

## Station House Design

## Architectural and Interior Design



The Old Station House  
Husthwaite York YO61 4QF

Our Ref: 235-01

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### Fox Hill Park - Holiday and Leisure Site

#### Authorship

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#### Proposed further development of the site to include -

- Revised layout of the existing 36 no touring caravan pitches
- Introduction of 33 no single-unit holiday cabins (to the provisions of The Caravan Acts)
- Revised landscaping and planting works

#### Location

Fox Hill Park  
Claxton to Harton Lodge Road  
York  
YO60 7RX





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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Fox Hill Park is an established and thriving touring caravan, camping holiday and leisure business. Since its establishment during 2005, it has enjoyed year on year growth.
- 1.2 The business changed ownership in November 2017. Various changes and improvements have been made since then. The owners and operators now wish to further develop the site in response to customer demand and business opportunities.
- 1.3 This planning statement will provide details of the site, its context and relationship with the surrounding area. There will be details of the proposed developments and an examination of potential impacts and the benefits.
- 1.4 Relevant national and local planning policy and guidance will be examined in regard to the proposals and the statement will conclude with a reasoned justification of how this scheme complies with policy. There will be a clear and objective analysis of the benefits to both the operation of the business and to the wider local economy.
- 1.5 A full LVIA (Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment) has been carried out in order to fully appraise the landscape character of the locality and wider area and to examine the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed development.





## 2.0 Description of Development

- 2.1 The proposal is for the revision of the approved site layout for the 36no. touring caravans, and the addition of 33no single unit static/cabin units.
- 2.2 The principle of the proposed design is to re-model the site within the existing boundaries (without making any material changes to the boundaries which offer extensive visual screening and security).
- 2.3 It is very important that the existing business of servicing the 36 touring caravan pitches has a continuity and be as good, if not better than it is now. By re-modelling and optimising the site layout, further tourist accommodation can be created by the introduction of 33 static units which conform to the provisions of the caravan acts for single unit caravans.
- 2.4 All of the above is to be achieved within the existing limits and boundaries of the site.





### 3.0 The Proposal Site and Surroundings

- 3.1 Fox Hill Park is located at post code YO60 7RX - (Easting 469 260 Northing 460 866).
- 3.2 It is approximately a quarter mile to the north of Claxton Village and adjacent to the highway which runs between the village and the main A64 Leeds to Scarborough trunk road at Harton Lodge Plantation. The main site entrance is approximately 430 metres from the A64 junction which provides quick and easy access to the main road links and commercial centres of Yorkshire.
- 3.3 The property is situated in a rural location, between Malton (approximately 9 miles by road) and York (approximately 5 miles by road)
- 3.4 The nearby market town of Malton offers a good range of amenities, including a hospital, police and fire stations, railway and bus stations, shops, restaurants, tennis and squash courts, swimming pool, rugby and cricket clubs, cinema and schools. The historic City centre of York is situated to the west and provides a very wide range of services and amenities.
- 3.5 The property is located in an area for attracting tourists, being in a great base to discover the City of York and surrounding villages. The Yorkshire Dales, North Yorkshire Moors are within an hour's drive, as are the coastal resorts of Whitby, Scarborough and Filey.
- 3.6 Other local attractions include:
- Castle Howard
  - Eden Camp
  - The North Yorkshire Moors National Park
  - Goathland (the Heartbeat Village)
  - Yorkshire Lavender
  - Local Golf Course and Driving Range
  - Dalby Forest
  - Go Ape
  - Eden Camp
  - North Yorkshire Moors Railway
  - Flamingo Land
  - The York Dungeon
  - National Railway Museum
  - York Minster
  - Yorkshire Air Museum
  - The Yorvik Viking Centre
  - York Boat – River Trips



**3.7 Foxhill Park is located in the Vale of York. A detailed summary of this area can be found in the National Character Area Profile number 28 - Vale of York**

**3.8 The site currently comprises**

- A total area of approximately 3.7 hectares
- A well-defined boundary of (generally) secure post and wire fencing with a significant shelter belt of mature trees and hedges
- Main vehicle and pedestrian entrance from the highway
- A utility area (adjacent to the main entrance) comprising car parking and delivery areas - with crushed stone and hardstanding permeable surfaces
- A brick built main building providing reception and site shop, WC and showering facilities, disabled WC and showering, laundry / boiler room, covered pot wash area with external access.
- A service area which includes the main 'Klargester' package treatment plant, waste bins and recycling facilities, chemical emptying point (additional emptying points are present on the site)
- A workshop and Store building
- A timber 3-bedroom log cabin which provides residential accommodation for the on-site staff (includes a veranda/ deck) with dedicated car parking.
- A grassland area for the caravan and camping pitches with crushed stone pitch areas, a crushed stone access track, service hook ups. A small wildlife pond with fencing around.
- The remainder of the site is woodland.





#### 4.0 Planning History

##### The Site

- 4.1 Until the approved change of use in 2005, the site was classed as agricultural grassland. This agricultural use dates back over an indeterminate period of time.
- 4.2 A study of historic maps - back to 1854 - 1856 shows the site area remained relatively unchanged in regard to the site itself and the immediate surroundings until its change to a holiday and leisure facility in 2005.



- 4.3 04/00735/MFUL - 2004  
This was the original application for the change of use of the agricultural land to caravan and campsite use. It included 53 caravan pitches and tent pitches, the amenity/ reception building and vehicle access, with planting proposals. The outcome was refusal, due to a lack of screening and the resulting adverse impact on the character and appearance of the open countryside location. Refusal date - 21 October 2004
- 4.4 05/00411/MFUL - 2005  
This is related to the previous application with a series of revised details i.e. a reduced number of touring caravan pitches (36) in an amended layout. In the intervening period in excess of 4000 trees had been planted, together with other landscaping works. Following officer report and consideration at the Planning



Committee, the outcome was approval. Approval date 2 December 2005.

- 4.5 06/00872/ADV - 2008  
Display of 2 non-illuminated post mounted welcome signs  
The signs were considered to be safe and suitable. Permission was granted for a period of 5 years. Approval date - 13 November 2006
- 4.6 11/00248/FUL - 2011  
Application for siting of a warden's cabin (based on twin unit design - conforming to The Caravan Acts) This was approved for a temporary period of 5 years.  
Approval date 3 June 2011
- 4.7 15/00872/OBL - 2015  
The previous owners of the site (and the agricultural land associated with the ownership) sought to allow the operation of the Caravan and Camping business as a stand-alone business not connected to the agricultural enterprise. The Planning Officers considered that insufficient information and justifications had been provided. Refusal date - 23 December 2015.
- 4.8 18/00092/FUL - 2018  
Following the new owner's acquisition of the site, an application was submitted to construct a secure store/ workshop building considered important to the efficient operation of the business. The Planning Case Officer concluded the details of the proposed building were acceptable and in accord with relevant policy. Approval date - 29 March 2018
- 4.9 18/00836/73  
An application to vary condition 02 of the original approval (05/00411/MFUL) to allow the site to operate for an extended season (1 March to 31 January each year). In addition to allow the storage of limited number of caravans in the site amenity area. The proposed changes were considered acceptable and the application approved. Approval date - 8 October 2018.
- 4.10 18/00837/73  
An application to vary condition 01 of approval (16/00800/FUL) to remove the 5-year restriction of the wardens cabin and allow it to remain for its approved use unless there should be a cessation (or material change) of the holiday and leisure business. The proposed changes were considered acceptable and the application approved. Approval date - 9 October 2018.





## **5.0 Planning Policy Considerations**

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

- 5.1 The updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2018 and replaces the previous iteration of the NPPF that was published in March 2012. Paragraph 212 of the updated NPPF makes clear how the latest version of the NPPF is expected to be a material consideration to be taken into account when dealing with applications from the day of its publication.
- 5.2 The NPPF promotes sustainable development, noting at Paragraph 10 how there is to be a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 5.3 Paragraph 11 describes the implications of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It sets out the requirement to local authorities to say 'yes' to development unless there are significant adverse impacts that would outweigh the benefits of development or policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.
- 5.4 Paragraph 83 states how planning policies and decisions should enable:
- The sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
  - The development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
  - Sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
  - The retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.
- 5.5 Paragraph 84 states how planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport.

In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing



settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

The Government attaches great importance to good design as a key aspect of sustainable development under Paragraph 124. Under Paragraph 130, the NPPF makes clear how permission for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area should be refused.

- 5.6 Paragraph 127 sets out design considerations in order to be visually attractive, and reflect local character and to create a sense of place.

#### **Statutory Development Plan for Ryedale**

- 5.7 The starting point for the assessment of this application is the Statutory Development Plan for the area, which in this case comprises the following:

1. Ryedale Local Plan Strategy (September 2013)
2. Saved policies in the Ryedale Local Plan

- 5.8 The current Proposals Map identifies the land as open countryside, not benefiting from any specific allocations or designations. There are no saved policies of relevance to this site.

#### **Ryedale Local Plan Strategy (September 2013)**

- 5.9 The Ryedale Plan is the adopted statutory development plan for Ryedale. It sets out where new housing, employment and retail development should be directed up to 2027. It comprises two parts including the Local Plan Strategy, which was adopted in September 2013, and the Local Plan Sites Document and Policies Map, which is currently being drafted.

- 5.10 Policy SP8 relates to tourism and sets out how tourism in Ryedale should contribute to a sustainable and diverse economy, and how the Council will seek to encourage sustainable tourism that minimises its environmental impact on the District.

The policy sets out how in the open countryside the Council will support new touring caravan and camping sites and static caravan and chalet self-catering accommodation, along with extensions to existing facilities that can be accommodated without an unacceptable visual intrusion and impact on the character of the locality.

- 5.11 Policy SP9 relates to the land-based and rural economy. It sets out how Ryedale's land-based economy will be sustained and diversified with support for (inter alia) appropriate farm and rural diversification activity including innovative approaches.



- 5.12 Policy SP13 relates to landscapes and sets out how the quality, character and value of Ryedale's diverse landscapes will be protected and enhanced; reinforcing the distinctive elements of landscape character within the District's broad landscape character areas.
- 5.13 Policy SP16 relates to design, and indicates how development proposals are expected to create high quality durable places that are accessible, well integrated with their surroundings and that reinforce local distinctiveness. Design should also provide a well-connected public realm, which is accessible and usable by all, safe and easily navigated, and protects amenity and promotes well-being.
- 5.14 Policy SP19 relates to a presumption in favour of sustainable development, outlining how the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.15 Policy SP20 relates to generic development management issues, stating how new development should respect the character and context of the immediate locality and the wider landscape/townscape character in terms of physical features and the type and variety of existing uses. The policy sets out how the cumulative impact of new development on the character of an area will also be considered.
- 5.16 Policy SP21 relates to occupancy restrictions stating (inter alia) how seasonal occupancy restrictions will be attached where the proposed accommodation is not suitable for year-round accommodation by nature of its location, design or proximity to a habitat that needs extra protection at certain times of the year. Criteria (e) of the Policy relates to time-limited occupation, stating how new un-serviced holiday accommodation 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 at 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.

Criteria (g) of the policy relates to the lifting of occupancy restrictions, indicating that these will be considered on a case by case basis. The capability and suitability of the unit being occupied as a permanent residential unit, together with any changes in circumstances which mean the occupancy restriction is no longer applicable, will be carefully considered.



## **Emerging Planning Policy**

### Local Plan Sites Document and Policies Map

- 5.17 Progress on the Local Plan Sites document and Policies Map is well advanced. The Examination Hearing sessions finished at the end of 2018, and the Main Modifications are expected to be out for consultation prior to Spring 2019. The Council expect that the Local Plan Sites document and Policies Map will be adopted in April 2019.
- 5.18 The Document will set out specific development allocations throughout the District and will replace the Ryedale Local Plan Proposals Map (2002). The Proposals Map indicates that the site is proposed to fall within open countryside and is not due to be allocated for any specific use, as is the case at present.



## **6.0 The Planning Case**

### **6.1 Material Planning Considerations**

6.1.1 The introduction to this statement makes clear the application is made in full. The layout plan illustrates how the site can accommodate 36no. touring caravans and 33no. holiday cabins. On this basis a number of key matters are pertinent to the determination of the proposal. Each is addressed in turn below.

### **6.2 Principle of Development**

6.2.1 The principle of using the land for tourism uses has already been established. Our client is simply looking to secure permission to intensify the use within the confines of the existing site in response to customer demand.

6.2.2 Paragraph 83 of the NPPF states how policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, in addition to the diversification of agricultural businesses. Sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside are encouraged.

6.2.3 On this basis, we consider the principle of the development should be considered acceptable.

### **6.3 Landscape Impact**

6.3.1 The proposed rearrangement of the site requires the removal of selected woodland blocks; however, this is compensated by new planting of native species of trees, hedges and understory planting.

6.3.2 The planting and landscaping plan will incorporate consideration of wildlife habitat to increase the habitat value and biodiversity of the site.

6.3.4 The existing pond will be cleared and revised with improved landscaping to provide a habitat for aquatic wildlife and a pleasant shared amenity area for the visitors.

6.3.5 The design layout and associated works are intended to ensure there is no visual impact to the surrounding area and wider locality. It should be noted that the planting program carried out between 2004 and 2005 was a major factor in the approval of the first use of the site as a caravan park.



- 6.3.6 In the intervening years, the trees and hedge rows have further grown and matured (significantly) and there has been a high degree of additional planting in and around the site. Therefore, today Foxhill Park is a very well screened facility and this will continue to be the case. The design will also retain the overall character of the site.
- 6.3.7 In support of this application a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared (235-01 LVIA ISSUE - Feb 2019).
- 6.3.8 The proposal is in compliance with Policy SP20 of the Local Plan.

#### **6.4 Design**

- 6.4.1 Of a total site area of approximately 3.7 hectares, there is a usable area of 1.9 hectares. With the current 36 pitches, this equates to 18 pitches per hectare, approximately 30 % of the recommended maximum gross density of 60 pitches per hectare (the recommended density is taken from the - Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act, 1960 Section 5 Model Standards 1989: Holiday Caravan Sites Schedule of Conditions).
- 6.4.2 Following development of the site as proposed, the resulting useable areas for touring caravans and new static / cabin units are respectively -
- 36 no touring pitches approximately 1.3 hectares (Density of 28 pitches per hectare).
  - 33 no static/ cabin pitches approximately 1.2 hectare (Density of 27 pitches per hectare).
- 6.4.3 Therefore, the density of the accommodation (following the new development) will be less than half of the recommended maximums.
- 6.4.4 The site is to be laid out in a pleasant organic style with progressive curves rather than the more regimented traditional approach of Caravan Parks
- 6.4.5 Generous spaces have been allowed between each pitch (for both the touring and the static units) which are in excess of the minimum distances specified in the model standards.
- 6.4.6 The static pitches can accommodate a generous family sized unit (up to 42 x 14 feet). The external appearance of the units are intended to feature non-reflective surfaces and textures and muted neutral colours.
- 6.4.7 The pitch designs include a generous parking space (6 x 3 metres) and good



turning radii to allow for good manoeuvring and turning.

6.4.8 Wide 4 metre grass margins are included to the front (from the front edge of the deck) and rear of static units to give a sense of space and to facilitate easy maintenance.

6.4.9 The proposal is in compliance with paragraphs 124 and 130 of the NPPF and Policy SP16 and SP20 of the Ryedale Local Plan Strategy.

## **6.5 Ecology**

6.5.1 The woodland plantation to the north of the site falls within the Woodland Priority Habitat Network (England) with the majority of the plantation classed as High Spatial Priority. No such designations apply to the woodland on site.

6.5.2 There are no known or registered specific habitats within the Foxhill Park site.

## **6.6 Flood Risk**

6.6.1 Flood Risk - There are no significant water courses or bodies of water within or near to the site. Environment Agency Flood Maps show that the site lies in Flood Risk Zone 1 where all land uses are considered appropriate.

## **6.7 Archaeology**

6.7.1 There are no listed heritage assets in or near the site and no known specific archaeological finds which would affect the proposed development.

## **6.8 Access**

6.8.1 The site is within approximately a quarter of a mile of the main A64 trunk road. The junction incorporates a filter box for traffic coming from the west to safely turn right into the road to Claxton and the site.

6.8.2 The road to the site from the junction is relatively straight and of a good width to accommodate the traffic and any predicted increased traffic movements. There are no visibility obstructions.

6.8.2 The local road network beyond the site is generally quiet with low traffic volumes.

6.8.3 The main vehicle access to the site is from the main A64 trunk road and the junction with the Claxton to Harton Lodge road. This benefits from a filter box for



eastbound traffic turning right. The section of road to the site is reasonably wide and straight with good visibility.

- 6.8.4 The main site entrance is well designed and laid out with good turning radii and visibility splays. A tarmacadam surface continues from the highway into the main amenity space of the site where it changes to well compacted permeable hardstanding. This is entirely suitable for the projected increases in traffic movements no modifications or upgrades are proposed.
- 6.8.5 A new access track within the site will provide the access to the new Static Units. Therefore, traffic for the touring pitches will bear to the left (as at present), traffic for the static units will bear right (sharing access with the warden's lodge). This will ensure a lack of congestion at busy times.
- 6.8.6 All access tracks within the site whether existing or new will have a minimum width of 3.7 metres and feature smooth curves to give good flow (a speed limit will be in force for the entire site) and will be constructed using well compacted hardcore to give a free draining surface.
- 6.8.7 Pitches feature generous aprons and parking bays to allow for easy manoeuvring and parking - particularly for getting touring caravans into place. The layout gives all requisite access and turning for emergency vehicles.
- 6.8.8 The site features a progressive gradient with no sudden changes in elevation which together with the mown grass surfaces and well compacted hardcore tracks make it suitable for visitors to walk around all the main areas and amenities.
- 6.8.9 The existing central amenity building has all visitor facilities on ground floor level and includes a dedicated disabled WC and Shower Room (combined).
- 6.8.10 The proposed new single unit static accommodation will have varying degrees of individual choice in regard to layouts. However, the units can be configured (internal layout and specification / steps and ramps) up to full Part M compliance
- 6.8.11 Public Transport

The Coastliner bus service (numbers 840 and 843) runs on the A64 and provides public transport links to York, Leeds, Malton and Whitby on the east coast. It stops at various tourist attractions en-route. The service operates all days of the week and bank holidays and at approximately 30 minute intervals at peak.

The distance to the bus stops from Foxhill Park are - Eastbound stop 0.5 miles (9 minutes walking) and Westbound stop 0.6 miles (11 minutes walking).





A local 181 service which runs between Malton and York serving villages in between including Claxton Village. It operates Monday to Saturday and there are generally 5 runs per day. It passes the site entrance and although there is no formal stop the drivers will stop and allow people on when hailed. Many park visitors have successfully used and value this service which helps to support and preserve its continuity

#### 6.8.12 Walking and Cycling

The site is naturally well suited for walking along the access tracks and grass margins to allow the visitors to access the site facilities. The existing footpaths will be revised and extended to provide interesting woodland walks and dog walking / exercising areas.

The local road network, although lacking dedicated footpaths (other than in Claxton Village) is generally quiet with low volume and low speed traffic.

There are often good margins with mown grass. Therefore the local roads provide a good resource for visitors who wish to walk or cycle and enjoy the area.

6.8.13 The proposal is in compliance with Policy SP16 of the Ryedale Local Plan Strategy.

### 6.9 Sustainability

6.9.1 Economically, the site will proposal will benefit the local economy in that it will bring additional tourists into the area. This will result in increased expenditure and help to support and maintain local facilities and attractions.

6.9.2 Socially, the site will help to support a strong, vibrant and healthy community, providing an environment for people to relax and enjoy their leisure time amongst open space and wooded areas.

6.9.3 Environmentally, the proposal will result in additional tree planting and will make a more efficient use of the land (which is currently underutilised).

6.9.4 There are regular scheduled bus services available to the Parks visitors and the local road networks are well suited to walking and cycling which contribute to the sustainability of the proposals

6.9.5 The NPPF outlines at paragraphs 11 and 83 how there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The proposal would be in accordance with paragraph 11 and 83 of the NPPF and Policy SP19 of the Ryedale Local Plan Strategy.



## **6.10 Viability**

6.10.1 Since the start of the operation of the holiday and leisure business in 2005, there has been a year on year growth of turnover and profit. This growth has continued and notably expanded since the acquisition of the site by the current owners in 2017.

6.10.2 The proposed further development will meet an identified business demand, contribute significantly to the local economy and will be a solid long-term enterprise.

## **6.11 Contamination**

6.11.1 Given the existing use and the sites previous use as agricultural fields, there is no risk of contamination.

## **6.12. Public Rights of Way**

6.12.1 There are no public rights of way either on site or close to it.



## **7.0 Conclusion**

- 7.1 National and local planning policy is in support of rural diversification and tourism in rural areas. Our client has identified a demand for additional accommodation and as such is seeking to expand the number of units available on site (which is currently underutilised).
- 7.2 The proposal is in compliance with NPPF paragraphs 11, 83, 84, 124 and 127 and Ryedale Local Plan Strategy Policies SP8, SP9, SP13, SP16, SP19, SP20 and SP21. It is demonstrated how the proposal is located in a sustainable location and the proposal would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area or neighbouring residential amenity. As a result, we consider the proposal to be acceptable.
- 7.3 In this instance we believe there are no adverse impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits to suggest the proposal should not be granted planning permission.