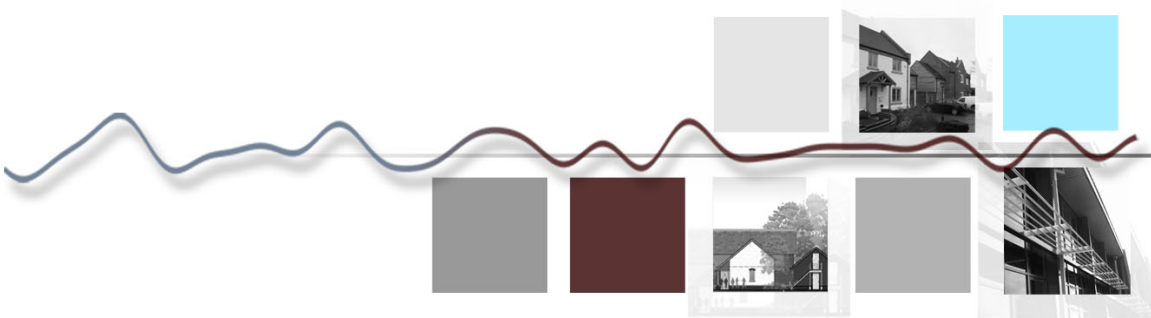


proposed leisure facilities | on behalf of Mr. D. Fletcher



app doc 1: introduction and planning statement

proposed leisure facilities
Land opposite the Hand and Diamond public house
Coedway, Powys

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1.0 Instructions and Introduction

- 1.1 We are instructed by Mr. D. Fletcher to prepare a planning statement to support the submitted proposals for the application site.
- 1.2 This report does not focus on the design of the proposed development, instead it will analyse the principal of development. As part of this it will refer to the other submitted documents and drawings. These are listed below:
- Application document no. 2: Design and Access Statement
 - Application document no. 3: Ecological appraisal
 - Application document no. 4a and 4b: Drainage design and Flood risk assessment
 - Application document no. 5: Application drawings.

2.0 Description of the proposals and relevant planning policies

- 2.1 The application proposals seek full planning consent for the establishment of a modest holiday leisure development that would see the formation of a new access way onto the B4393 carriageway and erection of 5 no. timber holiday chalets within the grounds of the application site. The proposed site layout also sees the formation of a parking area that can accommodate 10 no. cars.
- 2.8 The application site falls within the jurisdiction of Powys County Council who adopted their Local Development Plan in April 2018. Within the Powys Local Development Plan the following polices are relevant to the above proposal. To simplify this report we have split the policies (where possible and appropriate) to focus on a) the principle of development, and b) polices that relate to the design of the development:
- Principle of development:
- Key issues and considerations for the LDP – consideration 10. Tourism
 - LDP Objective 6 – Vibrant Economy
 - LDP Objective 7 – Key Economic Sectors
 - Policy TD1 – Tourism Development
- Design of the development:
- Key issues and considerations for the LDP – consideration 11. Natural resources
 - Key issues and considerations for the LDP – consideration 12. Streams and hedgerows
 - Key issues and considerations for the LDP – consideration 16. Flood risk areas
 - Policy DM 2 – The Natural Environment
 - Policy DM 4 – Landscape
 - Policy DM5 – Development and the Flood Risk
 - Policy DM6 – Flood Prevention Measures and Land Drainage
 - Policy DM7 – Dark Skies and External Lighting
 - Policy DM13 – Design and Resources

- 2.9 Please note that MTC are not suggesting that the above policies do not overlap between each aspect of the proposals as clearly they do, however most of the issues addressed under the design of the scheme can be resolved through sensitive design whilst the issues to address under principle of the scheme do not relate to design matters. The author will only relate to the key elements of each quoted policy within this report. However if required full wording of each policy can be provided. The above policies relate and consider national planning policy documents, and as such to address the above policies also considers the requirements of the following nation policy documents:
- Tan 6 – sustainable communities
 - Tan 12 – design
 - Tan 12 – Tourism
 - Tan 15 – development flood risk
 - Tan 23 – economic development
- 2.10 Finally a full conclusion will be included that provides an overview of all issues analysed within this report.

3.0 Description of the Site

3.1 Paragraph 3.1 – 3.4 of application document 2 (Design and Access Statement) provides the following site description. Accompanying this description within that document is a series of aerial images and panoramic site photographs.

'The application site includes 0.75ha of land and lies to the immediate east of the village of Coedway close to the Shropshire/Powys border. The site includes part of an overall meadow that is sub-divided by a brook that generally runs in a south west to north east direction. The overall field is regular in shape but due to the undulating route of the brook results in the application site itself being irregular in shape.'

3.2 *'The application site has a maximum width of 102.3m along its' southern boundary, adjacent to the B4393 carriageway. Its eastern boundary (from south to north) measures 116.8m. The site slopes from east to west along its southern portion by circa 1.0m. Despite this the area from the road towards the brook can be considered to be generally level. This level area extends up to 74.7m in length. The site then slopes a further 1.0m to an area designated as a lower plateau bordering the brook. The upper plateau also has a drainage channel/ditch that runs along the site's eastern boundary that feeds into the brook. This channel allows runoff water to drain from fields south of the site across the B4393 carriageway.'*

3.3 *'As indicated the site is bordered by fresh water sources on 3 sides. As such Application document 4a includes a flood risk assessment of the site that identifies the extent of the flood risk within the application site. It is acknowledged that a significant portion of the site does fall within an identified flood risk area, but crucially a portion of the site does not and the area immediately surrounding this portion can include relatively low-tech solutions to enable partial site development.'*

3.4 *'The site lies outside of the established settlement of Coedway but in an extremely close location to its centre. The site lies opposite the well respected and operating public house/restaurant 'The Old Hand and Diamond'. The site is also in close proximity to public transport. Coedway lies 12.7m/25.09km east of Welshpool, 10.6m/17.1km west of Shrewsbury and 12.7m/20.5km south of Oswestry. The site is in very close proximity to the Shropshire Border, the B4393 carriageway leads to the main Welshpool – Shrewsbury A458 Road. The site lies close to the River Severn valley, Shropshire Hills, the attractive market towns of Welshpool and Shrewsbury that both include wide ranging tourist attractions. The site is 7.0m/11.3km from A5 dual carriageway that provides connects to the national motorway network, being less than 1.0 hours drive from the cities of Wolverhampton, Birmingham, Coventry, Chester, and Merseyside.'*

4.0 Principle of development

4.1 Sections 2 and 3 of the adopted Local plan provide an insight into the local authority's key considerations and objectives which shape the planning policies, of these;

Key issues and considerations for the LDP – consideration 10. Tourism: the local authority is keen to stress that tourism is important to the Powys economy and a key desire to increase the all year round market share of the tourism sector.

LDP Objective 6 – Vibrant Economy. The local authority is committed to support diverse, robust, and vibrant economy that is to include a strong rural economy that is responsive to change.

LDP Objective 7 – Key Economic Sectors. This objective re-emphasis the commitment of the local authority to strengthen economic sectors within Powys of which sustainable year round tourism opportunities are listed as a key sector.

4.2 Policy TD1 – Tourism Development.

Figure 1 of the submitted Design and Access Statement includes where the application site is located in context of regional and national centres. Coedway lies on the Powys/ Shropshire Border, closer to Shrewsbury than other welsh town and is not located at a traditional welsh tourist hotspot. However its location means it is in close travelling distance to a number of local tourist attractions within both Powys and Shropshire including:

- Welshpool and Powis Castle
- Llyymynech
- The general walking areas of the River Severn
- The Shropshire Hills
- County Town of Shrewsbury
- The site is accessible from Shrewsbury by regular public transport and numerous walkways and bridle routes exist on the local area.

4.3 The site lies within 50.0m/80.0km (or a 45 minute drive) from the major urban areas of Birmingham, Coventry, Wolverhampton, and Stoke whilst Shrewsbury provides regular access to the north west, the midlands, and beyond. The site is a 10 minute drive from the A5 dual carriageway making its position very attractive for families or couples travelling for weekend breaks or long term stay-cation holidays.

4.4 Unlike many tourist developments the application site is located opposite a respected trading public house and opposite a bus stop with regular services to Shrewsbury town centre. This makes the application site a rare development that can be accessed by public transport and day trips be organized from the site via public transport.

4.5 MTC note that Coedway is not a sizable settlement, and as such the submitted proposals are very modest in scale including 5 no. structures, with minimal and low key parking areas, and no on site office/facilities. As such the development would not dominate the surrounding

settlement. The designs are to include log style chalets (that are not permanent structures) which have been sensitively designed to suite their location and surrounding landscape form.

- 4.6 The onset of the Covid 19 pandemic has greatly increased the desire for the stay-cation holiday. A consequence of the lock downs has been the greater appetite for outdoor activities and exercise. As such an increasing trend is for couples and families to look to take frequent short breaks away from urban settings to enjoy country lifestyle, outdoor pursuits, and relax in high quality environments. This brings regular and repeat trade to rural areas, from day visits to attractions, to purchasing local produce to cook within self contained accommodation or to frequent local trading public houses/restaurants. Following the end of the initial Pandemic and due to recent significant global events, the cost of travel, foreign holidays, and the continued lingering concern of Covid indicates that there the appetite for British based holidays have remained. This market remains vibrant due to the continued attraction to holiday in closed groups and the relative ease to do this compared to foreign travel.
- 4.7 The submitted scheme would include 3 no. 4 person chalets and 2 no. 2 person chalets, all finished to a high standard. The chalets would be attractive to a wide range of potential clientele, different ages, couples or families, active people or groups that just wish to have space for a relaxing time. The design provides for this in a location that creates tremendous potential income for the immediate local economy whilst being close to a range of tourist attractions be it rural or urban. It should be noted that an element of the above identified trends has continued since 2015 even before the corona virus outbreak; however the pandemic has meant that the requirement for self catering accommodation has increased dramatically. Such accommodation would be increasingly popular because of the ability of groups to stay in bubbles and relax in a self-contained environment. The type of accommodation is likely to remain extremely popular because of the fear of the pandemic and because of an anticipated economic slowdown meaning that the stay-cation will become popular for the foreseeable future.
- 4.8 It is clear from the above evidence and the analysis presented within the submitted design and access statement that the proposed holiday/tourism accommodation for this site would comply with all relevant planning policies. The proposals would seek to re-use land that by nature of its proximity to the brook and size is not practical agricultural farming land. Therefore the proposal would seek to improve and better the existing landscaping qualities of the site. The location of the site is very suitable, being within short distances to local and regional centres, both being accessible by cycling or public transport. There is a proven need and potentially large market share that this modest proposal could attract custom from, both locally and from the wider, well connected, region. The number of proposed chalets is consistent with previous planning consents granted by the local authority and has taken an approach of creating a modest, viable and therefore sustainable tourist business. The proposed accommodation utilizes and maximizes the existing terrain to provide a tourist development that would place visitors within walking distance of a local village that has a trading public house, thereby providing benefits to the local rural economy.

5.0 The Design of the Submitted Scheme

- 5.1 Key issues and considerations for the LDP – consideration 11. Natural resources. The local authority is committed to protecting Powys' natural resources that aid its ecosystems and preserve the county's rural; character.
- Key issues and considerations for the LDP – consideration 12. Streams and hedgerows. The local authority notes that not only are international and nationally recognised sites of biodiversity and geo-diversity, but all general hedgerows and streams are as important as they form wildlife corridors.
- Key issues and considerations for the LDP – consideration 16. Flood risk areas. New developments must not increase flood risk elsewhere, and where possible should aid the reduction or better management of existing flood for communities, infrastructure and businesses.
- 5.2 Policy DM 2 – The Natural Environment, and Policy DM 4 – Landscape:
- The site does not lie in an area of scientific interest. There is no evidence of protected species within the application site. Criteria 1-4 of Policy DM 2 does not apply to this application, however criteria 5 is an overarching criteria that states development would not be supported if the scheme is deemed to affect trees, woodland and hedgerows that provide public amenity value. The proposals do not see the removal of any trees or hedges. The scheme would create structures in a field previously underdeveloped, and as such there would be modest affects of the view of the hedgerows when looking east from the settlement of Coedway. However the overall setting of the site would not be adversely affected. The proposals would assist and enhance the landscaping of the site. This is done in a low-key manner that does not introduce high level landscape features. All proposed landscaping relates to drainage ponds, introduction of fen planting, and low-level planting around parking and pathway areas.
- 5.3 Application Document no. 3 provides a Phase 1 Ecology Report which notes that the site includes low level ecological features. The proposals, through the inclusion of drainage ponds and low- level landscaping will actively encourage ecological diversity at the site, thereby improving over time the overall amenity of the land for the benefit of occupiers and local residents alike.
- 5.4 A small section of hedgerow would be removed to create a 4.5m wide access carriageway. Low level raised pathway/bunds allow safe access to each holiday chalet. The chalets themselves are set on wooden stilts which allow growth to exist under and around each unit, thereby reducing the chalet's impact on the countryside.
- 5.5 Policy DM5 – Development and the Flood Risk
Policy DM6 – Flood Prevention Measures and Land Drainage
- Application document no. 4a and 4b provides a proposed drainage design and flood risk assessment for the site. Document 4b highlights that parts of the site do fall within an identified flood risk zone but a central area of the site does not. Initially the applicant wished to pursue a

scheme for the full site; however evidence from the flood risk assessment clearly meant that areas to the west, north, and immediately south of the brook were undevelopable. As a result lands to the west of the brook were removed from the potential site and the design focused on lands highlighted in application document no. 3.

5.6 The proposed layout as described in detail within application document no. 2. The vehicle access way, car park and proposed unit 1 are all located outside of any flood risk zones. Although units 2-5 are partially located within the flood zones, they are raised above any projected water levels by being set on timber stilts. The chalets are accessed by pathways that are formed from earth bunds. A drainage channel is retained along the site's eastern boundary that allows local fields to drain effectively to the brook, whilst the inclusion of 2 no. drainage ponds close to the drainage channel enables excess water to be stored and eventually drain away.

5.7 By creating a design that integrates ecology, landscaping, and drainage as one, the proposals do not affect the existing drainage patterns within the site, cause increased drainage onto surrounding lands, or inhibit the flow of water form adjacent fields. The development would not inhibit or affect the patterns of the brook and its natural water levels.

5.8 Policy DM7 – Dark Skies and External Lighting

The application site as noted in the submitted Design and Access Statement is located extremely close to the settlement of Coedway. To the south of the site the settlement extends further to the east than the proposed development. To the west a series of dwellings exist whose main facades all face east.

5.9 The proposed development would be most visible from the B4393 carriageway, be it travelling east, away from Coedway, or east towards the village. On leaving Coedway the light emitted from the development is reduced due to the number of openings on the chalets that face south west or north west. On approaching Coedway from the east more light would be visible from the proposed holiday units. However those would be seen in context of the dwellings in the background and the trading public house to the south that dilutes the proposal's impact.

5.10 Lighting would be further reduced by the incorporation of ground level pathway lighting to denote access to each chalet. The remainder of the design is low key and deliberately low tech. the overall scale of the scheme is very modest, there is no proposed site office as the applicant's home is located opposite the site, neighbouring the Old Hand and Diamond public house. As such personal will be on hand to assist with any queries.

5.11 The applicant is prepared, if required, to appoint the ecologists to develop in detail a sensitive light plan that ensures minimal light pollution for the local residents and native species alike.

5.12 Policy DM13 – Design and Resources

Application document no. 2 (Design and Access Statement) provides analysis of the proposals, their scale, layout, massing, design and appearance. The document illustrates how the design has carefully considered the local terrain, water courses, local landscaping, whilst seeking to improve the overall landscape and ecological qualities of the site. The layout has considered local dwellings whilst demonstrates that the scheme would be accessible for all. The scale and location of the development would clearly not impact on other existing and established tourism assets and attractions. The layout would create a safe environment, not endanger the site occupiers or others in neighbouring properties.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 This report has analysed the proposals in terms of the principle of development and the general design ethos of the development against the current local planning policy. It has examined and evaluated whether the site is suitable for this type of development. Its location is sustainable, viable, and the scale of development is appropriate for this location. The report has then analysed the different elements of the scheme to evaluate the scale of each form of structure and their essential merit in creating a cohesive tourist 'product' that will succeed and benefit the local economy. It also demonstrates that the scheme meet current tourist trends. The report, combined with the supporting application reports/drawings provide a comprehensive package of information demonstrating the suitability of the proposals.
- 6.2 The report has demonstrated that the application site is suitable for this type of development, the site is in an appropriate location for the proposed use, is well connected to local and national road and public transport infrastructure. The scheme will proved a blend of facilities and high quality accommodation that serve potential guests well. The quality of the accommodation will react and serve an identified need in the region, whilst the scales of the proposals are appropriate for such a start up venture. As such the proposals comply with relevant local planning policy and meet a clear identified need. Thereby providing employment and economic benefits to the local area whilst improving the setting of a previously used site.