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**USE OF LAND FOR THE STATIONING OF 15 HOLIDAY LODGES  
OAK LODGE RETREAT, NICKS LANE, BROME, EYE IP23 8AN**

PLANNING STATEMENT  
Incorporating  
LOCAL VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS STATEMENT

Ref: 2431  
March 2021

## INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

1. This statement has been produced in support of a planning application proposing use of land for the stationing of 15 holiday lodges on land at Oak Lodge Retreat, Nick's Lane, Brome.
2. Oak Lodge Retreat [www.oaklodgeretreat.com](http://www.oaklodgeretreat.com) is an established holiday destination that currently provides accommodation in the form of luxury bell tents and wooden cabins as illustrated by the following photograph.



3. Oak Lodge is ideally located to explore local tourist attractions including Eye Castle, Mid Suffolk Light Railway, Thornham Walks and Bressingham Steam and Gardens to name a few. The site is also within cycling distance of the Oaksmere Hotel and Restaurant and other public houses, restaurants and take-aways in the historic town of Eye.
4. The proposed holiday lodges will enable the enterprise to extend the range of accommodation on site.
5. The proposed lodges will fall within the definition of a caravan as set out in paragraph 29(1) of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 (as amended). The following image is an example of the type of lodges proposed.



6. The existing use operates under planning permission DC/17/03732. Planning permission has also been granted for a siting of nissen hut for use as museum for Eye airfield under DC/20/01952. However, the applicant now proposes the 15 holiday lodges on the land previously intended for the nissen hut.

#### **LOCAL VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS STATEMENT**

##### BIODIVERSITY

7. The application site is an area of land previously used as paddocks. There are no records or evidence of any protected species at or near the site.

##### FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

8. The application is accompanied by a copy of the Environment Agency (EA) Flood Map. The EA map confirms that the site is situated within Flood Zone 1 where all types of development are permitted and therefore a Flood Risk Assessment is unnecessary.

##### DRAINAGE

9. Foul drainage for the units will be provided by private treatment plants. Surface water will discharge to soakaways. The position of the private treatment plants is

yet to be confirmed and therefore the applicant is happy for precise details of foul drainage to be controlled by a planning condition.

#### HERITAGE

10. The application site is not within a conservation area and there are no listed buildings nearby. No heritage assets would be affected by the proposed development.

#### LAND CONTAMINATION

11. There is no recorded history or evidence of any contamination at the site or on adjacent land. Furthermore, there are no current or historic industrial uses nearby which could have caused the site to become contaminated.

#### LANDSCAPE IMPACT

12. The application site is not situated within an area of high landscape quality or special landscape designation. In assessing the potential landscape impact of the proposal, the extent to which the site is visible from public vantage points has been considered and evaluated.
13. The boundary of Oak Lodge Retreat is formed by mature trees and hedges which provides privacy to guests and screens views into the site from the wider landscape. The existing landscaping features will ensure that the development will not be a prominent or detrimental feature on the landscape.

#### **PLANNING STATEMENT**

14. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (As amended) requires planning decisions to be made in accordance with development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
15. In this case, the development plan for the area consists of the Mid Suffolk Local Plan (1998), the Mid Suffolk Core Strategy (2012) and the Mid Suffolk Core Strategy Focussed Review (2012).

16. The Council is in the process of producing a Joint Local Plan with Babergh District Council. The emerging Local Plan (eLP) is at an early stage and has limited weight. Nevertheless, the document provides a clear direction of travel in terms of the Council's forward planning.
17. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies and is a material consideration.

#### MID SUFFOLK CORE STRATEGY AND LOCAL PLAN

18. This site is outside of any village settlement boundary and for planning purposes is therefore considered to be in the countryside. Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy confirms that tourism is one of the categories of development which is permitted in the countryside.
19. Policy RT19 of the Local Plan concerns the proposals for static caravans and holiday chalets, it states "*Static caravans and holiday chalets will only be permitted where there are no adverse effects on the character and appearance of the landscape, existing residential amenity, highway safety, agriculture, forestry, wildlife conservation and where essential services can be provided*". The policy goes on to state "*In the countryside where permanent residential use would not be permitted but holiday use is acceptable, conditions will be imposed limiting the period of occupancy to ensure that the accommodation remains available for holiday use*".
20. In this case the proposed development will have no adverse impact on landscape setting, residential amenity, highway safety, agriculture, forestry or wildlife. As previously stated, the location of the site and the level of existing landscaping are such that the development would not harm the landscape setting or character of the area.
21. The level of traffic generated by the holiday accommodation will not be significant and can easily be accommodated by the local road network without any material effect on highway safety.

22. It is acknowledged that the site is in a location where the Council would not grant planning permission for residential development and that therefore it is necessary, in order to comply with policy RT19, for the Council to impose an occupancy condition. In this case, the applicant would be happy for the Council to impose the same condition which it has imposed on other holiday lodges approved recently elsewhere, i.e.

*"The lodges hereby approved shall not be occupied other than for holiday purposes and shall not be used as residential dwellings, including any use within Class C3 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). No person/s shall occupy any of the unit/s during the month of February each year. Details of the name and permanent home address of the occupants of the lodges shall be kept in a register a copy of which shall be made available to the Local Planning Authority for inspection at any time."*

#### NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)

23. The NPPF is a material consideration and provides a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The three objectives of sustainable development are described at paragraph 8 of the NPPF where it states that in order for development to be sustainable it should provide economic, social and environmental benefits. This proposal fulfils those objectives for the following reasons.

24. Firstly, the proposal fulfils the economic objective of sustainable development as guests staying at the site will help to sustain the viability and vitality of local shops, services and tourism attractions thereby helping to safeguard local jobs and providing benefit to the rural economy.

25. Secondly, the provision of holiday accommodation will fulfil the social objective of sustainable development. It is well documented that spending time with nature and being in natural surroundings is very important to the sense of wellbeing. Furthermore, by providing cycles for guest use, the development will help to encourage healthy lifestyles.

26. Finally, the proposal also accords with the environmental objective of sustainable development. There are bus stops a short walk from the site which are served by route 112. This provides a regular and frequent service between Eye and Diss. Diss has a railway station on the main Norwich to London line. Therefore, guests staying at the site would not be reliant on the private car for access to the site nor to explore the area.

27. The NPPF deals specifically with tourism at paragraph 83 where it states that local authorities should “*support sustainable tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside*”. This proposal will benefit rural businesses by providing more trade and custom for local pubs and other local services.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

28. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (As amended) requires planning decisions to be made in accordance with development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

29. In this case, the proposed development accords with the relevant development plan policies and the NPPF and would not cause any material harm to residential amenity, highway safety or any other interest of acknowledged importance.

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