

<b>Agenda Item</b> A11	<b>Committee Date</b> 4 April 2016	<b>Application Number</b> 16/00201/FUL
<b>Application Site</b> Moss Wood Caravan Park Crimbles Lane Cockerham Lancaster	<b>Proposal</b> Change of use of land for the siting of 25 static caravans	
<b>Name of Applicant</b> Mr Henry Wild	<b>Name of Agent</b>	
<b>Decision Target Date</b> 20 May 2016	<b>Reason For Delay</b> None	
<b>Case Officer</b>	Mr Andrew Holden	
<b>Departure</b>	N/A	
<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	Approval subject to conditions	

## **1.0 The Site and its Surroundings**

- 1.1 The application relates to the expansion of an established holiday caravan park located in a position approximately 1.5km south of the A588 on Crimbles Lane Cockerham. The existing site is well established with mature trees along all the boundaries of the site and little views of the development other than at the points of access off Crimbles Lanes. The application site lies immediately to the north of the existing site and comprises a single large field bounded on the east by Crimbles Lane, north by farm land with an access track running along it to the west by pastoral land outside the applicants control and on the south by the existing site.
- 1.2 The boundaries are well established with mature tree and hedgerows planted over 10 years ago. The boundaries have a couple of weak areas in the belt of planting. The main area is associated with the presence of a field access in the north-east corner of the site and a lack of tree belt planting to the south-west corner. The southern boundary with the existing site is well developed other than for the provision of access point to and provision of visitor car parking area.
- 1.3 The field is predominantly flat rising slightly south to north but with a more pronounced rise of several metres in a north/south alignment along the eastern boundary of the site. Within this rising land further tree planting has been developed to provide effective screening form the adjacent Crimbles Lane.
- 1.4 The open land has been used on an informal basis as an amenity area for the adjoining caravan site (dog walking informal recreation etc.) but has no development upon it other than a small visitor parking area (10 cars) on its southern boundary close to the existing shop/reception area.

## **2.0 The Proposal**

- 2.1 The application is seeking to change the use of an existing field adjoining the caravan site to allow the siting of 25 static pitches with associated access road, hardstanding and amenity area. In addition, supplementary landscaping is to be provided within the body of the caravan park and around the visitor car parking area. Access to the site will be via the main site entrance off Crimbles Lane and form within the existing site via an upgraded and widened car parking access road. The main circulation road is to be surfaced in tarmac, with stoned hardstanding alongside the

caravan pitches for parking and amenity space. The remaining area is to be soft landscaped, predominantly with grass.

### **3.0 Site History**

3.1 The application site has a limited planning history relating to the use of the site as a holiday caravan site (static and tourers). The site has been established for over forty years and has a limited number of extensions.

<b>Application Number</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Decision</b>
<b>03/00138/CU</b>	Extension to the site to provide a total of 168 statics, 27 Tourers and one staff residential unit.	Approved
<b>14/01060/FUL</b>	Change of use of land to allow holiday occupation of caravans between 4 February and 4 January in the following year (11 month season)	Approved

### **4.0 Consultation Responses**

4.1 The following responses have been received from statutory and non-statutory consultees:

<b>Consultee</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>County Highways</b>	No objections, suggests condition for the provision of cycle storage for each unit
<b>Environmental Health</b>	No observations received within statutory timescale.
<b>Environment Agency</b>	No observations received within statutory timescale.
<b>Tree Protection Officer</b>	No observations received within statutory timescale.
<b>Parish Council</b>	No objections

### **5.0 Neighbour Representations**

5.1 None received to date, any consultations will be reported verbally to the committee.

### **6.0 Principal National and Development Plan Policies**

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)  
 Paragraphs 7, 14 and 17 – Sustainable Development and Core Principles  
 Section 3 – Supporting a prosperous rural economy  
 Section 4 – Promoting Sustainable Transport  
 Section 11 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

6.2 Lancaster District Core Strategy Policies  
 SC5 – Achieving Quality in Design  
 ER6 – Developing Tourism

6.3 Development Management DPD  
 DM7 – Economic Development in Rural Areas  
 DM9 – Diversification of the Rural Economy  
 DM14 – Caravan Sites, Chalets and Log Cabins  
 DM20 – Enhancing Accessibility and Transport Linkages  
 DM27 – Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity  
 DM28 – Development and Landscape Impact  
 DM29 – Protection of Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland  
 DM35 – Key Design Principles

6.4 Lancaster District Local Plan Saved Policies  
 E4 – Development within the Countryside

## **7.0 Comment and Analysis**

7.1 The main issues are considered to be:

- Principle of development
- Landscape and Visual Impact
- Drainage/flood risk management
- Access and highway impacts
- Impact on trees
- Impact on residential amenity

### **7.2 Principle of development**

7.2.1 The application proposes an extension to an existing static and touring caravan site to accommodate a further 25 static caravans and provide associated amenity areas, visitor parking and a small office building. The site currently is licensed for 168 statics, 27 Tourers and one staff residential unit and operates over an 11 month season running from 4 February to 4 January the following year. The existing site is well landscaped and managed with a wide range of facilities available to the occupiers. These include, a shop/reception, launderette, large children play area, open grassed/landscaped amenity areas and access to a fishing pond.

7.2.2 Policy DM14 of the Development Management DPD sets out that proposals for new or extension to existing static or touring caravan sites will be supported in principle within the district, and outside areas of designated landscape importance and to an appropriate scale, subject to the following criteria:

- *Priority is given to previously developed sites and, where greenfield sites are identified, it should be demonstrated that no alternative, suitable brownfield sites exist in the locality;*
- *The proposal has no adverse impact on landscape character or significant detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the locality, and includes satisfactory proposals for additional landscaping where required;*
- *The layout retains onsite features and provides compensatory planting and other nature conservation measures;*
- *The proposal maintains and enhances existing areas of recreational open space or creates new areas which are proportionate in scale;*
- *The proposal does not have an adverse impact on biodiversity;*
- *The proposal does not have an adverse impact on surrounding residential amenity; and the proposal is in an accessible location and has no adverse impact on the capacity of the highway network, highway safety.*

7.2.3 The site is a greenfield site immediately alongside the current caravan site and in the ownership of the applicant. The site expansion will utilise the main site access, and all the facilities currently available within the existing site. Whilst not previously developed land, expansion into the adjacent field will limit the need for additional infrastructure to support the tourism development as it is provided within the existing developed site. Subject to the consideration of the more detailed issues, the principle of the development is considered to be acceptable in terms of the Council's policies.

### **7.3 Landscape and Visual Impact**

7.3.1 Planning policy seeks to ensure that development of the site has no adverse impact upon the landscape character or visual amenity of the area. The site is well screened from wider public aspect as much by topography as the mature tree/hedgerow planting, the majority of the land to the north, south and west being flat and open but the site is bounded by a well-established planting belt. Limited views into the site will be afforded in the winter months given the native, deciduous nature of the landscaping. The presence of a gated entrance to the north-east corner of the site does allow for direct views from a slightly elevated position into the proposed site. This weakness has been recognised in the amended application submission. The gateway will be lost and the area planted with specimen trees to reflect the current planting belt.

7.3.2 Subject to conditions to ensure the provision of the supplementary planting both within the site and along the boundaries, the visual impact of the development will be limited and is considered to unduly impact on the area. To further limit the visual effects of the siting of static caravans, the units are to be finished with 'park colours', shades of greens and browns the precise range of which will need to be agreed.

## 7.4 Drainage/Flood Risk Management

- 7.4.1 The application site and the existing caravan site lie within Flood Zones 2 and 3 but in areas protected by coastal protection measures. The issues of flood protection have been raised and considered in detail as part of the 2003 and more recent 2014 planning consents. The current application is also supported by an updated Flood Risk Assessment for the proposed extended caravan site. At the time of drafting this report, no consultation response has been provided by the Environment Agency.
- 7.4.2 In considering the recent applications it was concluded that the area has not been subject to any flooding incidents since 1977. This being caused by the failure of the tidal sea wall at Mill Bridge House (now replaced with tidal banking) with no further incidents of flooding in the area either tidal or surface water.
- 7.4.3 It is noted that development of the site will involve the introduction of some impermeable areas such as caravan roofs and service road. Surface water from each unit will be drained to individual soakaways and the road will drain directly into the ground. In practice, the areas of impermeable surface will be limited and directed into the ground with little impact upon natural drainage. Foul water is to be directed into the existing treatment plant which will be upgraded to deal with additional flows.
- 7.4.4 The extended site would also benefit from an existing Flood Management and Evacuation Plan which has been in place since the site expansion in 2003 and agreed with the local authority and the Environment Agency. The plan allows for early warning of possible flood events and has set out evacuation plans directed onto land to the east of the site and highway escape routes from the site.
- 7.4.5 With these anticipated limited impacts, lack of increase to flood risk elsewhere and lifetime protection of future occupiers of the site it is considered that the benefits of sustaining and strengthening a rural tourism use will outweigh the potential risks of developing within a Flood Zone 3 and will satisfy the exception test as set out in the NPPF and National Practice Guidance.

## 7.5 Impact on trees

- 7.5.1 The proposal seeks to retain the planting belt which surrounds the site on all side and will see the introduction of additional areas of planting within the body of the site to provide amenity and additional screening. The location of the caravan pitches and hardstanding area have been located outside the line of tree planting and are not anticipated to effect the trees either below ground or require lopping to facilitate the siting of the caravans.

## 7.6 Access and highway impacts

- 7.6.1 The application site will be served form an existing site entrance within the main site. The entrance is laid out to an acceptable geometry allowing for two-way vehicle movement and providing acceptable visibility along Crimbles lane. In responding to the consultation, the highway authority has raised no objections to the increased use of the highway network to support a tourism use but raises caution to the development of a residential site in this location. The application is seeking only to expand the existing holiday use and would be suitably conditioned to prevent residential use of the site.
- 7.6.2 In the interest of sustainable development, the highway authority has suggested a condition be attached seeking the provision of secure cycle storage for two cycles per unit. The applicant has raised some concern over the cost implication over this requirement but has indicated that subject to request from the pitch occupiers a secure cycle stores have previously been provided on the existing site, this approach would be adopted for the proposed extension. The reasoning behind this arrangement is due to the nature of cycle use at the site. This appears to generally fall into two areas if cycling is adopted; either use of simple bikes which are left in the unit when unoccupied or stored alongside the unit; or high-end bikes which are brought to the site on each occasion and secured to the vehicle or within the high specification secure structure paid for by the individual occupiers on requests but installed by the site owner. The development of cycle storage for each unit is considered to be an unduly onerous requirement for the site developer.

## 7.7 Impact on residential amenity

7.7.1 The area has a limited number of residential properties along Crimbles Lane with the nearest properties sited beyond the site entrance alongside the existing site. Given the separation distance and the relative location of the nearest residential properties it is not considered that there will be an adverse impact on residential amenity.

## **8.0 Planning Obligations**

8.1 Not applicable in this instance as the application is seeking to develop an 11 month season, reflecting the main site with a closed unoccupied period during January, (5 January to 4 February) which aids the prevention of residential occupancy.

## **9.0 Conclusions**

9.1 It is considered that the site is located in an appropriate location, well screened and allowing for a sustainable expansion of an existing rural tourism operation without undue impact upon the wider landscape and areas of acknowledge importance. Subject to appropriate conditions, the application should be supported.

## **Recommendation**

That Planning Permission **BE GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. Three year standard time limit
2. Development to be in accordance with approved plans
3. Amended plans – landscaping, colours, materials and finishes
4. Development of the additional landscaping with first planting season following commencement of development.
5. Caravans for holiday purposes only (maximum of 25 units)
6. Register of caravan owner/occupies main home address to be provided
7. Precise detail of the site office to be agreed

## **Article 35, Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015**

In accordance with the above legislation, the City Council can confirm the following:

Lancaster City Council has made the recommendation in a positive and proactive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development, working proactively with the agent to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. The recommendation has been made having had regard to the impact of development, and in particular to the relevant policies contained in the Development Plan, as presented in full in the officer report, and to all relevant material planning considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework, National Planning Practice Guidance and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents/ Guidance.

## **Human Rights Act**

This recommendation has been reached after consideration of the provisions of The Human Rights Act. Unless otherwise stated in this report, the issues arising do not appear to be of such magnitude to override the responsibility of the City Council to regulate land use for the benefit of the community as a whole, in accordance with national law.

## **Background Papers**

None.