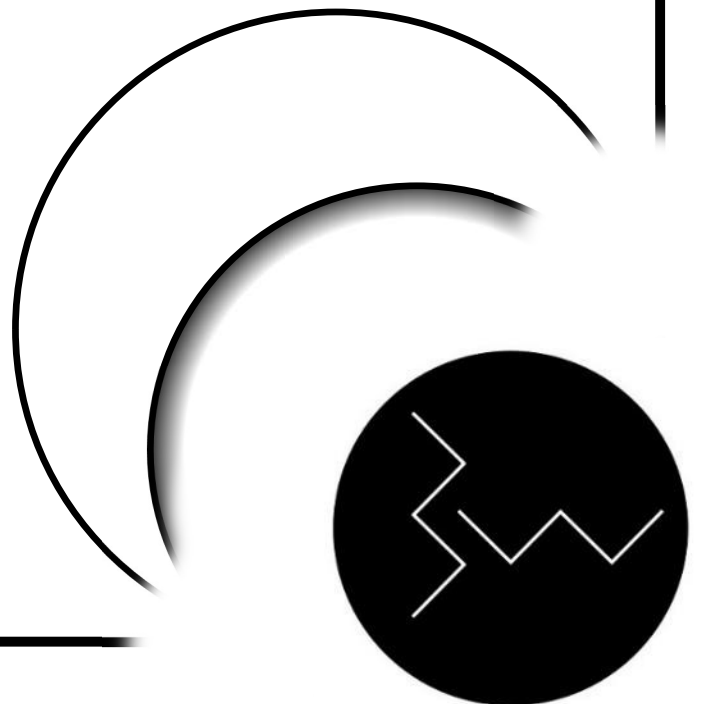


Planning Statement

The Meadows Campsite, Nansladron, St Austell





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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background and introduction

- 1.1.1 This Planning, Design & Access Statement supports the submission of an application for full planning permission for the use of land at The Meadows Campsite, in the Pentewan Valley, for camping, caravanning and caravan storage.
- 1.1.2 This Statement has been prepared for the landowners, Mr and Mrs Heaslip, hereafter referred to as 'the applicants' and should be read in conjunction with the submitted plans, drawings and supporting information.
- 1.1.3 The rationale for the planning application is the applicants' desire for a new site license, the application for which will need to rely on a recent planning permission or certificate of lawfulness. Emerging from the social and economic impacts of Covid-19 lockdown measures and emergency legislation, the applicants would like to increase the resilience and flexibility of their business and the associated use of their land. They look forward to a busy 2021 season and to making a strong contribution to the tourism 'offer' in this popular part of Cornwall.

2.0 Site Description

2.1 Description of the campsite and its surroundings

- 2.1.1 The Meadows Campsite is located at Nansladron, next to (west of) the B3273 between London Apprentice and Pentewan, postcode PL26 6DL. The site location is shown below in Figures 1 and 2. The site mostly comprises a large open space, much of which is bound by tree-lined hedgerows. Some of the camping and touring pitches have running water and electrical hook-ups, others are simply grass-covered open spaces. The applicants are the proprietors of the tourism business and live at the northern end of the site, beyond which a former plant nursery has been replaced with a row of new residential dwellings.
- 2.1.2 The Meadows Campsite covers an area of approximately 2.1 hectares. It is located close to the holiday parks known as Little Winnick and Sun Valley, but within a rural landscape and close to the edge of the South Coast – Central section of the Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The wider context is a wooded valley, agricultural land and the coastline to the south east at Pentewan.
- 2.1.3 The site lies within the Pentewan Valley, within the flood plain for the St Austell River and much of the site is located within Flood Zone 3. The topography is flat, much the same as the aforementioned Little Winnick and Sun Valley holiday parks.



Figure 1: Aerial image indicating the location of the campsite relative to Pentewan (Google Maps 2021)



Figure 2: Aerial image indicating the location of the land which is the subject of this application (Google Maps 2021)



3.0 Description of Development

3.1 Change of use of land

3.1.1 The applicants seek full planning permission for the use of their land for camping, caravanning and caravan storage in a more flexible way than that which is prescribed in the certificate of lawful use dated 25th January 1999.

3.1.2 The applicants have two main objectives: the first is the ability to run their tourism business 12 months of the year; the other is to increase the total number of pitches from 40 to 50 and for there to be a less rigid and prescriptive split between caravans and tents (currently the maximum numbers are 20 caravans and 20 tents).

4.0 Planning History

4.1 Relevant planning history

4.1.1 A review of Cornwall Council's online planning register, along with information provided by the applicants and their architect, has identified the following planning history for The Meadows Campsite:

- PA18/11498 – Construction of 10no. accommodation cabins on raised decking – approved on 21st March 2019
- PA17/03005/PREAPP – Pre-application advice for new reception and shop, maintenance equipment store, construction of accommodation pods on raised deck, construction of campsite refreshments bar – advice provided in November 2017
- C2/98/01452 – Use of land for storage of caravans and for camping by caravans and tents – approved on 25th January 1999

5.0 Planning Policy

5.1 Development plan

5.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material planning considerations can include other policy documents such as any local planning guidance and national planning policy. Other material considerations include planning history, planning constraints and local circumstances, for example the specific benefits of bringing forward a development proposal.

5.1.2 In Cornwall the development plan consists of the Cornwall Local Plan, which was adopted in



November 2016, saved policies from the Local Plans of the former boroughs and districts, and adopted Neighbourhood Development Plans. The policies in the Cornwall Local Plan considered to be relevant to the proposed development are set out below.

5.2 Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010 – 2030

5.2.1 Policy 1 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development) explains that when considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the Framework and in the Local Plan.

5.2.2 Policy 2 (Spatial strategy) explains that new development should provide a sustainable approach to accommodating growth, providing a well-balanced mix of economic, social and environmental benefits. This should help maintain the dispersed development pattern of Cornwall and provide homes and jobs in a proportional manner based on the role and function of each place. Policy 2 sets out a list of objectives that development in Cornwall should seek to meet, including:

- Respecting and enhancing quality of place
- Providing solutions to current and future issues
- Generating and sustaining economic activity

5.2.3 Policy 3 (Role and function of places) states that the scale and mix of uses of development and investment in services and facilities should be based on the role and function of places. Nansladron, Pentewan and London Apprentice are settlements not listed in Policy 3, and The Meadows Campsite lies outside of a settlement in the open countryside.

5.2.4 Policy 5 (Business and tourism), in section 3, states that the development of new or upgrading of existing tourism facilities through the enhancement of existing provision of new, high quality tourism facilities, attractions and accommodation will be supported where they would be of an appropriate scale to their location and to their accessibility by a range of transport modes. Proposals should provide a well balanced mix of economic, social and environmental benefits.

5.2.5 Policy 12 (Design) explains that the Council is committed to achieving high quality safe, sustainable and inclusive design in all developments. Development must ensure Cornwall's enduring distinctiveness and maintain and enhance its natural and historic character. Development should demonstrate a design process that has clearly considered the existing context, and how the development contributes to the social, economic and environmental elements of sustainability. Proposals will be judged against the fundamental design principles of character, layout, movement, adaptability, and engagement process.

5.2.6 Policy 13 (Development standards) sets out the provisions that all new development will be expected to achieve, including: open space on site and in proportion to the scale of the development, access and parking facilities on site, sufficient space for storage for domestic activities and recreation.



5.2.7 Policy 21 (Best use of land and existing buildings) explains that to ensure the best use of land, encouragement will be given to sustainably located proposals that ... (a) use previously developed land and buildings provided that they are not of high environmental or historic value; (c) increase building density where appropriate, taking into account the character of the surrounding area and access to services and facilities to ensure an efficient use of land.

5.2.8 Policy 23 (Natural environment) states that development proposals will need to sustain local distinctiveness and character and protect and where possible enhance Cornwall's natural environment and assets according to their international, national and local significance.

- Cornish landscapes: Development should be of an appropriate scale, mass and design that recognises and respects landscape character of both designated and un-designated landscapes
- Biodiversity and Geodiversity: Development should conserve, protect and where possible enhance biodiversity and geodiversity interests and soils commensurate with their status and giving appropriate weight to their importance.

5.2.9 Policy 25 (Green infrastructure) explains that the existing green infrastructure network in Cornwall, which is important to recreation, leisure, community use, townscape and landscape quality and visual amenity will be protected and enhanced. Development proposals should contribute to an enhanced connected and functional network of habitat, open spaces and waterscapes.

5.2.10 Policy 26 (Flood risk management and coastal change) states that development should be sited, designed and of a type that increases flood resilience of the area, taking account of the area's vulnerability to climate change, coastal change and the vulnerability of the proposed use. Development should minimise, reduce or eliminate flood risk, enabling or replicating natural ground and surface water flows and utilising green infrastructure and SUDS.

5.2.11 Policy 27 (Transport and accessibility) explains that development proposals should provide safe and suitable access to the site for all people and not cause a significant adverse impact on the local or strategic road network that cannot be managed or mitigated.

5.3 Neighbourhood planning

5.3.1 There is not yet a draft Neighbourhood Development Plan or any emerging policies that would carry weight in the determination of a planning application within the parish of Pentewan Valley.

5.4 National Planning Policy Framework

5.4.1 The Framework, updated in February 2019, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and places a strong emphasis on achieving sustainable development. The following sections of the Framework are considered relevant to the proposed change of use of land:

- Section 1. Introduction



- Section 2. Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4. Decision-making
- Section 6. Building a strong, competitive economy
- Section 9. Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 11. Making effective use of land
- Section 12. Achieving well-designed places
- Section 14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Section 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

6.0 Development Justification

6.1 The principle of tourism development at The Meadows Campsite

- 6.1.1 The Meadows Campsite has operated for 20+ years, which can be evidenced in part by the decision of Restormel Borough Council to grant a certificate of lawful use in January 1999. The applicants purchased the site in 2017 and since that time have ran their business in accordance with the site licence that is associated with the aforementioned certificate of lawfulness. This includes adhering to the maximum numbers of tents and caravans on site and adhering to the seasonal restriction on when the site can be occupied. The applicants' website explains: "*We are set over six acres of campground, meadow and woodland. Our season starts from end of April until the end of September*" (<https://www.themeadowspentewanvalley.co.uk>).
- 6.1.2 Pre-application planning advice received by the applicants in November 2017 acknowledged that The Meadows Campsite is an "established tourism site" and went on to say "the principle of proposals which allow existing rural businesses to develop and expand is supported by both national and local planning policy".
- 6.1.3 It is widely recognised that the holiday season in England is almost year-round, no longer confined to school holidays. The demand for tourism accommodation begins earlier in the calendar year and ends later in the year than in years gone by, propelled by different age groups and interest groups wanting to enjoy a holiday outside of the traditional 'peak season'. The determination of planning applications, including the use of planning conditions to control business and tourism activity, shows a recognition of this cultural and economic shift and an emphasis placed on achieving sustainable development.
- 6.1.4 The supporting text to Policy 5 in the Cornwall Local Plan states: "The quality of Cornwall's landscapes, seascapes, towns and cultural heritage, enables tourism to play a major part in our economic, social and environmental wellbeing, it generates significant revenues, provides thousands of jobs and supports communities. Our key challenge is to realise this opportunity in



better wages through improved quality and a longer season".

6.1.5 It is noteworthy that the decision notice for planning application PA18/11498 (accommodation cabins on raised decking) includes a holiday occupation restriction defined in condition 3. There is no reference to calendar months, public holidays such as 'Easter' or to any period of time when the site must be closed. Whilst the applicants are pleased with the flexibility that this affords them and their business, it is inconsistent with the limitations – now considered to be out-of-date – set out within the First Schedule of the certificate of lawful use dated January 1999.

6.2 The impact of Covid-19

6.2.1 The applicants would like to have the option of being able to open all year round. The lockdown measures in 2020 and 2021 made the applicants realise that their business model isn't resilient enough or flexible enough to withstand another 'lockdown' scenario in Spring and Summer months in the future, should that ever occur. The ability to open year-round would mean that income not obtained in one month could be compensated for by income received by guests and customers in other months. The applicants would like to obtain a new site licence that, based on a new planning permission, again building more resilience and flexibility into their business model.

6.3 Flood risk and drainage

6.3.1 A Flood Risk Assessment was prepared by BCL Consultant Hydrologists and was submitted in support of planning application PA18/11498. The Assessment explains that "in applying the Sequential Test, a pragmatic approach on the availability of alternatives should be taken. As per current guidance, when considering planning applications at existing business premises, it would generally be impractical to suggest that there are more suitable alternative locations for that development elsewhere. For this reason, it is considered that the development proposal cannot be steered into a lower risk setting".

6.3.2 The proposed change of use is not 'new' development and the modest intensification of the use of the campsite, from a maximum of 40 to a maximum of 50 pitches, is not considered to be excessive.

6.4 Vehicle access and parking

6.4.1 No changes are proposed to the existing vehicular access and car parking arrangements.

6.5 Other planning matters

6.5.1 This planning application proposes no changes to buildings or structures on site, no building operations, landscaping work or any introduction of a new use or activity that would be out of keeping with the existing site and its historic usage.



7.0 Conclusion

7.1 Summary and conclusion

7.1.1 Emerging from the social and economic impacts of Covid-19 lockdown measures and emergency legislation, the applicants would like to increase the flexibility of their tourism business and the associated use of their land. They look forward to a busy 2021 season and to making a strong contribution to the tourism 'offer' in this part of Cornwall.

7.1.2 The rationale for the planning application is the applicants' desire for a new site license, the application for which will need to rely on a recent planning permission or certificate of lawfulness. The applicants consider that the private benefit of being able to run their business throughout the year and derive a better, more regular income from it is to be balanced against the public benefits of year-round tourism accommodation, employment opportunities and the use of local suppliers for goods and services. These benefits accord with the aims of Policy 5 in the Cornwall Local Plan and contribute to the economic and social aspects of sustainable development.

7.1.3 It is considered that the proposed development accords with the development plan and with the relevant sections of the National Planning Policy Framework. As such the local planning authority is strongly encouraged to grant full planning permission.

