

Tendring District Council
Town Hall
Station Road
Clacton-on-Sea
Essex,
CO15 1SE

Date: 15 January 2021

Our ref: 04051/68/NT/IY/19145755v2

Your ref: PP-09289717

Dear Sir, Madam

Tendring District Council: Application for Planning Permission to Erect an Arrivals Lodge at The Orchards Holiday Village, Essex

On behalf of our client, Haven Leisure Limited, a subsidiary of Haven Holidays Ltd, please find enclosed an application seeking planning permission to erect an Arrivals Lodge at The Orchards Holiday Village, Essex.

The application, submitted via the Planning Portal (Ref: PP-09289717), comprises this cover letter along with the following:

- 1 Completed application form and notices prepared by Lichfields;
- 2 CIL Additional Information Requirements Form prepared by Lichfields; and
- 3 Application drawings (Annex 1 of this letter) prepared by A&M Architectural Partnership LLP.

A payment of £234 to cover the Council's application fee plus the Planning Portal's administrative fee (£25) has been made via the Planning Portal. The application fee has been calculated on the basis of the erection of a new building (23.7 sqm GEA) ('Minor Development').

Background to the Proposal

Haven Holidays Ltd (Haven) has, like many businesses during 2020, had to rapidly adapt its operation to cope with the risk of COVID 19 to guests and team alike. A wide range of measures have been introduced at the Haven holiday parks and the measures were instrumental in enabling a significant number of people to enjoy a holiday during the main summer season. Whilst the capacity of the parks was reduced, various activities were curtailed and some facilities closed, the measures helped the parks to operate and create a wide range of benefits. These included the economic benefits that arise from the operation of each park including via employment creation, spending by guests in the local area, and the use of local suppliers and services.

The importance of tourism has been referred to throughout 2020, including in the statement by MHCLG Secretary of State Robert Jenrick (14 July).

He noted “...*tourism industries are vitally important to the economy and the communities they serve...*” and for caravan and holiday parks specifically “...*These parks are the mainstay of their local economies, providing employment and supporting local services and businesses.*”

One measure that Haven introduced to ensure a safe operation involved a radical new approach to guest arrival and check in. The long established practice has been for guests to arrive at a holiday site, park in a car park and then queue in a reception building, often with many other people. The new approach undertaken in 2020 was to specify an arrival time (a one hour slot) for guests and for a team member to meet the guests at an outdoor “arrival” point within the park. The guest would be checked in and given keys/directed to their accommodation. The response from guests has been very positive indeed and the team at each park recognise that the process is significantly more efficient.

The intention is to establish this new approach as the standard operation in the future, starting in 2021. In addition to the underpinning operational efficiency of this approach, it is also anticipated that COVID 19 will impact guests’ behaviour and expectations for some time and Haven needs to ensure each park is able to operate successfully and safely, both for guests and team members, from the start of the season. It will be appreciated that this is important to enable the parks to operate as efficiently as possible with all the resulting benefits.

However, there is a need to address an important issue that arose in 2020; this concerned the lack of adequate facilities for team members. At the parks, various forms of temporary structure had to be erected to provide a degree of shelter from the elements as well as somewhere to keep material needed to undertake the arrival process. Accordingly, the decision has been taken to provide each park with a new Arrivals Lodge. The building is described below.

Whilst the development, the subject of this application, is very modest in terms of scale and structure it is, functionally, essential and will help to ensure a consistent arrivals experience across all Haven parks.

The Site

The Orchards Holiday Village is located in the northern part of Point Clear Bay; a large village west of Clacton-on-Sea and St. Osyth in Essex. The Park is an important contributor to the local tourism economy, providing a high quality tourist and leisure facility.

The application site consists of a landscaped verge on the left-hand side of the main access road within the Holiday Park that runs from the northern-arm of the roundabout junction on Point Clear Road to the south. The location for the proposed building in this area is defined in the application drawing by a zone. The zone extends to 88 sqm. The precise location of the Arrivals Lodge within this zone will be determined on site at the commencement of construction.

The Proposal

The proposed Arrivals Lodge will consist of a building (21 sqm GIA) comprising two main elements: (i) the kiosk area where the welcome staff and security team will be stationed, and (ii) a covered open-sided area where guests will briefly stop, in their cars, to be checked in. The canopy provides appropriate shelter from the elements for team members. Also, guests can visit the Lodge at any time during the day to ask for advice from staff. This area will include a park map to help guests with orientation.

The proposed building will be a maximum height of 3.4m, 7.7m in length and 3.4m wide. The two parts of the building each have pent-style roofs that slope in opposite directions. The east elevation facing the road will include a door enabling access to and from the kiosk for welcome staff and security, and a window for staff to

speak to guests from within the kiosk. A window is also proposed on the south and north elevations of the kiosk so that staff can speak to guests from each direction.

A sign displaying the Haven brand will hang from the roof canopy.

A single bollard will be positioned at the front of the building adjacent to the road.

The southern elevation of the covered open-sided area will incorporate a toughened/laminated glass panel with steel fittings, with the upper part of the elevation consisting of panelling from the base of the roof.

External lighting details are included on the enclosed drawings (Ref: 4502-310 Rev B). These will be minimal and discrete, comprising 2 directional luminaires embedded within the roof canopy.

Assessment

The statutory Development Plan consists of Tendring District's Local Plan (November 2007); the Essex Minerals Local Plan (2014); and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017). Tendring is at an advanced stage of the review process for its new Local Plan and, accordingly, the draft emerging policies are a material consideration in the assessment of the application.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019) sets out the overarching policy priorities for the planning system. The NPPF is also a material consideration.

(i) Principle of Development

The Orchards Holiday Village, including the application site, is identified as a safeguarded Caravan and Chalet Park (Policy ER18) in the Local Plan. The explanatory text to the policy states that such sites “...offer the best opportunity to cater for current and future tourism potential.” (Paragraph 3.71). Further, the Local Plan states that at these sites the Council “...encourages development which will provide new attractions and facilities.” (Paragraph 3.61)

Draft Local Plan policy continues this support for tourism proposals. Draft Policy PP11 (‘Holiday Parks’) states that, subject to consideration against other Local Plan policies, the Council will support proposals for “...improvements to the range and quality of attractions and facilities at safeguarded sites and other sites...” that “...would help to improve the tourism appeal of the District to visitors...” In the explanatory text to the policy (Paragraph 6.7.1) the Council recognises the importance of such sites to respond to the changing trends, aspirations and demands of caravan owners.

The proposed Arrivals Lodge, despite its discrete nature, will make an invaluable contribution to the future operation of the holiday park. Covid-19 has had a significant impact on the leisure and tourism industry and on the way Haven has needed to operate its parks to ensure compliance with social distancing measures and the safety of its guests and staff. These measures will need to be in place for the foreseeable future and, indeed, have led to a way of operating that guests have responded well to and would like to see become a permanent feature.

As such, the proposal is important to meeting guest expectations, even beyond Covid-19. Its purpose therefore accords with Adopted Policy ER18 and draft Policy PP11 by providing an enhanced facility that will support the specific operational requirements of the Holiday Park and the evolving demands of the holiday park guests. It is also consistent with policy guidance in the NPPF (para. 83) which supports the sustainable growth of the leisure and tourism industry.

(ii) Transport Statement

The zone where the Arrivals Lodge will be located has been carefully defined to be:

- 1 Conveniently located on the main road into the Park; and
- 2 Located sufficiently into the site to avoid effects at the entrance/junction with the public highway. The provision of a defined arrival slot for a guest means that the arrivals profile is smoothed out across the arrival day. Also, the check-in process will only last 20-30 seconds per car to keep the arrivals traffic flowing into the site. If guests require further assistance, they will be directed to an existing parking area within the Holiday Park where they will be offered further assistance. This process has been very effective over the peak summer season this year.

(iii) Landscape/Amenity Statement

The Arrivals Lodge zone has been defined to:

- 1 Form part of the main core of the established park where it will not materially change the appearance of the site; and
- 2 Avoid any external impacts on views and neighbouring amenity.

The purpose of the arrivals lodge – to greet guests as they arrive into the Park and provide an efficient check-in – means that it has to be located close enough to the main entrance so that it can engage guests before they divert to other parts of the Holiday Village. Also, the Lodge must be located far enough away from the entrance roundabout to ensure that guests arriving in their cars do not create any issues. The proposed location achieves these key objectives. However, to accommodate the Lodge will require the removal of one tree and a section of hedgerow. The tree and hedgerow comprise ornamental planting that are not considered to be of significant quality nor do they make an important contribution to the character or appearance of the area. On balance, the operational benefits of the arrivals lodge to guests are considered to outweigh the minor landscape impact.

(iv) Flood/Drainage Statement

The Arrivals Lodge 'zone' includes land that is within Flood Zone 3A. A Flood Zone 3 designation classifies the site as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding (>1%), or a 1 in 200 or greater annual probability of flooding from the sea (>0.5%) in any year. The most significant flood risk is flooding from Clear Point Bay to the west.

The NPPF states that a Flood Risk Assessment is required to be submitted for all proposals for new development at risk from flooding from all sources, including minor development. The Planning Practice Guidance states that the flood risk assessment should be proportionate to the risk and appropriate to the scale, nature and location of the development (para 031 ID: 7-031-20140306 rev. 06.03.2014). This is reflected in the scope of information provided in this statement.

The proposed Arrivals Lodge – by its very nature – needs to be located within the boundary of the caravan park so that it can serve the guests staying the Holiday Village. Given that the entirety of the caravan park falls within Flood Zone 3, in line with the sequential test requirements set out by the NPPF (paragraphs 157 and 158) and Local Plan Policy QL3 (Flood Risk and Surface Water Management), it is concluded that no alternative sites exist within a lower flood risk area which could practically and feasibly accommodate the Arrivals Lodge. It is also noted that the Arrivals Lodge would, in accordance with Planning Practice Guidance (paragraph 067 ID: 7-067-20140306 rev. 06.03.2014), be classed as a 'less vulnerable' use which is considered to be suitable within a Flood Zone 3 location. It should be also noted that the Holiday Village and site planned for the arrivals lodge is protected by flood defences.

Furthermore, the proposal will not increase the level of flood risk at the site nor to neighbouring sites, in accordance with national policy guidance and Local Plan policy - with rainwater falling on the roof to soakaway into the ground.

On the basis of the above, it is considered that the proposed Arrivals Lodge complies with Local Plan Policy QL3, Emerging Plan Policy PPL1 and the NPPF.

Summary and Concluding Comments

Overall, it is concluded that the application is in accordance with the Development Plan, draft Local Plan policy and national guidance. Accordingly, we trust that the Council will be able to support the application and that planning permission will be granted.

The Arrivals Lodge is needed urgently to ensure the appropriate facilities are in place for when the tourism seasons starts at the beginning of March 2021, when Covid-19 is still expected to have a significant impact on operations. We would therefore be grateful if this application could be determined as a matter of priority so that the building works can start as soon as possible.

We look forward to receiving confirmation that the application has been validated. If you require any further information in the meantime, please contact me or my colleague James Burman.

Yours faithfully



Ian York
Associate Director



Annex 1: Application Drawings

Drawing Title	Drawing Reference	Scale
Site Location Plan	4502-TO-100-REV B	1:2500 @A1
Block Plan	4502-TO-110-REV B	1:500 @A1
Proposed Plans, Sections and Elevations	4502-310 REV B	1:20 & 1:50 @ A1