

Item Number: 8
Application No: 19/00082/MFUL
Parish: Harome Parish Council
Appn. Type: Full Application Major
Applicant: Foxholme Park Ltd (Mr Chris Binks)
Proposal: Change of use of caravan park grassland area for an additional 16no. touring caravan pitches to be formed and extension of the opening season of the whole caravan park from 31st March or Good Friday if earlier to 4th of January the following year
Location: Foxholme Touring Caravan Park Gale Lane Harome Helmsley North Yorkshire YO62 7SD
Registration Date: 8 February 2019
8/13 Wk Expiry Date: 10 May 2019
Overall Expiry Date: 13 March 2019
Case Officer: Alan Goforth **Ext:** 43332

CONSULTATIONS:

Caravan (Housing)	No objections in principle - recommend informative
Nawton Parish Council	No response received
Harome Parish Council	No response received
Highways North Yorkshire	No objections

Neighbour responses: Mr & Mrs HJ and CA Welch

SITE:

Foxholme Caravan Park was established in 1979. The site is located approximately 1.2km north east of Harome and 1.1km south west of Wombledon. The site was a mess site associated with RAF Wombledon until 1950.

The application site is within the open countryside and an Area of High Landscape Value. The overall site amounts to 9.1 hectares of which 2.5 hectares is used by touring caravans with the remainder grassland and woodland. Access to the site is gained off Gale Lane to the west.

The Caravan Park comprises 60 pitches in the north-eastern part of the site together with a reception building and washrooms. The site currently operates from 1 April or Easter weekend (whichever is earliest) to 31 October. The application site is grassland that forms part of the wider caravan site. It has previously been used as overspill during busy periods under the '28 day rule' (permitted development).

The site is within Flood Zone 1 and is relatively flat with a slight rise in levels from Gale Lane to the eastern boundary of the site. There are no public rights of way in close proximity to the site, the nearest is 400 metres north of the application site along Sykehead Lane.

The application site is well screened by established mature tree planting on all sides. There is a dense, mature woodland block (approximately 2.6 hectares) to the west and south west of the application site to the rear of the nearest residential property (Dunromin). Dunromin is a bungalow that fronts Gale Lane adjacent to the existing access to the caravan park and is approximately 120 metres from the field to be used for the additional touring caravan pitches. Other residential properties in the area include Nawton Grange 300 metres to the north, Wombledon Manor 260 metres to the north-east and The Oaks 180 metres to the south-east.

HISTORY:

3/53/24/FA- Outline application for the development of land for the siting 30 touring caravans with ancillary roads and toilet facilities off Gale Lane, Nr Harome, York. APPROVED 04.09.1978.

3/53/24A/PA- Application for the approval of matters reserved pursuant to Condition No 2 of Decision No 3/53/24/PA dated 4th September, 1978. APPROVED 06.11.1978.

3/53/24B/PA- Increase from 30 touring caravans (approved under ref 3/53/24/PA) to 60 touring caravans. APPROVED 06.08.1979.

3/53/24C/FA- Amendment to condition 4 of decision 3/53/24B/PA dated 6.8.79 to read "*No caravans on the site, except the one occupied by the site warden, shall be used for the purpose of human habitation between 31 October and 1 March of the following year*". APPROVED 02.05.1990.

PROPOSAL:

Planning permission is sought for the change of use of caravan park grassland area for an additional 16no. touring caravan pitches to be formed and extension of the opening season of the whole caravan park from 31st March or Good Friday if earlier to 4th of January the following year.

The proposed extension relates to a field 1.4 hectares in area and it is proposed that 16 additional touring caravan pitches would be established. There is an existing access off the internal site road in the north-west corner of the field. The applicant states that no hardstanding would be created and the field will remain grassland with no hard surfacing for access roads or pitch bases. The field has been the subject of land drainage works and the applicant acknowledges that the use of the field will be regulated by weather conditions.

Foul waste is disposed of via the mains drainage connection. The users of the touring caravan park have access to the onsite disposal point connected to the drainage system.

The applicant also seeks to extend the opening season from 31 March or Good Friday (whichever is earliest) until 4 January the following year. This would allow the operation of the site over the Christmas and New Year holiday period.

POLICIES:

Under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 planning authorities are required to determine each planning application in accordance with the planning policies that comprise the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the determination of this particular application comprises the following:

- The Ryedale Plan- Local Plan Strategy (2013)

The Ryedale Plan - Local Plan Strategy (2013)

Local Plan Strategy -Policy SP1 General Location of Development and Settlement Hierarchy

Local Plan Strategy - Policy SP8 Tourism

Local Plan Strategy - Policy SP13 Landscapes

Local Plan Strategy - Policy SP16 Design

Local Plan Strategy - Policy SP19 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Local Plan Strategy - Policy SP20 Generic Development Management Issues

Local Plan Strategy - Policy SP21 Occupancy Restrictions

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF)

REPRESENTATIONS:

An objection has been received from the occupants of Dunromin. In summary the concerns are:

- The existing access is too close to Dunromin causing safety issues and noise and fumes from vehicles
- Most of the trees on the site have been removed in recent years resulting in loss of privacy and impact on quality of life.
- Longer period of operating will result in loss to peace and quiet and quality of life from noise and disturbance.
- Security lights and car lights shine into the windows of the property
- Commercial waste bins are located adjacent to Dunromin causing noise and disturbance.

The concerns largely relate to existing, consented lawful activity that has taken place since the caravan park first opened although the impact of the proposed development over and above existing will be taken into consideration.

APPRAISAL:

The main considerations in the determination of this application are:

- i) Principle of the development;
- ii) Landscape and visual impacts;
- iii) Impact on local amenity;
- iv) Highway impacts; and
- v) Occupancy restrictions.

Principle of the development

Policy SP1 states that development in the open countryside will be restricted to that which is necessary to support a sustainable, vibrant and healthy rural economy and communities. Tourist-orientated schemes are a form of development which could be considered to be necessary to support the above policy objective. At the national level paragraph 83 of the NPPF supports a prosperous rural economy and states that planning decisions should, *inter alia*, enable “(a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings; and...(c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside”.

Tourism makes a significant contribution to the local economy and local planning policy (Policy SP8) seeks to develop tourism in a sustainable way which does not undermine some of the very special qualities that visitors come to enjoy and experience. Policy SP8 supports tourist accommodation in the wider open countryside that, *inter alia*, involves “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 site is in relatively close proximity to the scenic landscapes of northern Ryedale and the proposal would contribute to the range and choice of tourist accommodation available to visitors to the District. The field proposed for the additional touring caravan pitches also forms part of the established caravan park and has previously been used for overspill during busy periods.

In addition to the extra pitches the applicant seeks permission to extend the operating season by two months and 4 days beyond that currently permitted. Policy SP8 states that one way in which sustainable tourism can be achieved is by encouraging all year round tourism subject to occupancy conditions set out in Policy SP21.

Local policy provides support in principle for sustainable tourist accommodation 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. The proposed development represents an expansion to an existing and established site and is considered acceptable in principle subject to consideration of the design, landscape and visual impact, highways safety and local amenity.

Landscape and visual impacts

The site is located within the open countryside and an Area of High Landscape Value. The land use in the locality is predominately agricultural with nearby tourist-orientated sites (caravans and camping). There are no public rights of way immediate to the site or residential receptors with direct, uninterrupted views of the site. The land immediately to the north, east and south is in agricultural use. The field proposed for the additional caravan pitches is not visible from the public highway.

Policy SP13 requires the protection of distinctive elements of landscape character in areas valued locally for their natural beauty and scenic qualities. Policy SP20 also requires new development to respect the character and context of immediate locality and the wider landscape character and to ensure the proposed uses are compatible with the ambience of the surrounding locality. In addition, Policy SP8 requires that new or extended caravan sites do not give rise to unacceptable visual intrusion or adverse impacts upon the character of the locality.

The southern boundary of the caravan park is a well-established belt of woodland and the western side is dominated by the large woodland block to the rear of Dunromin. The eastern boundary is a combination of hedgerow interspersed with mature trees beyond which is open farmland.

The existing boundary planting provides a sense of enclosure and the separation distances from receptors and the presence of established screening ensures that the use of the site is not detrimental to local visual amenity. There are no proposals to remove any of the existing, established screen planting and, as part of the applicant's planting programme, additional tree planting has taken place on the western side of the caravan park parallel to Gale Lane. To ensure that the effectiveness and integrity of the landscape screening is retained a condition shall require prior approval from the LPA before any trees within the site are lopped, topped or felled.

There would be no additional buildings, structures or hardstanding associated with the proposed development and no introduction of urbanising features within the open countryside. The main landscape and visual change would be the presence of up to 16 additional caravans within the park throughout a 10 month operating season.

Taking account of the topography of the land, boundary planting and woodland blocks and belts the field is not particularly prominent within the local landscape. The proposed use of the land would not interrupt skyline views or the scenic qualities of the area to an unacceptable degree and it is considered an appropriate and compatible land use in landscape and visual terms. The proposed development would not result in any landscape harm or visual intrusion and would not conflict with the aims of Policies SP8, SP13, SP16 and SP20.

Impact on local amenity

As required by Policy SP20 (Generic Development Management Issues) development should respect the character of the area without having a material adverse impact on the amenity of present or future occupants, the users or occupants of neighbouring land and buildings or the wider community.

The objector states that in the last couple of years most of the trees on site have been removed. However, the field to be used for the additional touring caravan pitches is well screened by mature planting and would not be visible from Gale Lane or the nearest residential property (Dunromin) or any public right of way in the area. It is evident from site visits undertaken in February and June of this year that the existing planting is substantial and well established and acts as an effective screen as discussed earlier in this report. The applicant has confirmed that the tree removals that have taken place within the caravan park related to Norway Spruce that was beyond its harvestable age and had the potential to

cause health and safety issues. The substantial blocks and belts of deciduous woodland remain.

In terms of the neighbour's concern in relation to noise disturbance from guests staying at the park it is considered that the impact of the extended operating season and additional touring caravan pitches would be negligible particularly given the separation distance and intervening planting. The applicant highlights that the caravan park is marketed on the basis of being within a rural setting whereby peace and tranquillity are qualities that attract holiday makers to the area.

The occupants also refer to noise and disturbance from work to build the pitches and the associated deliveries by lorries. However, no such work is proposed and this is not a relevant concern. Likewise reference is made to noise and disturbance as result of the position of the commercial waste bins adjacent to the entrance to the caravan park. The bins are required to be positioned in close proximity to the public highway for collection purposes and this existing arrangement would be unchanged as this is a matter beyond the control of the applicant.

The existing access off Gale Lane adjacent to Dunromin is established and has served the caravan park since it first opened 40 years ago. There would be no change to the access and whilst concerns over noise and fumes from vehicles have been raised it is not anticipated that the extended season and additional pitches would give rise to any material harm to the occupants of Dunromin. The reception building is set back within the site and as a result there would be no reason for customers to wait in their vehicles at the entrance adjacent to Dunromin.

To address any potential for light pollution any additional external lighting associated with the site shall require approval from the LPA prior to installation.

It is considered that there would be no impact outside of the site in terms of pollution, disturbance, overlooking, loss of privacy or visual intrusion for neighbours. It is considered that the proposed development would not conflict with the aims of Policy SP20 in relation to the protection of amenity.

Highway impacts

Policy SP20 seeks to ensure that new development does not have a detrimental impact on road safety.

The neighbouring residential property (Dunromin) is served by a separate vehicular access adjacent to the entrance to the caravan park. The occupant of Dunromin has highway safety concerns in relation to the use of the caravan park access.

The access widens where it meets Gale Lane to allow cars towing caravans to pass each other safely clear of the public highway. There are no proposals to alter or reposition the existing site access and Local Highway Authority (LHA) has not raised any highway safety concerns in terms of visibility or any conflict between uses. The existing reception building is within the site, away from the entrance, and there would be no congestion or waiting vehicles on the internal access road adjacent to Dunromin.

It is considered that, taking account of anticipated traffic movements associated with the proposed development and existing access and visibility, the proposed development would not give rise to a materially significant adverse impact on highway safety either individually or cumulatively and there would be no conflict with Policy SP20.

Policy SP8 states that "*attractions that will attract large numbers of visitors should be accessible by a choice of means of transport*". The proposed expansion is relatively modest and 16 additional pitches and an extended operating period would not give rise to what could be reasonably considered to represent large numbers of visitors. Nevertheless, the additional pitches would give rise to an increase in traffic accessing the site.

The LHA initially raised concern that the site is remote from the nearest settlements and, being beyond what is defined as reasonable walking distances, would result in the majority of journeys to and from the site being made by private motor car. The NPPF promotes sustainable transport and the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport use. The LHA highlighted that the application did not address

sustainable transport aspirations enshrined in policy and recommended refusal.

In response the applicant has provided further detail covering the operating arrangements and future aspirations for the site. The details set out that whilst public transport is not an option not all customers arrive in private motor vehicles with caravan in tow. The majority of existing pitches are 'long stay' and caravans can be stored on site all year round. This reduces the number of 'caravan in tow' vehicle movements which, in turn, reduces emissions and congestion.

The applicant highlights that from previous experience customers, of the caravan park do walk to amenities in neighbouring villages and the distance is not therefore a barrier. The applicant promotes local public footpaths, trails, bridleways and cycle routes and customers take advantage of the relatively close proximity to the Moors, Vale of Pickering, Howardian Hills and Dalby Forest and so on during their stay.

The LHA acknowledge that the grass verges along Gale Lane are fairly level and generally suitable to use as a refuge if a vehicle is encountered whilst walking. In addition one section where the verges are narrow has been improved by the inclusion of two passing places/carriageway widenings carried out as part of planning permission ref. 16/01839/MFUL at Canadian Fields whereby the facilities are also able to be used also as a pedestrian refuge.

The LHA have responded by confirming that, it is not considered that further improvements of this nature are considered essential to the remainder of the lane up to the site. Given the information now provided (and the relatively modest increase in pitch numbers proposed) the LHA have no objections to the application.

It is not anticipated that the proposed development would create additional traffic movements that would give rise to a materially significant adverse impact on highway safety either individually or cumulatively and there would be no conflict with Policies SP8 and SP20 in relation to highway safety and sustainable modes of travel.

Occupancy restrictions

The applicant seeks an extension to the opening season of the whole caravan park from 31st March or Good Friday if earlier to 4th of January the following year which amounts to an additional two months and 4 days beyond that currently permitted.

Local Policy SP21(e) relates to time-limited occupation and states "*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*".

Local Policy SP21(f) relates to seasonal occupancy and states "*A seasonal occupancy condition will be attached where the proposed accommodation is not suitable for year-round occupation by nature of its location, design or proximity to a habitat that needs extra protection at certain times of the year*".

To comply with Policy SP21 it is considered appropriate to limit the operating season for the caravan park and impose a condition restricting occupancy at the site to holiday purposes only.

The Council's Housing Officer has no objection subject to the inclusion of an informative requiring the applicant to obtain a caravan site licence from the Council.

Conclusion

The principle of the development is in line with national and local planning policy relating to the

sustainable development of tourism and the rural economy. The proposed development represents a sensitive expansion of an established caravan park that would improve the viability of the business, retain and create employment at the site and attract visitors to the District. Taking account of the location of the development in terms of proximity to sensitive receptors, public highways and the effectiveness of established screen planting it is considered that the additional pitches and the extended operating season can be accommodated without giving rise to unacceptable visual intrusion or an adverse impact on the character of the locally valued landscape.

The proposed development would not have an unacceptable impact on local amenity or highway safety and any adverse impacts can be mitigated by appropriate planning conditions. In light of the above assessment, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable and that it complies with Policies SP1, SP8, SP13, SP16, SP19, SP20 and SP21 of the adopted Ryedale Plan - Local Plan Strategy and the revised National Planning Policy Framework. The recommendation to Members is one of conditional approval.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval

1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun on or before .

Reason:- To ensure compliance with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Location Plan ref. 170 117 LP
Site Plan ref. 190 117 01

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3 No more than 16 touring caravans shall be sited on the land shown on drawing ref. 190 117 01 at any one time and at no time shall the land outlined in red on drawing ref. 170 117 LP be used to site static caravans without the express written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: Additional caravans would result in a cramped and unsatisfactory site layout.

4 The permission hereby granted shall not authorise the use of the land as a caravan site except during the period from 31 March or Good Friday (whichever is earliest) until 4 January the following year. Any caravans stored on the site outside this period shall not be used for human habitation.

Reason: It is considered that caravans constitute unacceptable visual intrusions into an open rural area during winter months, outside the holiday season.

5 No trees within the area outlined in red on drawing ref. 170 117 LP shall be lopped, topped or felled without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of amenity.

6 Prior to the installation of any external lighting associated with the development hereby approved details of the location, height, angle of lighting, level of illuminance output and hours of operation shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The lighting shall therefore be installed on site only in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of amenity to ensure that the proposal satisfies Policy SP20 of the

adopted Ryedale Plan - Local Plan Strategy.

- 7 The field to be used for the additional touring caravan pitches as shown on drawing ref. 190 117 01 shall remain as grass land throughout the lifetime of the development hereby permitted. No hard surfacing shall be laid within the site without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and drainage.

- 8 The touring caravan pitches shall be occupied for holiday purposes only; and not as a person's sole, or main place of residence; and
The touring caravan pitches shall be available for commercial holiday lets for a least 140 days a year and no let must exceed 31 consecutive 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.

Reason: In order to ensure it is available for holiday use only and to comply with Policy SP21 of the Local Plan Strategy.

INFORMATIVE

The applicant is required to apply to the Council's Housing department for a caravan site licence.