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**STATIONING OF 23 HOLIDAY LODGES AND 1 LODGE FOR SITE MANAGER
(RENEWAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION DC/18/04377)
HONEYPOT FARM CAMPSITE
THE STREET
WORTHAM
IP22 1PW**

PLANNING STATEMENT

Ref 2091
October 2021

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INTRODUCTION

1. This statement has been produced in support of a planning application proposing the use of land for the stationing of 23 holiday lodges and 1 lodge for site manager at Honeypot Farm Campsite, The Street, Wortham.
2. The application seeks to renew planning permission DC/18/04377 which itself was a renewal of planning permission 2689/15.
3. On 29 September 2018 an appeal was allowed (Ref APP/W3520/W/16/3148952) in relation to condition 3 of planning permission 2689/15. The allowed Appeal varied condition 3 (occupancy) of planning permission 2689/15, the remaining conditions of the original permission are still subsisting.
4. The application comprises this statement together with the following documents:
 - Application Forms and Certificates;
 - Site Location plan scale 1:2500;
 - Drawing No 3577-02B site layout plan;
 - Indicative drawings of proposed holiday lodges; and,
 - Ecology Survey.

BACKGROUND AND PLANNING HISTORY

5. The application site has been used as a campsite for touring caravans and tents for more than 40 years. The Council's first planning record for the site is an application in 1975 for 'extension to existing certified touring caravan and camp site' (application 0221/75). Further planning applications were approved in 1983, 1989, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2004, 2006 and 2008 and the site currently has permission for up to 35 touring caravans or tents.

PHYSICAL CONTEXT

6. The application site is located on an area of land on the southern side of the A143 beyond the houses fronting the village green. The 1:2500 site location plan

illustrates the site in the context of its surroundings. The site is not readily visible from the A143 or from Mellis Road to the west as it is enclosed by existing landscape features and screened by relatively recent housing developments. The site includes a large pond which was available for coarse fishing for visitors staying at the site.

USE

7. The proposed lodges will be used to provide self-catering holiday accommodation. The spaces around the buildings will be used to provide access (vehicular and pedestrian), parking, amenity space and landscaping.
8. The holiday units will conform to the definition of 'caravans' set out in paragraph 29(1) of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960.
9. It is intended to provide holiday accommodation at the site for 11 months of the year as permitted by the Appeal Decision. This will ensure the scheme is viable and will enable the applicant to meet demand for holiday accommodation outside of the summer season. The site manager will be on site all year round to undertake maintenance during the month the site is closed and therefore will require 12 month occupation. The manager's lodge will be the unit located closest to the entrance to the site.
10. The site has excellent links to the A143, A1066 and the A140 and provides an excellent base from which to explore Suffolk.

AMOUNT & LAYOUT

11. The holiday lodges will each have a 'footprint' of approximately 65 square metres.
12. The proposed layout of the site has been influenced by a number of factors, these include: the need to provide a sufficient number of units to ensure viability; the need to accommodate the units on site in such a way as to provide adequate amenity space; and, positioning the units in such a way to utilise

existing landscaping to minimise the impact of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

SCALE

13. The scale of the units is illustrated on the submitted drawings. The holiday units will have the following dimensions (approximate); height 2.8m; width 5m; and length 13m.

APPEARANCE

14. As previously stated the holiday units will conform to the definition of 'caravans' set out in paragraph 29(1) of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960. The holiday units will have the appearance of a timber cabin and not a 'traditional' static caravan. An illustration of the type of unit proposed is included with the application.

ACCESS & ACCESSIBILITY

15. Access to the site will be via the existing vehicular access to the A143 which has adequately served the existing campsite. Being adjacent to the A143, the site has excellent connections to the primary road network.
16. The site is within 3.5km of Diss railway station which is served by a ½ hourly service to Norwich and London Liverpool Street. Wortham benefits from a regular and frequent bus service which links the village with the towns of Bury St Edmunds and Diss. The application site is within 150m of the closest bus stop. It is a 10 minute bus ride to Diss. Consequently the site is accessible by public transport.

BIODIVERSITY

17. The Council has previously granted planning permission for the use of the site as a campsite. The last permission at the site was approved without any requirement from the Council to provide an Ecology Survey. This application is accompanied

by an ecological survey. The report confirms that the application site and ponds do not provide habitat for protected species.

FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

18. The application site is situated within Flood Zone 1 where all types of development are permitted and therefore a Flood Risk Assessment is unnecessary.

DRAINAGE

19. Foul drainage for the units will be provided by means of a private treatment plant. Surface water will discharge to soakaways. The position of the private treatment plant is yet to be confirmed and therefore the applicant is happy for drainage details to be controlled by a planning condition.

HERITAGE

20. The application site is not within a conservation area and does not contain any listed buildings. The dwelling to the north of the site known as Green's Farmhouse is a Grade II listed building. The setting of Green's Farmhouse is derived from views of the building from Bury Road and The Green. The historic setting of Green's Farmhouse has been changed significantly by the erection of the 4 dwellings to the east of the building and also the Cherry Tree Close development to the west. Being some considerable distance to the south and rear of the listed building, the proposed lodges will not have any material impact on its setting.
21. No archaeological sites, Scheduled Ancient Monuments or any other heritage assets will be affected by the development.

LAND CONTAMINATION

22. 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. As the Council has

previously granted planning permission for the site to be used as a campsite there is no reason for this application to be accompanied by a contamination report.

LANDSCAPE IMPACT

23. 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.
24. It is considered that the existing landscaping within the site and along its boundaries will provide adequate screening and will ensure that the development will not be a prominent or detrimental feature on the landscape.

LIGHTING

25. The proposals will only include exterior lighting on a domestic scale. This is unlikely to affect the area given the extent of trees and hedgerows which screen the site.

PARKING PROVISION

26. Each holiday lodge will be provided with two parking spaces.

RESTORATION

27. In the event that at some time in the future, the development comes to the end of its life, the site could easily be restored back to open land. There will be no physical alterations other than the access driveway and private treatment plant all of which could easily be removed if necessary. Site restoration could be controlled by way of a planning condition.

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

28. The proposed development finds wide support from national and local planning policies. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's

planning policies for all forms of development. The main principle of the NPPF is that it provides a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The document states that there are three objectives to sustainable development, being economic, social and environmental and that planning decisions should be approved for development which fulfils these three objectives.

29. In this case, the development will provide significant economic and social benefits. The provision of a higher quality tourist facility at the site will provide additional jobs on site and will also provide additional income for village facilities such as the public house and the shop, post office and tea shop. As such, the development will also provide local social benefits in terms of helping to sustain the viability of local services thereby helping to safeguard local jobs. The development also provides environmental benefits in that it involves the reuse of an existing campsite rather than the use of a completely new green field site.
30. The NPPF states that local authorities should *"support sustainable tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside"*. This proposal will benefit rural businesses by providing more custom for the village pub and other local services. Furthermore, as the development utilises an existing campsite it is sustainable and will respect the character of the countryside.
31. Relevant local planning policies are contained within the Mid Suffolk Local Plan 1998 and Mid Suffolk Core Strategy 2008. This site is outside of the settlement boundary for Wortham 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.
32. Policy RT19 of the Local Plan concerns the proposals for static caravans and holiday chalets. This policy is relevant as the proposed lodges fall within the definition of a caravan. Policy RT19 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".

33. 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. When considering landscape impact it is important to acknowledge that the site can currently be used by touring caravans.
34. The separation distances between the lodges and the nearest private dwellings are sufficient to ensure that the lodges will have no impact on residential amenity. Noise from vehicles arriving and leaving the site will be no different than were the site to remain in use for touring caravans and tents.
35. The level of traffic for the proposed lodges is likely to be less than the traffic levels generated by the current use of the site so the development is unlikely to have any material impact on highway safety.
36. The application does not involve the loss of agricultural fields or land set aside for forestry and so will have no impact on those uses. The accompanying ecological survey confirms that the development will not affect any wildlife interests.

CONCLUSIONS

37. 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. In this case, there has been no material change in circumstances or planning policy since the previous application was approved. The proposed development accords with the relevant development plan policies and the NPPF and would not cause any material harm interest of acknowledged importance.

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