accommodation proposed subject to certain criteria (which are discussed below). It also accords with the Local Plan Strategy as described in paragraph 5.8 above and in particular with policy SP8 which supports the provision of a range and choice of quality tourism accommodation on an all year round basis.
- 5.27 Obviously, in accordance with Local Plan Strategy policy SP20, it is accepted that an occupancy condition will be attached to the planning permission. However, this should not require closure of the accommodation for any particular period of the year as this would harm year round tourism. Rather it should limit length of stays.
- 5.28 **Ancillary Buildings to the Lodges, Caravan Park and Camping area –** Various necessary ancillary service buildings are proposed throughout the development such as reception buildings, toilet blocks, toilet/shower blocks, biomass boiler buildings and two small site shops. These have been kept small scale, with a complementary 'rural' design, and dispersed throughout the development.
- 5.29 As such they comply with the requirements of Local Plan policy TM5 and Local Plan Strategy policy SP8.
- 5.30 **Restaurant and two small Site Shops –** The lakeside restaurant is primarily to serve holiday makers and visitors to the site and therefore a complementary part of the leisure/tourism mix. It is of a scale (88 covers) that would not result in harm to the vitality and viability of Pickering town centre. It would also provide another facility for the local community.
- 5.31 Similarly the size and particular retail offer of the on-site shops will not harm the centre's vitality and viability. Together they will only have floor spaces of only 141sqm and provide basic daily provisions and outdoor activities clothing and equipment.

- 5.32 Consequently the provision of these facilities will not conflict with Local Plan policies or the Framework's policies in relation to the protection of town centres.
- 5.33 **Football Pitches & Pavilion** – The Pickering Community Junior Football Club has been looking for some time to provide facilities for its junior and youth teams. The club provides the opportunity for about 130 children from the Pickering area – boys and girls – to participate in football regardless of ability. Unfortunately it has not been able to find a suitable site within Pickering town boundaries. The shared use of part of the events field for football pitches is an opportunity for the club as well as for the development. It will provide the club with an accessible and quality base and the applicants with another complementary sports/recreation use for the site. A shared use of the space would be possible and the new pavilion is designed to have toilet facilities large enough for use during events. Importantly the proposed pitches will be an additional sports facility for Pickering. The club's existing sports ground within Pickering is to be retained for senior matches.
- 5.34 As such this aspect of the development accords with RSS policy ENV11 and Local Plan policy L1 which is a permissive policy subject to certain considerations. These are considered below.
- 5.35 **Nature Area** – Given that the proposal is based on rural tourism, the intrinsic nature of the site has been an important consideration in drafting the scheme design. Consequently the commissioning of a habitat study was one of the first actions undertaken by the applicant.
- 5.36 This extensive ecological investigation of the site has revealed a population of great crested newts. Their habitat is based around the rubble mounds, ponds and adjoining foraging grassland and hedgerows located toward the centre of the northern part of the site. The accompanying great crested newt report concludes that "the proposed development and mitigation will ensure that any great crested newt populations at the site are maintained at a favourable conservation status." Conservation status is defined as "the sum of the influences acting on the species concerned that may affect the long term distribution and abundance of its

population within its territory". The impact assessment and mitigation strategy demonstrates that:

- The natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future;
- There is, or will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long term basis.

- 5.37 A mitigation strategy and method statement (for the construction operations) is proposed by Wold Ecology and this will be strictly adhered to by the applicants - who are aware of their responsibilities under the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, particularly the need to obtain licences from Natural England for some of the works on site.
- 5.38 Discussions have taken place with the Council's Countryside Officer, Don Davies, and it is expected that planning conditions will be attached to the planning permission for the development to ensure the mitigation measures and methodology are implemented and that a future management plan for the area be submitted, agreed and thereafter implemented.
- 5.39 Consequently the proposals accord with RSS policy ENV8, Local Plan policy ENV18 and Local Plan Strategy policy SP14 as well as the national Framework's requirement (policy 118) that biodiversity should be conserved and enhanced.
- 5.40 **Detailed issues** – Various other matters need to be considered for this development under the provisions of various Local Plan policies. These are:
- 5.41 **Impact on local landscape** – The site does not fall within any of the regionally defined character areas. It lies within the Vale of Pickering which comprises flat or gently undulating farmland with few notable landscape features except for a few stands of trees. However, there are some subtle discernible differences which have been identified in 'The Landscapes of Northern Ryedale' a report prepared by Gillespie for the Council in 1999. The application site falls within the Local Landscape Type – Area K – Linear Vale Farmland (an area to the south and west of Pickering) whose key features are:

- Historic linear field pattern;
- Gently sloping land which rises to the north;
- Distinctive linear field systems; and
- Local enclosed landscape.

- 5.42 The Arboricultural Report submitted to support the application identifies the main landscape features of hedgerows and lines of trees. The whole site is enclosed by hedgerows. The northern part of the site is now mainly devoid of its linear field pattern apart from remnants of hedgerows within and adjacent to the nature area. Within the southern part the pattern is more recognisable. All these are to be retained and supplemented and land levels will not be altered except marginally and imperceptibly to the west of the proposed lake and the gentle slope up from south to north will remain.
- 5.43 Owing to the flatness of the topography and the substantial boundary hedgerows and trees, the site is barely visible from the public highway of Malton Road. Even the existing large event building is only glimpsed from Malton Road when passing in a vehicle. Consequently the new lodge buildings and touring caravan area, nor any of the ancillary buildings, or the sports pitches will be visually intrusive from that direction.
- 5.44 This application does not involve the later phases of lodges to the east of Haygate Lane, but even here the existing and proposed planting will mean that views into the site will be extremely limited. These later phases of lodges will be single storey which will also mean their impact on the local landscape will be slight.
- 5.45 The lodges and the caravan area in the southern parcel of land are located so far off the boundary they will not be visible at all from public areas – just as the static caravans at the Black Bull Caravan Park or those on Upper Carr Lane are not visible.
- 5.46 To reinforce this screening and landscape setting for the development it is proposed to carry out an extensive tree and shrub planting scheme for the site.

The extent of this is shown on the proposed site plan (GBA no.704) with more detail on the individual area drawings by The Company of Gardeners.

- 5.47 Another important aspect of the scheme in relation to its impact on the landscape is the low density of the lodges, particularly those in the northern part of the site. Although well screened by existing planting, the generous space about the lodges will enable significant planting to take place. As it matures the development will be absorbed into the local landscape even more than it would be if none took place.
- 5.48 A combination of distance and existing and proposed planting will mean longer distance views of the development in the landscape from higher ground such as the B1257 and A170 will not be adversely affected.
- 5.49 Consequently, the development would comply with RSS policy ENV10 and the detailed requirements of Local Plan policies TM3 (i), (ii) and (iii) and TM4 (i) and TM5 and Local Plan Strategy policy SP13 and the relevant parts of SP16.
- 5.50 **Impact on Biodiversity** – An extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey was carried out in Spring 2012 to establish the biodiversity characteristics of the site. This report, the Breeding Bird Survey report, an Arboricultural report and a Great Crested Newt report accompany the application. Together they provide a very comprehensive assessment of the biodiversity present on site. They conclude that subject to certain mitigation measures being undertaken, a development methodology agreed and followed and a long term management plan for the site put into place, then the development would have no material harm on the site's biodiversity.
- 5.51 Furthermore, the reports make recommendations how the biodiversity can be enhanced and an aim of the landscape scheme is to create habitat and encourage the development of greater biodiversity on the site. New green networks will be formed with connectivity into existing ones within and outwith the site.
- 5.52 With the creation of the protected nature area and walks through it and the existing and proposed stands of trees, the site's biodiversity will be enjoyed by

holiday makers, visitors to the site and the local community. It is hoped that the nature area can be a study focus for local schools and nature groups.

- 5.53 Consequently the proposals accord with the provisions of RSS policies ENV8 and ENV11, Local Plan policies TM3 (iv), TM4 (iii) and (v), Local Plan Strategy policy SP8 (in relation to biodiversity and the development of nature tourism), SP14 and SP15 and the Framework which requires biodiversity to be conserved and enhanced.
- 5.54 **Traffic generation, access & parking** – The application is supported by a Transport Assessment which has assessed a 'worst case' scenario in relation to traffic generation; for instance it does not take into account any traffic flow reducing benefits associated with the proposed park and ride facility. It is therefore a robust assessment and concludes that the proposed development could be accommodated at the application site without adversely affecting the operation of the surrounding highway network.
- 5.55 It does acknowledge that during the two major events a traffic management strategy is in place and this will be reviewed and updated to take into account the development proposals.
- 5.56 There are 3 significant improvements that will be part of the development. These are:
- Improved access arrangements to the site involving separate access points serving the 3 main elements of the scheme, with the existing main arena access being altered to provide a ghost island right turn lane;
 - Improved car parking well related to the uses it is intended to serve. Traditionally there has never been any formal parking provision at the site. A current planning application includes parking and servicing areas around the events building which will serve smaller events and outward bound activity users; and this application provides for permanent (surfaced) car parking close to the main entrance with overspill car parking areas alongside for larger events and the park & ride;.
 - A park & ride facility to serve the site, Pickering town and the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, utilising the car park area near the entrance.

- 5.57 Consequently the proposals accord with RSS policy E6 (6), Local Plan policies TM3 (vi), TM4 (iv), L1 (iv), T4, T7, T8 and Local Plan Strategy policies SP8 and SP10.
- 5.58 **Cycling and walking** – An integral part of the scheme is to encourage cycling and walking, both as part of rural leisure pursuits holidays and as a way of linking the site with Pickering town. Footpath/cycle routes will be established within the site itself and discussions have been held with Ryedale Council and North Yorkshire County Council to establish 'quiet lane' routes (via Haygate Lane, Leas Lane and Mill Lane) between the site and Pickering. It is understood Sustrans are looking at establishing a long distance route just west of the site and signing from/to the site could be part of this.
- 5.59 Appropriate and well related cycle parking will be provided throughout the site and it is intended to have a bike hire facility as part of the scheme. Furthermore, the scheme does not preclude the use of the former railway line being used for cycling and walking in the future.
- 5.60 The provisions of RSS policy ENV11, Local Plan policy T7, T9, T11 and L1 (iii) and Local Plan Strategy SP10 are therefore met by these proposals.
- 5.61 **Impact on Local Amenity** – The site is relatively self-contained and there are few neighbouring residential properties. Where there are, and partly as a result of the consultation exhibitions held in the Autumn of 2012, the development has been designed so as to cause as little disruption and harm to local amenity as possible. Obviously new buildings are to be erected and new uses introduced and activity on the site will increase, but this is not considered to be to such a significant level to cause material harm to residential amenity, particularly given a combination of distance, careful design of buildings and location of different uses and buffer/screen landscaping.
- 5.62 Consequently there will be no conflict with Local Plan policies TM3 (v), TM4 (vi) and Local Plan policy SP19.
- 5.63 **Flood Risk and Utilities** – The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment. The site has parcels of land that fall within all three flood zones.

The arena building and some adjoining land is in zone 3. The building and adjoining land either has planning permission for events or is intended to be used for water compatible uses – sports pitch and outward bound activities. The lake is to be created in a zone 2 area and the adjoining lodges will be on flood zone 1 land. Where they have decking over the lake it will be raised on stilts. The land levels in zones 2 or 3 will not be raised. The southern area of lodges, the camping area and the area for touring caravans would be primarily in flood zone 2. The FRA assesses the development in relation to flood risk and makes some recommendations and concludes that the development is satisfactory.

- 5.64 **Flood Risk: Sequential Test** - A significant and overriding factor in carrying out a sequential approach for the development is the interrelation of the various uses both existing and proposed for the site. The events building and use currently exists with the benefit of planning permission and will form the base or anchor for the other leisure uses being introduced (most water compatible uses in any case) and for the ancillary accommodation – a significant part of which would be on flood zone 1. The wider sustainability benefits to the local community (Pickering centred) and economy arising out of using an existing leisure destination for the development are significant matters which dictate that this is an appropriate location for the development and the sequential test is passed. The connectivity between the leisure uses and the accommodation mean that there are no reasonably available alternative locations.
- 5.65 Even if an exceptions test was necessary the wider sustainability benefits would prevail and the flood risk assessment demonstrates that the development can be made safe from flooding through the incorporation of appropriate mitigation measures where development is in zone 2. It also explains that the methods proposed to deal with surface water runoff will not result in flooding elsewhere. These measures have been incorporated into the design of the various buildings and structures. It is anticipated a condition will be attached to the planning permission requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the FRA's recommendations.
- 5.66 It is intended to use a site SUDs approach to surface water and new foul treatment plants are proposed to deal with foul water.

- 5.67 Therefore the development will comply with Local Plan policies U2, U3 and U4 and Local Plan Strategy policies SP16 and SP17, as well as the policies and technical guidance of the Framework.
- 5.68 **Sustainability** – The intention is to make the development as sustainable as possible in terms of building standards and operation. A biomass boiler will be used to heat the arena building. Others will be part of a 'district heating scheme' for the northernmost lodges. All the lodges will be constructed to sustainable homes code 4 standard and a sustainable drainage system is to be developed for the site. The combination of accommodation and leisure uses on site will mean that travel distances between the two will be minimal. This accessibility and the provision of a park & ride facility and opportunities of travel by cycle or walking between the site and Pickering mean that the proposal will be well served by sustainable means of travel.
- 5.69 The development would contribute to the local economy, provide accessible services in a high quality built and landscaped environment and would safeguard and improve local biodiversity. This development therefore meets the Framework's definition and 3 dimensions of sustainable development
- 5.70 **Design & Layout** – The application is accompanied by a Design & Access Statement which explains the principles behind the design. It is contended that the design and layout respects the local rural environment and is therefore compliant with Local Plan Strategy policies SP16 and SP19 and meets the requirements.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 Taken in the round the planning balance is in favour of the proposals. The development represents a significant investment in the local area, its economy and community, and demonstrates a confidence in the local tourism industry of Pickering and Ryedale. The location is an accessible one for visitors and greater connectivity with the town is proposed by sustainable modes of transport. The design of the buildings are of a high standard with the use of materials that reflect

the rural location. The layout respects the prevailing local landscape character and works with the existing vegetation. With significant new planting to reinforce the rural character the development will be absorbed into the landscape. The existing biodiversity will be conserved and enhanced.

- 6.2 At the public exhibitions held in late 2012 the majority of those who attended were very supportive and could see the opportunities the development held for the area. Where suggestions were made to change the scheme they have been incorporated.
- 6.3 The Local Plan Strategy promotes appropriate uses at the site and requires the Council to support appropriate business plans and operational requirements of existing tourist and visitor attractions and events arenas. Consequently the proposals accord with all relevant aspects of Development Plan policy and the policies of the Framework taken as a whole.