

Proposed New Games Room/Entertainment Space –

Beech Farm Cottages Main Street, Wreton

Design Statement

Beech Farm Cottages is a complex of eight holiday cottages situated in the village of Wreton, two miles west of Pickering. The eight cottages range in size from one bedroom (sleeping two people) to five bedrooms (sleeping 10 people). In total, there are 23 bedrooms sleeping up to 45 people. Other on-site facilities include an indoor swimming pool, sauna and children's play area. There are currently three full time employees, including the owners, at Beech Farm with 20 casual staff who help with cleaning/gardening.

The existing building on site which it is proposed to replace is currently used for general storage and is made up of partly fair faced blockwork, timber cladding and an old shipping container and is roofed with a mixture of pantiles and asbestos sheets.

The building is detached and is located on the western edge of the site. To the south of the building is an enclosed external play area and to the north is the main parking area for guests.

There is a public right of way to the west up against the boundary of the building.

The replacement building would add another attractive facility for the existing guests, as it is intended to be a multi-purpose space that will serve a few functions:

1. When not used for anything else, it will be set up as an indoor play area (table tennis table, pool table, toys etc).
2. The owners are looking to hold themed weeks with classes that will be held in the new building (examples include yoga retreats, sewing classes, art classes).
3. There are occasions where guests take more than one cottage (even up to all eight). When they do so, they have no one area to all congregate together. They will be able to use this space for that purpose.
4. It would mean Beech Farm could be used as a boutique wedding venue, with the reception held in the converted building.

The anticipated outcome of the replacement building is that bookings will increase, particularly at quieter times of the year. This will enable an additional full time member of staff to be employed while bringing in further guests to the area. The themed weeks will be run in conjunction with local experts in their fields, while larger groups using it for get-togethers will be encouraged to use local caterers. We therefore anticipate this having a direct benefit on these local business-owners while other businesses will benefit indirectly from the increased number of guests being brought into the area.

The use of the proposed new building would be for the exclusive use of the existing guests, (eg a yoga retreat would be accommodation, yoga, with some meals supplied by caterers and some meals at other local pubs/restaurants). It will not be a private venue hire without the accommodation as part of it.

Usually the space would be open from 9am until 9pm daily but if it was being used for a specific event (eg dinner for 30 guests), it would be extended to 11pm. A staff member would be on site during any significant event like a wedding.

Beech Farm has recently been shortlisted as the Best Tourism Business in the North of the UK at the Rural Business Awards for its positive contribution to the local rural community. This proposed new building will enable the business to further improve the facilities, bringing benefits to both our guests and our community.

A pre application enquiry was submitted in April 2018 – ref 17/01429/PREAPP and the general response was that the principle of a replacement building in this location may be acceptable subject to agreeing the detail design.

It is proposed to replace the building with a simple rectangular structure that would be mainly clad with vertical timber boards but with some reclaimed stone detailing around the main entrance and the south elevation facing the play area. The roof will be covered in clay pantiles with a number of small velux rooflights on the north and south facing pitches.

On the southern elevation, it is proposed to create a modest covered veranda that would allow the internal and external spaces to be integrated during the summer months.

Whilst the size of the replacement building is larger than the existing, it has been designed to resemble a simple agricultural structure with a slight contemporary twist that would improve the visual amenity of both the paying guests using the cottages and the local residents using the public right of way to the west.

The planning policies against which the proposal should be considered are

SP8 – Tourism

SP 13 – Landscapes

SP 16 – Design

SP 19 – Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

SP 20 – Generic Development Management Issues

National Planning Policy Framework – Chapters 1-7

Taking into account the above planning policies, we feel that the proposed replacement structure would significantly improve the setting of the existing range of buildings within the wider open countryside. It would create a building that would be

sensitive to its surroundings and to the local character of the area, whilst at the same time creating an additional facility which would be appropriate in terms of the existing uses on site.

There would be no adverse impact on adjoining properties or neighbours and the proposed facility has the potential to increase employment both directly on site and also in a wider context relating to local businesses in the area.

We therefore feel that the proposed building should be granted planning permission.