

# Woodlands Farm Caravan Park & Holiday Cabins

Design and Access Statement

February 2016



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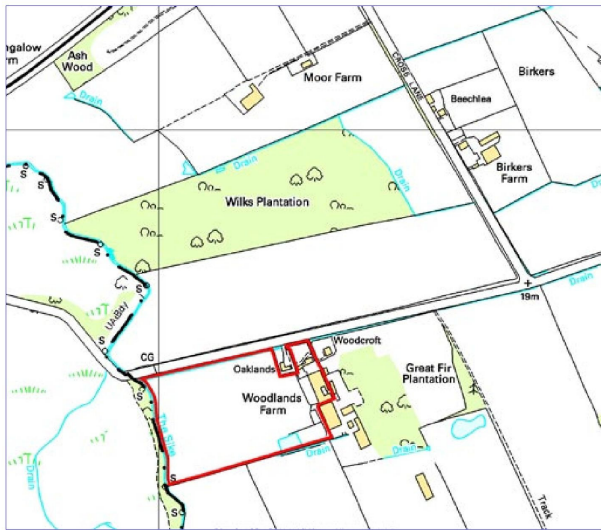


Fig. 1 Location Plan with site outlined in red



## 1.0 Introduction

This document has been prepared on behalf of Mr. J. Charters-Reid to support his Change of Use Planning Application to develop a touring site for caravans and holiday cabins at Woodlands Farm, York Lane, Flaxton, North Yorkshire.

This statement describes the site and design philosophy in reference to the site layout plan showing a scheme for 20 caravan and motor home pitches in addition to 5 holiday cabins. This statement will also look in detail at the visual impact of the proposal within the landscape. The proposed development will be a significant contributor to tourism in the local area and will meet the objectives of Ryedale's Tourism Strategy.

The proposal was subject to a formal Pre-Application Enquiry in April 2013 and reference is made to the outcome of this process.



View 1. Panoramic of site looking west

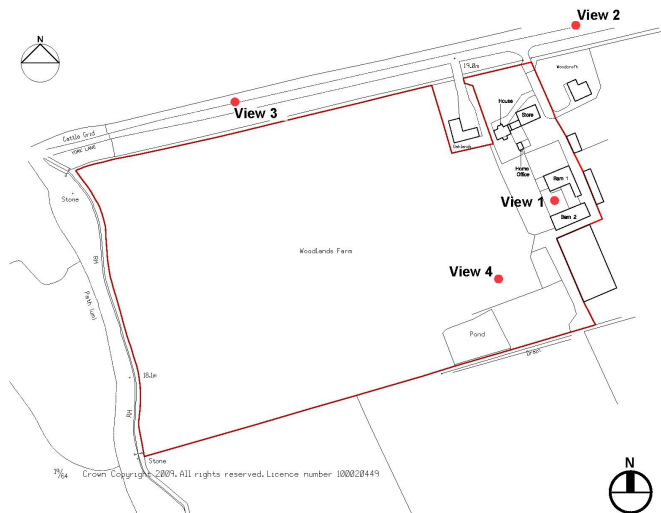


Fig 2. Positions from which photographs taken

## 2.0 Context

### 2.1 Physical

The site is a former farm off York Lane, travelling south-west from Flaxton. The site area is approximately 13 acres.

The application site is located within the open countryside, adjacent Strensall Common S.S.S.I, which is noted for it's flora. Part of the site is located within Flood Zone 2 and 3.

The north boundary of the site is bordered by York Lane with the impact of the road broken up by mature trees and hedges.

On the western edge of the site is an area of moorland in which Strensall Golf Course is located. The southern boundary of the site borders farmland.

The eastern end of the site contains the former farm house and associated outbuildings.



View 2. View looking west along York Lane



View 3. View looking east along York Lane

## 2.2 Existing Buildings

The former farmhouse is located at the eastern end of the site. This has a store directly adjacent to it. Opposite the main house is a small outbuilding that is currently used as a home-office.

The two largest buildings on the site are former barns. The first, Barn 1, is closest to the house has an 'L' shaped plan and was used for livestock and crop/feed storage. The second, Barn 2, has a rectangular plan and was for general farm storage.

The remainder of the site is a flat grassed open area.

## 2.3 Planning Policy

The application proposal was subject to pre-application consultation in February 2013 and a response was issued on 10th April 2013, under reference 13/00243/PREAPP. The response referred to policies TM3 and TM4 of the then Ryedale Local Plan, which broadly encouraged new rural tourism development, provided that it was well landscaped and screened from roads and topographical viewpoints, such that the proposal did not have a material adverse effect on the open countryside.

Advice was also given regarding the location of development within the site, so as to avoid the western half of the applicant's land, which was subject to flood risk zones 2 and 3. Development should be sited on the eastern part of the land to avoid this.

Reference was also made to potential ecological interest, namely: The adjacent SSSI to the west of the site;

- Whether barn owls and bats used the existing buildings proposed for conversion;
- Whether there were any great crested newts on the land;
- Whether any site lighting would disturb bats and moths (the area is well known for the latter).



View 4. View looking east toward farm buildings

Since this advice, the Council has adopted the Ryedale Plan, Local Plan Strategy (in September 2013) and this therefore supersedes that referred to in the pre-application advice. Policy SP8 (Tourism) is relevant but its content is broadly the same as in Local Plan TM3 and 4 when applied to proposals for small new rural caravan sites.

It states that:

"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."

It goes on to state that:

"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."

The key planning criterion for assessing this form of development is therefore landscape impact within the site's countryside setting. The focus is therefore on the need for and type of screening proposed, retaining existing trees and hedges and supplementing these, and planting new vegetation where this is absent. The principle aim should be to avoid lines of white caravans becoming prominent in the local landscape. The submitted proposal includes suitable landscape proposals to achieve this aim, the details of which can be submitted at future reserved matters stage.

The pre-application advice referred to the question of flood risk. The Council's concerns have been addressed by locating the proposed development outside the risk areas, in the eastern section of the applicant's land, adjoining the existing building group at Woodlands Farm. The landscape strategy is set out in Section 6.4.

With regard to ecology, a survey has been carried out and the report is submitted. No evidence of owl and bat activity was found in the existing buildings and no great crested newts were found on the land. With regard to the impact of proposed site lighting on nocturnal species, this can be specified at reserved matters stage and should be the subject of a planning condition. Suitable forms of low-rise and low intensity lights are available which should mitigate this particular issue.



Fig 2. Existing site layout (not to scale)

## 3.0 Use

The area of the proposal site currently forms part of the amenity space of the existing dwelling. The proposed development would provide 20 touring caravan pitches and 5 holiday cabins for seasonal use. In addition, a new block would be created providing shower, VWC and laundry facilities.

Barn 2 would be converted to provide a reception area and information point with a parking area located nearby. Vehicle circulation within the site will be on a one-way loop with speeds limited to 5 mph. Given the scale of the proposal, queuing on York Lane is highly unlikely.

Other on-site facilities would include a children's play area. Visitors to the site will also be able to make use of Strensall Common as an amenity.

## 4.0 Scale

The 20 touring caravan stands would each provide a landscaped area of 9 metres x 9 metres. This would allow parking of a caravan and attachment of an awning, in addition to an area for external recreation.

The cabins would be single-storey and provide 3 bedrooms with maximum sleeping accommodation for six people.

The shower block would also be single storey and has a floor area of 180m<sup>2</sup>. This would provide male and female facilities.

Barn 2 would provide two storeys of useable floor space.

Overall the scale of the development has been restricted to the area of the site that does not fall within Flood Zones 2 and 3.





Fig 4. Proposed site layout

- Key**
- Caravan Pitches
  - Holiday Cabins
  - Flood Zone 1
  - Access Road

## 5.0 Layout & Access

The caravan park would be located centrally on the site following the line of the Flood Zones. The impact of any development in this position will be mitigated against by new landscaping and trees. Existing trees to the north will screen the view from York Lane.

The Car Park (1) and parking for Late Arrivals (2) are located adjacent to Reception (3) and are screened from the road by existing buildings and trees.

Access to the site would be created through the former farm and would be facilitated by the partial demolition of Barn 1 (4). A new access road is created from the farm area across the field to the caravan stands. Footpaths will provide direct routes across the field to the Children's Play Area (5), Car Park (1) and Reception (3).

The proposed design will take advantage of natural assets and will ensure that no existing trees are removed, provide a generous green open space and a play area for children. The reception and site office will be located in a disused barn making use of a currently, redundant building. The new Shower Block with WC's (6) will be to the highest standard and provide disabled and ambulant washing/shower facilities, covered dish washing area, baby changing facilities and food preparation area.



Fig 5. Barn 2



Fig 6. Barn 2



Fig 7. Holiday cabins of the style proposed



Fig 8. Holiday cabins of the style proposed

## 6.0 Appearance

### 6.1 Barns

Barn 2 is currently clad in ribbed sheeting, this would be removed and a new external brick skin built around the existing concrete portal frames. The brick used would match Barn 1. The roof of both barns would be finished with clay tiles to match other buildings in the locality. All doors and windows will be timber with large areas of glazing.

### 6.2 Shower Block

The shower block would be brick and timber clad with a tiled pitch roof to create a visual link between the local vernacular and the proposed holiday cabins.

### 6.3 Holiday Cabins

The cabins are yet to be designed, but it is intended for them to be timber clad and have a pitched roof. Figures 7 and 8 show examples of the style proposed, which include extensive veranda type areas.

### 6.4 Landscaping

Additional mature trees would be added to provide enhanced privacy and additional screening of the development.

## 7.0 Conclusion

The application site is ideally suited to the proposed use and would create a positive addition to the local tourism economy. Making use of the existing landscape and vegetation and with new planting there will be no impact on the surrounding S.S.S.I.

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