



Planning Statement

Change of use of land for the stationing of 2 shepherd huts to
provide holiday accommodation
Foston's Ash Inn, The Camp, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL6 7ES

October 2023

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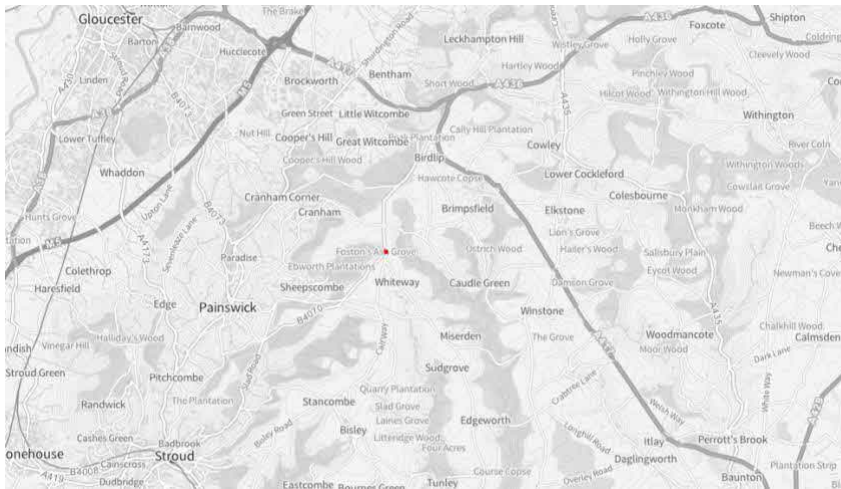
1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared in order to explain and support an application for full planning permission for the stationing of 2 shepherd huts on land at Foston's Ash Inn, The Camp. The huts will provide accommodation for holiday makers and visiting diners.
- 1.2 The application is submitted on behalf of [REDACTED] Lloyd-Baker.
- 1.3 Foston's Ash Inn is a historic coaching inn dating back to the 19th Century. Having been vacant for some time, the pub was bought by [REDACTED] Lloyd-Baker in December 2022 with a view to re-establishing the property as a vibrant inn offering a wide range of facilities to local people and visitors to the Cotswolds AONB alike. Building on Mr Lloyd-Baker's reputation as a chef gained at several top restaurants in London and elsewhere, the dining experience will form an important element in the business offer.
- 1.4 To enhance that offer, the plan is to increase the overnight accommodation available through the siting of two shepherd's huts within the grounds of the Inn.
- 1.5 Recent pressures on the hospitality sector mean that in the current market, it is vital for businesses such as this to broaden their offer. Pubs must now offer drinks, dining, community events, accommodation, training, etc as a minimum in order to survive.
- 1.6 This proposal was the subject of an application for Pre-Application Advice reference 2023/0362/PREDSK in September 2023.
- 1.7 This statement should be read in conjunction with the following documents:
 - Application Form
 - Location Plan
 - Site Plans
 - Floorplans and elevations

Heritage Impact Statement (included within this statement)

2. Site and surroundings

- 2.1 The pub is located within open countryside approximately 7km northeast of Stroud and 10km southeast of Gloucester. The villages of Sheepscombe, Cranham, Whiteway and Miserden are within in easy reach.



Source: Magic Maps showing location of site

- 2.2 The site is within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



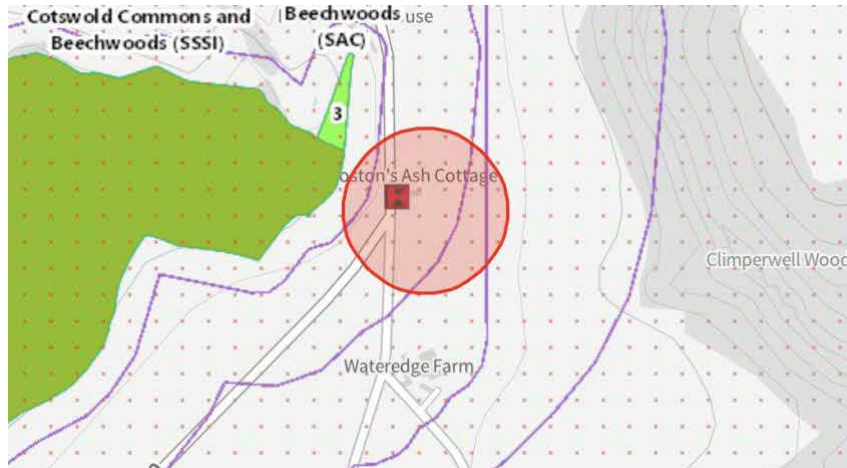
Source: Magic Maps showing AONB



Planning Statement

Foston's Ash Inn, The Camp, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL6 7ES

- 2.3 The site is also close to the Cotswold Common and Beechwoods SSSI and Cotswold Common and Beechwoods SAC as shown below.



Source: Magic Maps showing SSSI and SAC

- 2.4 Foston's Ash Inn is Grade II Listed and the list entry reads as follows:

SO 91 SW CRANHAM B4070 (east side)

2/151 Foston's Ash Inn

II

Coaching inn. c.1800. Coursed rubble limestone; ashlar chimneys; stone slate roof, concrete tile to rear. Two-storey with attic; rear outshut and single-storey parallel range. Stables to north now incorporated into inn. Front: 3-window fenestration to main part, outer 3-light, central upper floor 2-light, all with chamfered thin mullions and iron casements. Central flat-roofed single-storey porch with cornice; segmental arched opening and small circular side windows. Painted lettering in C19 style above upper floor casements 'FOSTON'S ASH INN'. Gable end chimneys with moulded caps. Lower 2-storey part to left links with former stables, timber casement fenestration with stone lintels being adapted from original stable openings. Parapet gabled north end. Interior not inspected.

Listing NGR: SO9145611432

- 2.5 The site is within Flood Zone 1 where there is a very low probability of flooding and where there are no restrictions on development on flooding grounds.



Planning Statement

Foston's Ash Inn, The Camp, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL6 7ES



Source: Flood Map for Planning

3. Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal is for the stationing of 2 shepherd huts to be sited at the end of the garden at Foston's Ash Inn. The huts would be let to guests visiting to dine or those wishing to visit the area. This accommodation is in addition to the existing rooms.
- 3.2 Each hut would provide a living area with double bed and a WC and shower. The huts would be stationed on a no-dig base topped with bark chippings or similar for sitting out. Each hut would have a wood fired hot tub.
- 3.3 This part of the garden would be enclosed with a timber fence and new native species planting is proposed to provide privacy for guests.
- 3.4 Parking for 2 cars is provided at the bottom of the car park near the huts.

4. Pre-Application Advice

- 4.1 Pre-Application discussions were held with the LPA earlier this year reference 2023/0362/PREDSK. Advice received was that any application submitted should ensure that the key policy requirements are met.



5. Planning history

- Alteration to existing doorway, creation of new door and various internal alterations. (Revised plans received 26.6.1996)
Ref. No: S.96/0493/LBC | Status:
- Single storey extension to the rear, erection of a sheltered seating area and bin store.
Ref. No: S.16/1089/FUL | Status: Application Permitted
- A single storey extension to the rear of the public house with associated improvements to the external landscape including the erection of a sheltered seating area to the eastern boundary of the site and a bin store at the entrance to the car park.
Ref. No: S.16/1090/LBC | Status: Application Approved
- Erection of single storey kitchen extension to rear and new pergola to rear.
Ref. No: S.23/0621/FUL | Status: Application Permitted
- Erection of single storey kitchen extension to rear, structural alterations to main bar and replacement of two external doors and one window.
Ref. No: S.23/0622/LBC | Status: Application Approved
- Discharge of condition 3 (extraction equipment) from S.23/0621/FUL.
Ref. No: S.23/1558/DISCON | Status: Application Permitted
- Provision of external lighting. (Revised plans received 27.8.96.)
Ref. No: 96/267 | Status: Application Approved
- Provision of external lighting. (Revised plans received 27.8.96.)
Ref. No: 96/213 | Status: Application Approved
- Single storey rear extension to form community function room. Erection of single storey accommodation block in rear garden.
Rev.drwgs.recd.21/10/03
Ref. No: 03/1055 | Status: Application Approved
- Single storey rear extension to form community function room. Erection of single storey accommodation block in rear garden. Revised plans received 21/10/03, and 7/11/2003.
Ref. No: 03/1059 | Status: Application Approved

6. Relevant planning policy

National Planning Policy 2023

Chapter 2	Achieving sustainable development
Chapter 6	Building a strong, competitive economy
Chapter 9	Promoting sustainable transport
Chapter 11	Making effective use of land
Chapter 12	Achieving well-designed places
Chapter 14	Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
Chapter 15	Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
Chapter 16	Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Stroud Local Plan 2015

CP1	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
SO2	Local economy and jobs
CP11	Economic growth and strategic employment needs
CP14	High quality sustainable development
CP15	A quality living and working countryside
ES1	Sustainable construction and design
ES3	Maintaining quality of life within our environmental limits.
ES7	Landscape character
EI4	Development on existing employment sites in the countryside
EI10	Provision of new tourism opportunities
EI12	Promoting transport choice and accessibility

Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025

Policy UE3 Sustainable tourism

7. Planning considerations

7.1 The starting point in the consideration of this proposal is the presumption in favour of development which is at the heart of both the NPPF and the adopted Local Plan. This means that permission should be granted without delay unless there are material considerations which would indicate otherwise.

7.2 The key issues in this case are as follows:

Principle

Business and marketing justification

Design

Visual & landscape impact

Heritage Impact

Access and parking

Biodiversity

8. Principle

- 8.1 The site is located outside of any established settlement. In countryside locations such as this, new development strictly controlled and only permitted in exceptional circumstances.
- 8.2 Both the NPPF and the Stroud Local Plan, however, make provision for tourism development outside of settlements. The NPPF is supportive of schemes such as this at Paragraph 84:
- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
 - b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
 - c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside;
- 8.3 This proposal has been prepared in order to provide a small low-impact tourist accommodation offer in a way that is sensitive to its location. Most importantly, though, this scheme is an important part of the applicant's Business Plan for the Foston's Ash. The provision of accommodation at the pub is designed to diversify the offer at the pub. The huts would be marketed to those visiting the area, but also to those visiting the pub for dining. This is now a very common approach in hospitality.
- 8.4 As such, the proposal fully complies with Paragraph 84 in that it will support the existing business and enable its sustainable growth.
- 8.5 The relevant local plan policies in relation to principle are CP15 and EI10. CP15 is supportive of development in the countryside where 'it is essential to be located there... to support the rural economy through employment... and tourism' or to enable development required to maintain a heritage asset. As previously stated, the proposed accommodation will help to support the existing business which will provide local employment. The proposal will

contribute to the local economy both by supporting the pub and providing accommodation for visitors who will use other local facilities. This part of the business will also play a part in maintaining the listed building.

8.6 The second part of the policy requires proposals to comply with the following criteria:

- i.* it does not have an adverse impact on heritage assets and their setting;
- ii.* it does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings;

8.7 Heritage impact will be addressed later in this statement, but the proposed huts are to be sited at the bottom of the pub garden within the curtilage. No encroachment is proposed. It should also be noted that the huts are temporary in nature and do not extend the built form.

8.8 Policy E110 applies specifically to new tourist accommodation. This policy primarily directs new tourist development to settlements, however the supporting text at 5.58 states that *in lower tier and unclassified settlements or countryside..., Tenting and touring caravan sites provide the cheapest accommodation and in suitable settings can sit into the countryside without unsightly intrusion!*. Where a countryside location is essential the Council favours re-use or the provision of temporary structures in countryside locations rather than new build. Temporary structures such as shepherd huts can be conditioned and can be removed if the holiday letting ceases.

8.9 Policy E110 states:

In exceptional cases, development may be supported in lower tier settlements, where:

- i.* there is evidence that the facilities are in conjunction with a particular countryside attraction and it is demonstrated how the proposal could assist rural regeneration and the well being of communities

The pub is an important local attraction and the new chef owner proposes to put it on the map as a destination for great food and drink both locally and nationally. The pub has been closed for some time and the community are eagerly anticipating its reopening.

- II. no suitable alternative existing buildings or sites exist which are available for re-use or a countryside location is essential for the proposed use

The proposed huts would provide additional accommodation in an unobtrusive way within the pub garden.

- III. the scale, design and use of the proposal is compatible with its wider landscape setting and would not detract from any acknowledged biodiversity interest, character or appearance of the landscape or settlement and would not be detrimental to the amenities of residential areas

The proposal is small scale and the huts are of an appropriate design in this location. If glimpsed from nearby public vantage points, they would be muted in tone, rural in nature and not unexpected in this country location. The huts will be marketed to single people or couples, so there are unlikely to be issues to do with noise or disturbance.

- IV. the building is served by adequate access and infrastructure

The site is served by an existing access and there is parking available.

- V. the site has reasonable access to local services.

Guests are likely to visit the pub for dining and most food and other supplies will be provided. Local services and facilities are available within easy reach in the surrounding villages and in Stroud which is only 6km away.

- 8.10 Paragraphs 84 and 85 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are supportive of a prosperous rural economy while recognising that not all new facilities will be located within existing settlements.
- 8.11 The two proposed huts are not a new tourist facility. Rather, they represent the sustainable growth and expansion of an existing (or, strictly, a revived) business in a rural area. As such, we consider that the proposal complies with all the relevant policies including Paragraphs 84 & 85 of the NPPF, CP15 and EI10 and is considered acceptable in principle.
- 8.12 It should also be noted that the AONB Management Plan is supportive of the provision of a range of tourist accommodation. Accommodation such as this is considered to be highly sustainable given its light touch nature and limited

scale. Facilities are basic using less energy and water and accommodation such as this allows guests to stay in and appreciate the landscape.

- 8.13 We would expect a conditions to be attached to any permission securing occupancy of the huts for genuine holiday accommodation only and requiring the removal of the huts should they no longer be required for tourist accommodation.

9. Business and marketing justification

- 9.1 The shepherd's huts would be offered as guest bedrooms on a 'bed and breakfast' basis, adding to the existing room already available. The huts would be equipped with a toaster and a kettle. A hamper of home-made bread, jams etc would be provided along with tea, coffee, milk etc. Guests would therefore have some means of making breakfast, but the hope would be that they would come into the Inn to eat and drink.
- 9.2 The current intention is for the accommodation to be made available year-round at competitive rates, now estimated to be in the range of £120-£180 per night. Marketing would be thorough the Foston's Ash Inn web site and other national booking agencies. Lettings would be managed internally.
- 9.3 Staff that work in the Inn would be used to help with the demand; a cleaner would also be employed. Current intentions are that the business would employ 5 full time staff and between 10-15 part time staff.
- 9.4 Other local businesses would be supported, mirroring the values of the enterprise which are using locally and seasonal sourced food and drink. Mr Lloyd-Baker will work with local farmers who are rearing livestock, dairy, honey, wine and beer. Vegetables will be sourced from a local community garden scheme just outside Stroud. Everything the business does has the same mantra and direction.
- 9.5 The Cotswold Way runs just to the north of the Inn, so guests may be attracted to the area for the opportunities for walking and enjoying the AONB.
- 9.6 The Council will also be aware of other attractions close by such as Gifford's Circus, Miserden gardens, Gloucester Cathedral, Stroud Farmer's Market, the Roman town of Cirencester and the many attractions in Cheltenham and Stroud such as the literary festival and Jazz festivals.

- 9.7 It is therefore unsurprising that several similar enterprises have been established in the locality, presumably with the agreement of the Council. These include Cherry Tree Glamping and Cafe, Bisley Camping, Daneway Inn Campsite, Middle Lypiatt glamping and B&B and Blackhorse Glamping.
- 9.8 The demand for glamping accommodation such as this continues to be strong both nationally and in the Cotswolds. Glamping has emerged in the last few years as one of the dominant trends in new travel accommodation and there is a great demand for shepherd huts, log cabins, yurts, camping pods and other such self-catering accommodation. Glamping is popular with holidaymakers because it is affordable and often located in countryside locations offering the chance to enjoy nature and local scenery. Shepherd huts are a particularly practical choice as they are weatherproof and can be let all year round. The proposal would increase the volume of overnight visitors to the area and would benefit the local economy in line with Chapter 6 of the NPPF, albeit in a small way.
- 9.9 The site's location would offer visitors the sense of tranquillity and isolation they are looking for whilst still being in easy reach of the many attractions and facilities offered nearby.

10. Design

- 10.1 The proposal consists of 2 traditional shepherd huts designed and constructed by Cowley Shepherd Huts, a local company. The huts are hand built and similar in appearance to this:



11. Visual & landscape impact

- 11.1 The scale, design and colour of the proposed huts have been chosen in order to minimise the visual impact of the scheme. Furthermore, the site is partially enclosed by existing mature trees. There are public rights of way at some distance to the east; they also run in a valley bottom and on the valley sides. Views into the Inn garden will therefore be very limited.
- 11.2 There is a short connecting public right of way from which views of the Inn and its garden could be gained. While additional structures would be in the view, so would the considerable development and activities already permitted at the pub. Some new planting is proposed, but the visibility of a thriving rural attraction might be considered, at worst, a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the area.

12. Heritage Impact

- 12.1 A full Heritage Impact Statement was submitted with the recent application for works to the pub reference S.23/0622/LBC & S.23/0621/FUL. This contains detailed information relating to the significance of the listed building and setting.
- 12.2 The List Entry Number is 1302998 and the listing reads:
- Coaching inn. c1800. Coursed rubble limestone; ashlar chimneys; stone slate roof, concrete tile to rear. Two-storey with attic; rear outshut and single-storey parallel range. Stables to north now incorporated into inn. Front: 3-window fenestration to main part, outer 3-light, central upper floor 2-light, all with chamfered thin mullions and iron casements. Central flat-roofed single-storey porch with cornice; segmental arched opening and small circular side windows. Painted lettering in C19 style above upper floor casements 'FOSTON'S ASH INN'. Gable end chimneys with moulded caps. Lower 2-storey part to left links with former stables, timber casement fenestration with stone lintels being adapted from original stable openings. Parapet gabled north end. Interior not inspected.
- 12.3 The proposed shepherd huts are temporary in nature and to be sited in the part of the garden furthest from the main building. The choice of huts is usually considered to be compatible with heritage assets such as this as they are

traditional in form and historically might have been found in locations such as this.

13. Access and parking

- 13.1 Access is via the existing access to the car park and visibility is good in both directions as shown on the plans submitted. The provision of the proposed accommodation is unlikely to significantly increase vehicle movements or adversely impact highway safety in the area.
- 13.2 Parking can be provided for 2 cars within the existing pub car park and an electric charging point is available if required.

14. Biodiversity

- 14.1 The site is part of the garden. This consists of an area of lawn which is regularly mowed. It is not considered that there would be any impact on biodiversity associated with the proposal.
- 14.2 The applicant would be very happy to provide some enhancement in the form of new native species planting and bat and bird boxes.

15. Conclusion

- 15.1 This proposal is an important part of the Business Plan for the newly reincarnated Foston's Ash Inn. The applicant's vision of the pub is for a thriving local hub and eatery which also attracts visitors and passer's by – in much the same way as the historic coaching inn has always done.
- 15.2 The proposal complies with all the relevant national and local planning policies including Paragraph 84 and 85 of the NPPF, CP15, EI10 as well as those relating to landscape and heritage.
- 15.3 We respectfully request that planning permission be granted without delay. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to ask.