



Planning Statement

Submission to Dover District Council

**Proposal: "Conversion of existing residential outbuilding to
Holiday Let"**

(Garage/Annexe to the rear of)

2 Cornerways

Watercress Lane

Wingham Well

Canterbury

Kent

March 2024

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Planning Statement has been prepared by Kent Planning Consultancy on behalf of Mr Guy Burrows in support of a submission in respect of the site known as:

‘(Garage/Annexe building to rear of,) 2 Cornways, Watercress Lane, Wingham Well, Canterbury, Kent’

(hereafter referred to as the “Site”), as shown on the Site Location Plan.

The description of development is as follows:

‘Conversion of existing residential outbuilding to a holiday let’

Full planning permission is sought for the proposal.

This submission follows informal pre-application advice from Dover District Council with respect to a proposal description of the same as above, in Autumn 2023.

The key issues in determining the application are, as appears agreed within the Officer’s pre-application response, considered to be:

- The principle of development, namely, the use (Tourism) within the ‘countryside’ context;
- Impact on the character of the area;
- Neighbouring amenity
- Highways

This Statement considers these matters in line with local policy and emerging Local Policy and argues that the proposed development is acceptable, largely as a result of being a conversion of an existing building, and of limited additional land use intensity, policy support within SP6 of the emerging Local Plan, and is otherwise in line with local policy.

Given the above, it is politely requested that permission be issued in line with the Councils usual procedures, inclusive of appropriate Conditions.

2.0 SITE CONTEXT, LOCATION, and PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

Site Context

The application site is located to the rear of 2 Cornerways, Watercress Lane.

The site contains the existing property, and ‘Shepherds Huts’ used for holiday accommodation in line with the previous approvals on the site.

Access is taken from Watercress Lane, with parking provided on-site behind the existing dwelling, on an existing hardstanding/ grass area suitable for the parking of vehicles.

The building subject to the proposed conversion is directly to the rear of 2 Cornerways, and is currently used as a residential outbuilding, in the form of an annex.

Planning Constraints

The site is not within a protected landscape, AONB or Green Belt. The site is not within a Conservation Area, and no neighbouring Heritage Assets are considered relevant to the determination of the application.

The applicant building is not within a Flood Zone 2 or 3 area. No trees are impacted by the proposals, and no tree works are proposed.

No Public Rights of Way are considered impacted by the proposals.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

A review of the Dover District Council website identifies the following relevant history:

- Certificate of Lawfulness (existing) for continued occupation of dwelling without compliance with agricultural occupancy condition (condition 5) of planning permission DOV/76/00457
Ref. No: 22/00179 | Status: Certificate Existing Granted
- Change of use of agricultural land for the siting of 2no. glamping pitches for holiday lets, 1no. converted horse box for use as WC/washing facilities, cycle/bin storage and associated parking
Ref. No: 22/00537 | Status: Granted Permission
- Certificate of Lawfulness (existing) for use as residential dwelling without compliance with agricultural occupancy condition (condition 5) of DOV/76/457
Ref. No: 10/00994 | Status: Granted Permission
- Amendments to positioning of garage pursuant to DOV/00/520
Ref. No: 00/00520/B | Status: Granted Permission
- Amendments to erection of detached double garage and side conservatory
Ref. No: 00/00520/A | Status: Granted Permission
- Erection of detached double garage and side conservatory.
Ref. No: 00/00520 | Status: Granted Permission

Pre-application engagement was undertaken with the Council prior to the submission of this application, which included a commentary which we summarise as being:

- that policy SP6 and E4 of the emerging Local Plan supports tourism;
- that as the proposal involves no or little external alteration, the impact on the character and appearance of the area is of limited concern;
- no concern over neighbouring amenity, although there may be some benefit in defining an external amenity area to limit spread of activity and risk of impact;
- that access is appropriate, although defining the parking area to be in accordance with policy would be beneficial.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY AND BACKGROUND

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF (2023)

The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and puts “*the presumption in favour of sustainable development*” at the heart of the planning system. The following chapters are relevant to the proposal:

- Chapter 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Chapter 4 – Decision Making
- Chapter 6 - Building a strong, competitive economy
- Chapter 11 - Making effective use of land
- Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Chapter 15 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

National Planning Policy Guidance - NPPG

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) builds on principles within the NPPF and provides further detailed technical guidance.

- Para. 106 – Guidance relating to the application of conditions upon planning permissions.

Local Policy

Local - Dover Core Strategy 2010

The Development Plan for Dover District comprises in part the Dover District Core Strategy 2010. The relevant Policies are:

- CP1 - Settlement Hierarchy
- DM1 - Settlement Boundaries
- DM3 - Commercial Buildings in the Rural Area
- DM13 - Parking provision
- DM15 - Protection of the Countryside

- DM16 - Landscape Character

Other Documents –

Land Allocations Local Plan (2015) within which no site allocations relate to this site.

‘Saved’ Policies from the **2002 Local Plan**, within which no policies have been identified as relevant to this proposal.

Other Documents - Submission Dover District Local Plan (2022)

The Draft Dover District Local Plan is a material planning consideration in the determination of this planning application. The new Plan is currently at Main Modifications Stage, having been through Examination. The- primary relevant policies are:

- SP6 - Economic Growth
- E4 - Tourist Accomodation and Attractions

Kent Design Guide (2005)

The Kent Design Guide seeks to provide a starting point for good design while retaining scope for creative, individual approaches to different buildings and different areas

5.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The description of development is as follows:

‘Conversion of existing residential outbuilding to a holiday let’

The proposal seeks to convert the existing building to the rear of the existing residential premises at No.2 Cornerways, which is currently used as a residential outbuilding/ annexe, to a holiday let.

In order to facilitate the change of use, no substantial internal or external works are required. No additional hardstanding or parking area is required, as a large enough area currently exists, in association with the dwelling and existing permitted ‘glamping’ operation.

6.0 PLANNING ANALYSIS

This section of the report sets out an assessment of the proposed development against the relevant planning policy, material considerations and guidance. A topic-based approach is

taken in respect of the prevailing planning considerations, with due regard to the planning policies at National and Local level.

Principle of Development

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The application site lies outside Wingham settlement confines and therefore in open countryside in policy terms.

Policy DM1 permits development outside of settlement boundaries where it functionally requires such a location. Development will not be permitted on land outside the urban boundaries and rural settlement confines shown on the proposals map unless specifically justified by other development plan policies, or it functionally requires such a location, or it is ancillary to existing development or uses.

The nature of the application being for a tourism glamping use is such that it would reasonably be expected to be found in the countryside. Further, the proposed development does not include the introduction of any additional built form.

Policy E4 of the emerging Local Plan supports proposals for additional self-catering accommodation within the District subject to a number of criteria, including impact of local character and landscape, a proportionate and appropriate level of activity and provision, and ensuring an appropriate level of highways impact (or lack thereof).

This is further support by SP6 of the emerging Local Plan, which reads that the Plan seeks to:

‘Support[] tourism development that would extend or upgrade the range of tourist facilities particularly those that attract the staying visitor, increase the attraction of tourists to the area and extend the season in accordance with Policy E4’

Policy DM3 of the DDC Local Plan restricts new commercial development in rural areas unless it complies with specific policy criteria. Whilst the proposal does not lie within a village settlement, the proposed development contains no new building works and will not restrict the existing agricultural use of the remaining elements of the site, or impact upon the residential use of the property. It is therefore considered that there is flexibility in applying this policy.

The NPPF provides support for a prosperous rural economy. In paragraph 84 (c) it states that 'Planning policies and decisions should enable: sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside.

Consequently, the principle of the development is considered to be positively supported by the NPPF/

Given the above, the proposal is considered in line with the expectations, aims and objectives of DM1 and DM3, and is highly supported by emerging policy E4 and SP6 of the emerging Local Plan, to which weight should now be applied given the Plans advanced stage.

Impact on the Character of the Area

Policy DM15 seeks to protect the countryside. Development will only be permitted if it is in accordance with allocations made in the development plan, is justified by the needs of agriculture, or justified by a need to sustain the rural economy or a rural community. In addition it must be shown that development cannot be accommodated elsewhere and does not result in the loss of ecological habitats. The proposal will contribute to the local rural economy – albeit on a small scale.

Policy DM16 states that development that would harm the character of the landscape will only be permitted if it is in accordance with allocations made in the development plan, incorporating any necessary mitigation; or it can be sited to avoid or reduce the harm and/or incorporate design measures to mitigate impacts to an acceptable level.

One of the core planning principles contained within the NPPF is that planning should 'take account of the different roles and character of different areas' and recognise 'the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside'. It is not considered that this proposal will give rise to conflict with this core planning principle, nor will it fail to respect the character of this hamlet or cause harm to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, indeed, as the proposal required only the conversion of the existing building with very limited alteration, the proposal would introduce no additional impact into the landscape.

Chapter 6 of the NPPF is particularly relevant as this supports a prosperous rural economy. It is considered that the provision of a new holiday let alongside the established glamping units will contribute to rural tourism. Accordingly, the development is considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact and its effect on the countryside. It falls within Core Strategy policies and the guidance contained in the NPPF.

Neighbouring Amenity

The closest dwelling to the proposal is No.1 Cornerway. Holiday Let users would use the existing track which serves No.2 Cornerways and existing 'Glamping' units, which is separate from the access to No.1.

Due to the limited additional vehicle movements to those that already occur in conjunction with the use of the land, it is not considered that there would be any undue harm to residential amenity, albeit there may be a minor amount of activity at night time if visitors are returning from eating out that would not normally occur from this site.

It is accepted that the proposed development would introduce a level of activity closer to No.1 than the existing glamping units, but the activity would be limited, and in line with the level of intensity that would be expected from a residential unit.

Highways

The main issues for consideration in relation to highways are whether the increase in activity generated from the site would give rise to highway safety concerns; whether the proposed car parking arrangements are adequate and the site access suitable for purpose.

The proposed glamping facilities would be accessed via the existing access that serves no.2 Cornerways which is already used in conjunction with the use of the agricultural land.

Core Strategy policy DM11 directs that development which would generate travel will not be permitted outside of the rural settlement confines unless justified by development plan policies. However, there is an existing site use which generates vehicle movements to and from the site and the limited number of movements on a less frequent or predictable pattern from a further single holiday let is considered negligible; similarly, the cumulative impact of the total proposed use of the site remains limited to an extent that it would not raise highways safety concerns.

In considering the previous application for 'glamping units' the Officer wrote:

'It is noted that concerns have been raised with regard to adequacy of the rural network of roads and their ability to support both existing and potential increased vehicle movements; in particular the use of Watercress Lane itself. This proposal does not comprise any alterations to the current access which is prominent and wide at its connection with Watercress Lane. Whilst the access is on a bend, it is on a quiet country lane that does not serve as a 'rat run' between main roads and the curvature

of the road serves as a means of slowing vehicles down. Visibility in either direction is not negatively impacted by the bend, with reasonable visibility being achievable. It is concluded that this proposal is acceptable and would not cause severe harm to the highway network to warrant a refusal.'

The same is considered true for the additional unit proposed.

The proposal includes two parking spaces for the use of the property, however, there is plentiful additional capacity on the site if required.

7.0 CONCLUSION

This Planning Statement has been prepared by Kent Planning Consultancy on behalf of Mr Guy Burrows in support of a submission in respect of the site known as:

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The description of development is as follows:

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- The principle of development, namely, the use (Tourism) within the 'countryside' context;
- Impact on the character of the area;
- Neighbouring amenity
- Highways

This Statement considers these matters in line with local policy and argues that the proposed development is acceptable, largely as a result of being a conversion of an existing building, and of limited additional land use intensity, and in line with local policy.

The principle of development is considered established by DM1 and DM3, as the use is considered unable to take place elsewhere, and represents no additional development in the countryside. Similarly, impact on local character is extremely limited as no additional built form is required, thus the proposals are in accordance with DM15 and DM16 of the current Plan (with regards to landscape character).

The proposals are strongly supported by emerging policies SP6 and E4 of the Local Plan (supporting tourism and self catering accommodation).

Neighbouring amenity is considered protected, as the proposed use is of limited intensity and similar to the residential use of the land and building already undertaken.

No highways safety issues have been identified as a result of the generation of a small number of vehicle movements, and car parking is provided on site.

Given the above, the proposals are considered entirely in line with existing and emerging Plan policies and as such, it is politely requested that permission be granted.