

DC Area Teams GMS Constraints: East Area (1) 0003

2.2 Policies:

CYGB1 -Development within the Green Belt

CYV1 -Criteria for visitor related devt

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

INTERNAL:-

3.1 Environmental Protection Unit raise no objection to the proposal subject to the proposed amenity buildings incorporating suitable mitigation measures to deal with the possibility of landfill gas arising from a closed tip nearby migrating into their foundations.

3.2 Strategic Flood Risk Management object to the proposal on the grounds that insufficient information has been submitted with the application in respect of the means by which the site would be drained.

3.3 Design, Conservation and Sustainable Development raise no objection to the proposal.

3.4 Highway Network Management raise no objection to the proposal.

3.5 Integrated Strategy Unit were consulted with respect to the application on 5th September 2012. Views will be reported verbally at the meeting.

EXTERNAL:-

3.6 Elvington Parish Council object to the proposal on the grounds that the proposed amenity buildings would lead to over development of the site, the proposed amenity buildings and access would not meet Modern standards, the development would have an adverse impact upon the open character of the Green Belt and the site would not be used for the purpose applied for, as a maximum 20 pitch touring caravan site. The Parish Council have been consulted in respect of the revised details but express continuing concern in respect of the size and range of amenity buildings proposed bearing in mind the location of the site in the Green Belt.

3.7 The Ouse and Derwent Internal Drainage Board were consulted with regard to the proposal on 5th September 2012. Views will be reported verbally at the meeting.

4.0 APPRAISAL

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:-

4.1 KEY CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDE:-

- Impact upon the open character and purposes of designation of the Green Belt.

IMPACT UPON THE OPEN CHARACTER AND PURPOSES OF DESIGNATION OF THE GREEN BELT

4.2 Policy GB1 of the York Development Control Local Plan states that planning permission within the Green Belt will only be forthcoming where the scale, location and design of such development would not detract from the open character of the Green Belt, it would not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt and it is for one of a number of purposes deemed to be appropriate within the Green Belt including essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation. This closely follows Central Government Policy in respect of planning in Green Belt areas outlined in paragraphs 79 to 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 89 of the NPPF adds a further test requiring that any development providing appropriate facilities for outdoor sport or recreation should preserve the openness of the Green Belt and should not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

4.3 The application site has a lawful use as a 20 pitch caravan site but has not been used as such in recent years. The proposal seeks permission for two elements. Firstly single storey brick built chalet type building to provide bathing and laundry facilities along with a single storey brick structure to provide a site office and workshop. At the same time permission is sought for the retention of 20 hardcore surfaced caravan pitches along with a hardcore surfaced access road and an earth bund at the northern edge of the site.

4.4 In respect of the built facilities, the applicant has indicated that two buildings previously existed at the site but were demolished because of their poor state of repair. The two buildings are requested in order to service the site. The office and workshop building has been kept separate from the bathing and laundry facilities with the aim of minimising the impact upon the openness of the Green Belt and to enable both buildings to be more closely related to the pattern of development along Elvington Lane without intruding into open countryside. A workshop, with site office and small shop are considered to be essential for this type of site whilst the amenity building includes 3 three toilets and 3 bathrooms for use by male visitors together with 3 of each for use by female visitors, together with laundry and pot washing facilities for use primarily by those occupying the area reserved for tents at the northern edge of the site.

The Caravan Club, which is the primary regulatory body for such sites, sets a series of minimum standards for facilities, and provision varies widely between sites. The proposed provision is generous when compared with other sites in the wider area and the NPPF paragraph 89 categorises appropriate facilities for outdoor recreation as being suitable within the Green Belt providing the openness and purposes of designation of the Green Belt are safeguarded.

4.5 The applicant has submitted a statement offering a justification for the level of facilities provided based upon the levels indicated in the Building Regulations; however touring caravan and camping sites are exempt from the requirements of the Building Regulations and the case for an additional level of facility over and above that of other neighbouring sites within the Green Belt has not fully been made. It can clearly be argued that the provision of formalised facilities on such a scale would have an urbanising impact upon the Green Belt not just in terms of the physical form of the buildings but in terms of the intensity of use that would be generated.

4.6 In terms of the bund and the site layout incorporating pitches and access road, the development has significantly altered the character of the site and its relationship with its surroundings. The surrounding landscape is gently rolling with small gatherings of mature trees and lengths of hedgerow surrounding fields in largely arable use. The bund, comprising an alien and engineered structure, causes significant harm to the openness of the Green Belt by extending urban type development into the surrounding open countryside. Furthermore the layout and surfacing of the pitches, with the use of crushed hard core also significantly harms the openness of the Green Belt by extending hard surfaced, engineered development out into open countryside. Following concerns expressed the applicant has agreed to the removal of the bund from the development proposal together with the laying out of the access road and pitches beyond the proposed workshop/office building in Net pave to have a lesser impact upon the openness of the Green Belt. That aspect of the development is now felt to be acceptable.

OTHER ISSUES

4.7 Concern has also been expressed in respect of the suitability of the proposed amenity buildings along with the use of the site for the intended purpose of a touring caravan site. These matters are however covered by the Caravan Site Licensing Regime and as such are not material to the determination of the planning application.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 Home Lea comprises a long and relatively wide site within the Green Belt to the north of Elvington Airfield with a Lawful Use as a 20 pitch touring caravan site. Planning permission is sought for the retention of 20 marked pitches laid in hard core together with a hardcore laid access road and a bund at the northern edge of the site. Permission is also sought in respect of the erection of two amenity buildings to supply a shop/site office and workshop together with a separate building to providing toilet, washing and laundry facilities. The detail of the proposed buildings has been amended subsequent to submission in order to lessen their scale and massing with the aim of lessening their impact upon the open character of the Green Belt. Notwithstanding the amendment and the modifications to the site layout to lessen its impact upon the open character of the Green Belt, the proposed service buildings remain more substantial than is considered appropriate and reasonable in the area, and the submitted justification does not adequately address why such an enhanced level of facility would be appropriate. The development therefore remains unacceptable and it is recommended that planning permission be with held.

COMMITTEE TO VISIT

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Refuse

1 It is considered that insufficient justification has been given as part of the development proposal to demonstrate that the proposed amenity buildings constitute an appropriate facility for outdoor recreation and therefore form appropriate development within the Green Belt, in line with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 89. The proposal as it stands is therefore felt to be inappropriate development within the Green Belt and by definition harmful to its openness, contrary to the provision of the NPPF and Policy GB1 of the Council's Development Control Local Plan.

7.0 INFORMATIVES:

Notes to Applicant

1. STATEMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE APPROACH

In considering the application, the Local Planning Authority has implemented the requirements set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) in seeking solutions to problems identified during the processing of the application. The Local Planning Authority took the following steps in an attempt to achieve a positive outcome:

Sought detailed clarification in respect of the level of amenity facilities proposed in relation to their appropriateness within the Green Belt.

Notwithstanding the above, it was not possible to achieve a positive outcome, resulting in planning permission being refused for the reasons stated.

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