

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF

HOLIDAY LETS AT

‘CARADOC COTTAGE’

All Stretton,

Church Stretton,

Shropshire,

SY6 7JN

Katherine Cooper and Philip Richmond

Design & Access Statement

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1.0 Executive Summary

Proposed is a small-scale development of three individual holiday let accommodations in an existing dwelling and ancillary outbuildings. It is proposed guests park near to Caradoc Cottage and access the site via a track and via public footpath. Also, within the site is an associated footpath, existing trees, existing out-buildings, and landscaping.

The three accommodation types on site consist of a cottage, and two log cabins, all are existing. All feature private decked areas for guests to use during their stay. Each of the holiday lets are rented out by private individuals, with a minimum stay of 2 nights, with a maximum of three couples renting out the units at any one time.

The plot is situated approx. a 5-minute drive from the A49 with access via unnamed local roads. The site provides subtle and discreet countryside accommodation for tourists visiting this area on short breaks.

The site was granted consent in August 2020, application ref no. 20/01248/FUL, for an ancillary building. This application should be referred to in the Planning review for the intended change of use to individual lets.

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2.0 Site and Surrounding Area

2.1 Location

The site is situated in the area of All Stretton, Church Stretton, Shropshire under the oversight of Shropshire Council. The area is a popular for short weekend breaks. The proposals create an economic benefit to the surrounding area and local businesses. With easy road access via the A49.



Figure 1 – Aerial View showing Location.



Figure 2 – Aerial View to Site.

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Figure 3 – Location: 1:50,000

2.2 Proposed Site Information

The plot for the site occupies approx. 3,404 m² of the applicant's land.

Please refer to drawing 220516-01-01: Location, for further details.

Guests reach the various holiday lets via rights of way, (off-road track and footpath), from the parking area. Guests park at the bottom of Caer Caradoc, at Botvyle Farm. No guest vehicles will be on site. The parking area is off-road parking at Botvyle Farm, off the public highway, with parking of up to 3 cars. The aerial view and photograph below show where the parking area is.

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Figure 4 – Location of parking

The existing boundaries of the site will be maintained as is and no changes will take place. Refer to drawing 220516-01-02: Layout Plan.

The nearest neighbouring residence is approximately 200m from the site, located north. Due to the large landscape and very few neighbouring properties, it is therefore not expected that any minimal noise from the site will impact any neighbours. In our experience, guests renting in the countryside tend to be respectful to others and do not create noise in any case. Each of the holiday lets are well spaced from each other and it is not expected that they will disturb each other. The holiday lets are adults only, with no large groups.

2.3 Justification for Proposed Use

The site is located in All Stretton, Church Stretton, Shropshire. The site offers contemporary accommodation to visitors seeking quiet and natural short breaks.

The site is on a tranquil green area surrounded by vast green areas and existing forested areas. The holiday lets will not require any further work to be done. We, therefore, believe the site will be an ecologically viable accommodation solution, suited to the area.

The concept of luxury stays is now gaining popularity throughout the UK, with standards and guests' expectations on the rise. It is intended that this site will be seen as amongst the best available in the area, with three completely unique holiday lets.

At the moment, there is little presence in the area offering this kind of luxury holiday let accommodation giving guests exclusive facilities. The site aims to provide a more luxurious experience for the visitor. Therefore, we feel the site would be providing a luxury alternative for visitors to the area.

Such niche tourism businesses as this, encourage visitors from far and wide to Shropshire, who otherwise would be unaware of the County and the attractions it offers. The proposed small-scale development is viewed as consistent with local planning policies to promote tourism: this is discussed further in section 5.

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3.0 Use

The individual holiday lets would be rented out with a minimum stay of two nights. Patrons are stipulated as adult couples with no children, due to the size of the units. Party groups will not be permitted by the operator.

The intention is to operate the site as a typical holiday let, following the recognised holiday seasons: greater use in Spring and Summer, less use in Autumn and very limited use in Winter. Specifically in Winter the cabin and lodge are likely to be closed off to avoid frost damage to water pipes. The cottage is better suited to the Winter months with central heating and being of brick construction.

The site is marketed as a peaceful and relaxing retreat for couples only, which again should mean noise from guests is not a consideration. Letting the units to individual couples, rather than to groups, means in practice guests treat the site as a quiet retreat, respecting other guests privacy and minimising noise.

The site is sufficiently located far enough away from neighbouring settlements that noise and light pollution is not a consideration.

There is no intention to use the units for long term lease / permanent residences.

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4.0 Layout, Design, Scale and Character

From the A49 and local unnamed road, guests park in a parking area at Botvyle Farm, off the public highway. The three holiday lets are sited facing towards the north of the site and given a generous distance to the boundaries. Decking is situated around the units to provide a seating area for guests.

The design implemented for the site has purposely underdeveloped the site, utilising less than 5% of the site area for the units, in order to provide both privacy for guests and to minimise the impact on neighbouring sites and properties. The cottage is the original dwelling, and the cabin & lodge are both small scale buildings as shown below, and in the photographs accompanying this application.



Figure 5 – Image of cabin exterior.



Figure 6 – Image of lodge exterior.



Figure 7 – Image of cottage exterior.

5.0 Policy: Considerations and adherence to

In designing the proposed glamping site, the **Draft Shropshire Local Plan (2016-2038)** is referenced, and the following policies are considered. It is believed that the proposal is compliant with each of the following policies. Further discussion is considered below, justifying how the proposal is compliant. This should be reviewed in conjunction with the reviews of past guests (Appendix 1), outlining how these considerations are met in practice.

- SP5: High- Quality Design

This development is consistent with the neighbouring settlements and is in keeping in scale with the surrounding area. This was tested as part of granted consent in August 2020, application ref no. 20/01248/FUL, for an ancillary building. Shrubbery was planted as screening of decking area, materials used are consistent with the local settlements. The appearance of the existing cottage and cabin has been maintained. The development specifically complies with SP5 3a, by taking opportunity to maximise energy efficiency: the site is off-grid with the use of primarily solar power and storage batteries to provide power and water is sourced efficiently from a borehole.

- SP6: Health and Wellbeing

This development sets out to provide guests with a good connection to the natural environment with its unique builds and large amount of open space. Each holiday let features a decked area that allow the guests to enjoy their private, unique holiday let location and quiet surroundings. The site also allows guests to easily access local walks and footpaths, one public footpath runs through the site, this will not be hindered in any way by the site and holiday lets. Due to the outstanding location of the site, the guests will be encouraged to use the local walks found upon Caer Caradoc and surrounding area.

- SP10: Managing Development in the Countryside

The Draft Shropshire Local Plan, SP10, states that sustainable tourism proposals will be positively considered where they maintain or enhance countryside vitality and character, and provide sustainable tourism which specifically requires a rural location. The development satisfies this

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requirement with guests specifically visiting the site owing being to the Shropshire Hills area, both for its beauty and ability to walk amongst the Hills.

- SP17: Waste Management Infrastructure

The development will provide the holiday lets with an effective waste management strategy by providing refuse and recycling points on site. They will be encouraged to use local amenities and local goods to cut down on their plastic use and food waste whilst using the holiday lets. The operator will ensure a trade waste contract is entered into to satisfy the council's waste and recycling requirements.

- DP10: Tourism, Culture and Leisure

The proposal aligns with this policy as the development of the site has been carefully considered to be compatible with the physical characteristics of the area, using a section of land where the holiday lets will look upon the large open environment surrounding the site. The site aims to encourage those visiting Shropshire to visit a more rural location, and to respectfully enjoy what green space the site has to offer.

The site is accessible via bike or foot, offering varying methods of gaining access to the site with the use of the large footpath / bridleway links nearby.

The development helps to support local tourism by including the use of the nearby public rights of way found on-site, these will be used to encourage visitors to discover the local area. The development will provide access to the local surrounding natural and historic tourism spots, such as the Shropshire Hills AONB with Caer Caradoc directly south of the site. Local villages and towns are close to the site: All Stretton approx. 1.4 miles; Church Stretton approx. 2 miles; Leebotwood 2 miles; with their associated business and leisure facilities. Guests will use a range of businesses whilst staying at the site: encompassing pubs, restaurants, food takeaway establishments, supermarkets, general retail shops etc. Furthermore, the larger Shropshire towns such as Shrewsbury and Ludlow are within reasonable distance of the site, widening the positive impact on tourism.

The site attracts many visitors who would otherwise be unaware of the Shropshire Hills. Many state their intention to return to the area again, further promoting tourism in the area.

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- DP28: Communications and Transport

The associated traffic with the site for 3no. holiday lets will be negligible and will not be detrimental to highway safety. A maximum of three cars can reach the nearby parking area at one time – one for each group per unit. The road close to the site is a single-track road with multiple passing places, the road is mainly used to service residents in the area and is therefore low in traffic. It is perfectly capable of servicing the additional three cars associated with the proposed site. Some guests also travel to the site by utilizing the nearby train links, in conjunction with use of local taxis.

Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy

- Policies: CS16 - Tourism, Culture and Leisure

As described in DP10 above the proposal aligns with this policy, being that it is carefully considered, high quality and in keeping with surroundings. The site gives the opportunity to engage with Shropshire's landscape, culture and assets. The site is well screened and is appropriate to the location. The site has already proved it is a much needed and viable tourism enterprise and has proved the accommodation is required.

- Policies: Creating Sustainable Places Policy CS5 – Countryside and Green Belt

As described in the Council's Core Strategy Policy CS5, development proposals, on appropriate sites, which maintain and enhance countryside vitality and character will be permitted, where they improve the sustainability of rural communities by bringing local economic and community benefits, particularly where they relate to small scale development diversifying the rural economy.

The development clearly demonstrates this, being the sole means of income for Katherine. Ensuring that Katherine and her son can live in the area, bringing benefits to the local economy. Furthermore, many businesses benefit from the existence of the development: for example, from obtaining supplies of wood, gas; trades people such as plumbers and garden maintenance.

Policy CS5 further states that new development will be strictly controlled in accordance with national planning policies protecting the open countryside and that such development will be expected to take place primarily in recognisable named settlements, unless it is linked to other existing development and business activity where this is appropriate. This development is within the vicinity of a named

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settlement: All Stretton, and is effectively within the named hamlet of Botvyle, a range of neighbouring settlements at the foot of the Caer Caradoc hill.

Furthermore, Caradoc Cottage stands close to neighbouring properties which also provide tourism: a camping and caravan site at Botvyle Farm and several properties nearby which are also holiday lets. The cottages at Botvyle Farm were until last year, also offered as holiday lets. This demonstrates that Caradoc Cottage is consistent with other tourism enterprises in the immediate area.

As described in Appendix 2, Caradoc Cottage holiday lets bring specific attractions as holiday lets, clearly reflected in the positive feedback of guests.

Guests welcome the opportunity to stay in a quiet, off-grid location, viewing their stays as a relaxing retreat from day-to-day lives. Accordingly, there is limited dependency on car travel during their stay.

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6.0 Public Rights of Way

There is a public right of way found within the site, however this will not be hindered in any way by the site and holiday lets.

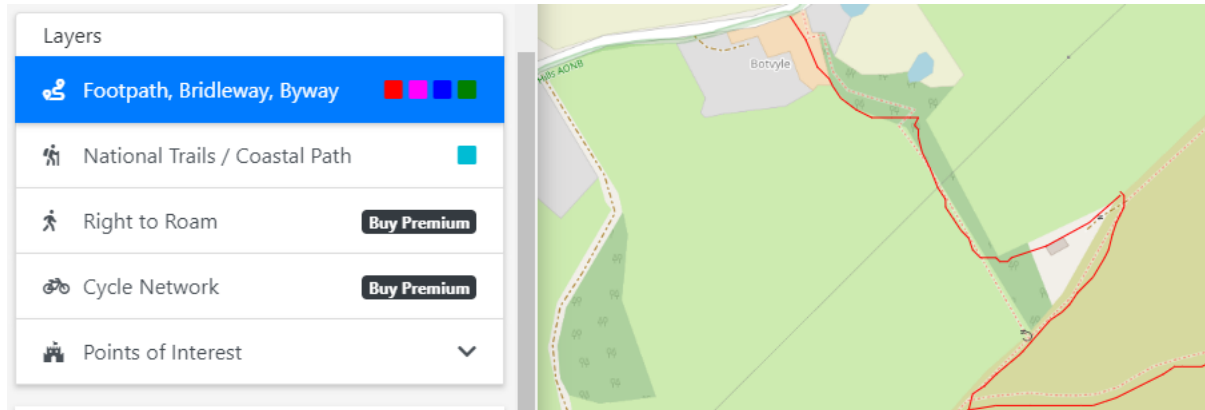


Figure 8 – Rights of way - footpathmap.co.uk

As noted in the pre-planning application advice and as discussed with the Council's Rights of Way officer after the granting of permission under application ref no. 20/01248/FUL :

“Footpath 5 runs through the site which the applicant is aware of and has been acknowledged within the Design and Access statement. This footpath has been built on previously and Officers have been in contact with the applicant quite recently regarding this. Access has not been impeded through the property and there is an alternative route available through the site which the applicants are happy to allow access along”.

This was further clarified during a site visit on 8th August 2023, by Stephen Rodenhurst, Rights of Way Officer covering Church Stretton Parish. Further advice was sought and given during this visit, over signage of the footpath and access to and from the site. We re-iterated that we are happy to allow access along the alternative route.

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7.0 Flood Risk

It has been identified that the site lies in a very low-risk zone with regard to river, sea and surface water flooding. Refer to the Figure below, which indicates this, given that the site is away from sources of water and is located on the side of Caer Caradoc hill. Therefore, no FRA would be required to support this application.

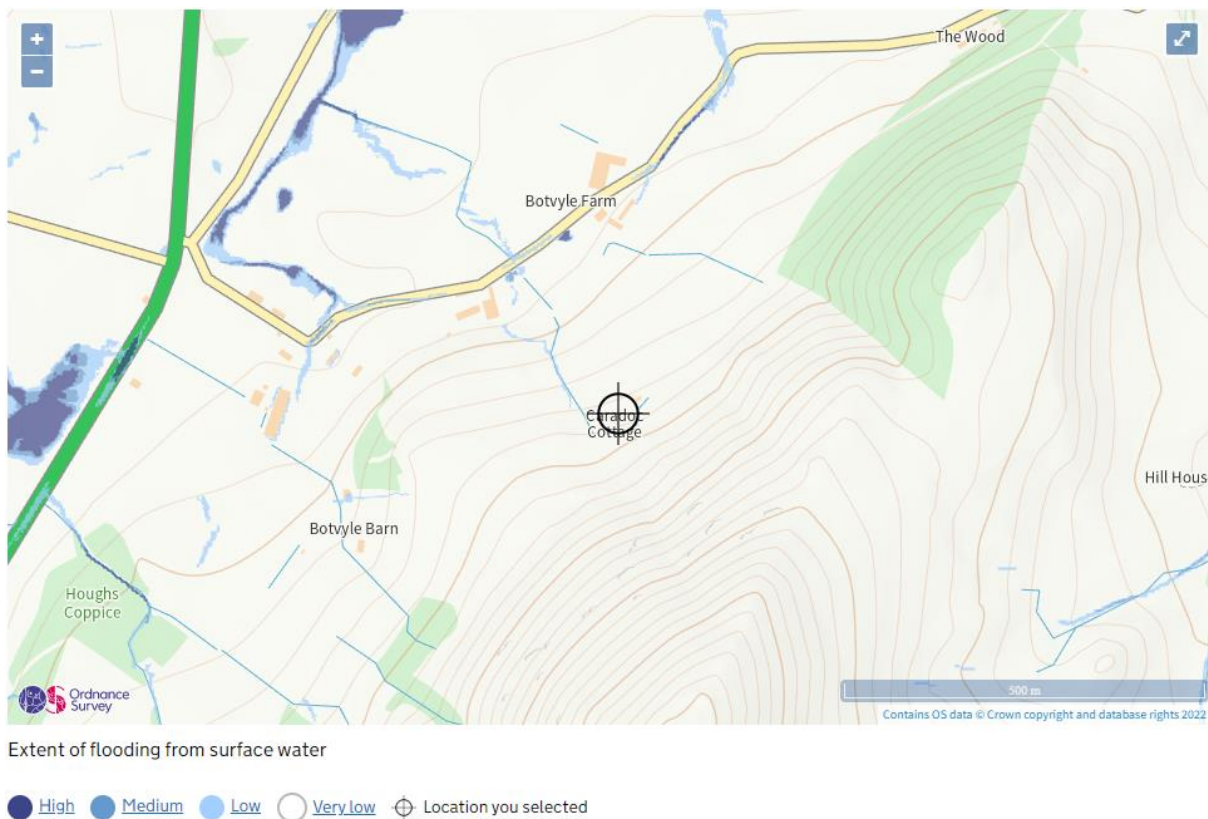


Figure 9 – Surface Water Flood risk. Source: GOV.uk

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8.0 Ecology and Sustainability

An ecology report (PEA) prepared by Arbor Vitae Ecology which was commissioned and was issued as part of the previous application (application ref no. 20/01248/FUL). This report is included with this application for reference. It should be noted no ecological issues or concerns were raised.

As detailed in the pre-planning advice, updated ecology survey work is dependant on the amount of development work sought. To confirm, no new development work has been undertaken. This planning application is simply for change of use. Therefore, we state that no updated ecology survey work is required.

Extract from Conclusion of PEA report below: -

No evidence of breeding birds was found during the survey and the structure does not appear to have any suitable nesting features. The previous structure would not have provided any suitable nesting sites and given that the work was carried out during the winter of 2019 the alterations have had no impact on breeding birds.

The works have had no ecological impact on the site, or its surroundings and mitigation is not required.

Sustainability

The proposal will offer an economic stimulus in the area, as detailed in section 5, adhering to the relevant policies in the **Draft Shropshire Local Plan (2016-2038)**.

The holiday lets are energy efficient with well-insulated floors and walls/roofs with the use of materials with a low life-cycle environmental impact. LED light fittings are installed as standard throughout. Water heating is instantaneous with no stored hot water. The site is off-grid with electricity supplied by solar power and wind power, augmented by a diesel generator and storage batteries. Water is supplied by a borehole and waste using a cess pit.

An efficient operational waste management and recycling strategy is carried out by the operator as required by Shropshire Council, with a trade waste contract entered into.

The development requires the employment of two part-time staff for cleaning and hosting of guests.

9.0 Fire Safety

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 is the main legislation that controls fire safety in all premises in England that provide accommodation for paying guests. We have reviewed the fire safety principles in the government guidance, specifically that refer to single premises of ground floor, or ground and first floor, providing sleeping accommodation for a maximum of 10 persons.

Furthermore, the Home Office guidance document “A guide to making your small paying-guest-accommodation safe from fire” states that the guidance can also be applied to smaller types of accommodation which fall under the same duties, including lodges.

Given that the holiday lets on the site comprise as follows, they clearly fit under this definition:

- a cottage with ground floor kitchen & living room and first floor bedroom;
- a lodge with only ground floor accommodation;
- and a cabin with only ground floor accommodation.

The principles set out in the guidance to the legislation have been adhered to as follows:

Fire risk assessment

A suitable fire risk assessment has been carried out for each of the three holiday lets, recording the potential hazards and assessing what fire safety measures are appropriate.

Potential fire hazards

- Flammable materials, such as wood, and sources of ignition are kept separate.
- Log burning fires and hot tubs are inspected and maintained on a regular basis, with for example chimney sweeping. Fire surrounds (for example: stone tiles on floors, metal sheeting on walls) are installed around each of the log burning fires and hot tubs, to mitigate the risk from embers and heat.
- The risks from naked flames and hot surfaces in kitchens has been assessed and minimised.

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- Guests are informed that smoking is not permitted inside the units, with signage displayed. There are suitable arrangements outside for those who wish to smoke, with means to properly dispose of smoking materials.
- Fuel such as LPG Gas and heating oil is sited safely outside the units. Heating oil and diesel for the power generator is stored safely in dedicated storage tanks, again a safe distance from accommodation units.
- Waste and bins are stored safely, clear of the units in purpose-built bin stores.
- Upholstered furniture is fire resistant, meeting fire safety standards.

Fire safety measures

- Smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are installed in each accommodation unit. They are battery powered, so will not switch off in the event of a power cut. They are checked on each change of occupancy.
- Fire blankets and single multi-purpose extinguishers are provided in each accommodation unit, with guests briefed on their location and how to use them.

Emergency fire escape procedures

- Fire action notices displayed in the properties, detailing what to do and where to go in the event of a fire, including raising the alarm to other guests. Also includes instructions on how to contact the emergency services and the correct address, including postcode & What3words location reference, and owner contact details.
- Battery operated torches to provide lighting in an emergency.
- Information provided to Church Stretton Fire Station about access to the cottage site in the event of a fire or other emergency. This includes information about the gated access track to the site. It is noted that Church Stretton Fire Station is nearby and has a small fire tender specifically for access to the surrounding Shropshire Hills.

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10.0 Summary

The proposed holiday let site provides a new and exciting accommodation option for Church Stretton, Shropshire area. Demand for this type of accommodation is high throughout the country, which has also been shown to be true of other glamping sites within the UK.

We anticipate the business will create at least one full-time job. We will build on existing relationships with other local businesses in the area to offer their goods and services to the guests, including shops, pubs and restaurants to name but a few. This includes promoting these services within the individual holiday lets.

Specifically, this site brings tourism in from guests who live mainly in towns and cities. Guests consistently remark on how the site helps them relax and find their inner calmness. All while visiting the surrounding area, local shops and eateries, spending money in the local communities and exploring Caradoc Hill and the surrounding Shropshire Hills. The holiday let site is about sharing a place and its views with a range of people, who otherwise would be unable to experience such a unique home and setting.

Based on the points discussed in this Design and Access statement, it is reasonable to suggest that this accommodation is warranted in this location, to cater for increasing visitor demand, without sacrificing the area's beauty or ecology. Visitors to the site specifically seek a location which is a Retreat, and which offers peace and quiet, with no disturbance to neighbouring properties.


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Appendix 1 Guest reviews and feedback

The snapshots below of guest reviews and feedback gives proof of the justification of the site. Namely that the site offers a unique glamping experience appreciated by guests. The reviews signify that guests view the site as a retreat experience, seeking relaxation amongst the Shropshire Hills.

Hillside Retreat 11 Sept 2022 · 🌐

You know when your boss at work gives you a pat on the back, well i got mine today! Reading this from Haz, ... See more



Private note
Hi Katherine
We want to let you know that you cabin is truly a piece of magic-you are so clever!
Myself, my husband and our dog Bess had an incredibly relaxing stay (apologies for not booking u all in correctly!!) The lodge is just perfection, and the views were insane! We totally loved lighting a the fires and getting into the cozi hot tub. It felt really private even though other guests were staying we hardly noticed anyone else at all.
Your sister and Ray were so accommodating and helpful. We haven't got a single complaint... only that we wish we could stay there forever! Thanks so much and well done on creating such a beautiful and unique place to stay! 🍷🍷 we will be back! Haz, Ed and Bessie xx

See Insights and Ads [Boost post](#)

👍❤️ 31 3 comments



Hillside Retreat 30 Jul · 🌐

And she said Yes! 💍 A beautiful couple who made a beautiful memory up here. I just wanted to share this.

Public review



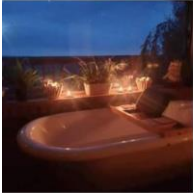


An amazing location and cottage enjoyed with a lovely hot tub and decking area. The photos don't do it justice! You guys were amazing and were able to decorate the space beautifully for me to propose to my girlfriend and what a special moment it was. You really went above and beyond and I couldn't thank them enough. Highly recommend this family run cottage. 🍷🍷🍷

[Reply to Costantino](#)



Hillside Retreat 22 Jul 2022 · 🌐

Masiulyte and her partner sent us some pictures after their stay at Caradoc Lodge. Looks rather romantic! 🍷🍷



Caradoc Cottage

All Stretton

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Overall Rating



Public review

Reply

Probably one of the most Romantic places I have ever been too! So cosy and perfect for a get away for two. Loved restaurants and the little shops down the road. Can't wait to book again and get back in that hot tub at night with the stars! Little slice of heaven. Worth every penny! Thank you again! 😊😊

Private note

Owen and I had such a lovely time, we can't wait to go back. Fallen in love with the place especially the hot tub at night with the stars. Such a beautiful place and so romantic, Owen asked me to marry him so always going to have such fond memories of our stay.



Overall rating

5 ★

Public review

We absolutely loved our stay here at Hillside Retreat! The hosts were so welcoming and even collected us on arrival so help take all our luggage to the cabin! This is the perfect retreat if you are looking for a glamping experience! The place was so well decorated and was super cosy! We loved the outdoor baths too 😊 highly recommended and we will definitely be back!

Private note from Stephen And Chris

Thank you so much Katherine. We loved our stay! This glamping experience is just what we were looking for x

Detailed feedback



Rich

September 2023

This accommodation was just what we needed for a child free weekend. It is ideally located within very close walking distance to some of Shropshire's finest hills and offers peace and quiet for a very relaxing break. Although our car was left at a nearby farm, this added to the off grid glamping experience and encouraged us to stay in and relax, which was what we wanted from our time away. This accommodation is very much glamping, but had the feel of something far more luxurious. It was spotless throughout, and the wood fired hot tub and pizza oven a very nice addition. Whilst there is other accommodation nearby, we never felt like we were overlooked and it did not detract from the peacefulness of the location. The hosts were quick to respond and we are very likely to book to return again soon.

Caradoc Cottage

All Stretton

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Overall rating

5 ★

Public review

My husband and I (and our dog!) have had the most wonderful and relaxing stay at Hillside Retreat. Couldn't have wished for a more idyllic location. Incredible views across beautiful South Shropshire, and you only have to open the garden gate and you are able to access some of Shropshire's best hill walks, which we made good use of. Communication with Katherine was fab, and Caroline and Ray did a wonderful job of helping us with our bags and getting us settled in. The fire heated hot tub was so cozy and relaxing as was the bath, which has possibly the best view a bath can have in the world! The cabin is set right up in the hill, which means the views are exceptional you feel really able to get away from the daily grind



Charlotte
August 2023

We got engaged!!!!!! Second time we have stayed at this location. We upgraded to the larger cabin so the house next! Make sure to bring plenty of wine and food as it's a retreat away from the world! Great hosts, comfy bed. Very much a glamping experience so hot water in the outdoor shower and lots of fire and log management to get the hot tub going. We love that sort of stuff so we happily worked for 4 hours to get the hot tub hit and log burner ticking along. We loved the DVDs and board games. The views are incredible! Even with the bad weather we were happy to be hidden away up there! Phil was awesome!!!!!!!!!! Thanks for having us x

Caradoc Cottage

All Stretton

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Appendix 2 Local Businesses

The list below are examples of specific businesses which gain further trade and footfall from the existence of the holiday lets, both from operation of the site (e.g., supply of wood, trades such as plumbers) and from guests. This is not an exhaustive list; it is an indication of the range of businesses nearby:

Operation of the site: supplies, such as wood and fuel; maintenance of the site: plumbing, heating engineers, garden and grounds maintenance.

Pubs: The Pound Inn, Leebotwood; Yew Tree Inn, All Stretton; Dorrington's Horseshoes; The Green Dragon, Little Stretton; Ragleth Inn, Little Stretton; The Kings Arms, Church Stretton.

Restaurants and Cafes: Jaipur, Church Stretton; Berry's, Church Stretton; Mr Bun the Baker, Church Stretton; Libby's Café, Marshbrook; Saxtons Deli, Church Stretton.

Supermarkets and local shops: Family Shopper, Church Stretton; Your Co Op Food, Church Stretton; Mynd DIY, Church Stretton; Vine & Co, Church Stretton.

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