



CYV1 - Criteria for visitor related devt

CYV5 - Caravan and camping sites

### **3.0 CONSULTATIONS**

#### INTERNAL

##### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION UNIT

3.1 No objections.

##### HIGHWAY NETWORK MANAGEMENT

3.2 Defer pending confirmation of red/blue line boundary and details of parking, access including widths, turning and circulation space.

#### EXTERNAL

##### WIGGINTON PARISH COUNCIL

3.3 No objections.

##### PUBLIC CONSULTATION

3.4 The consultation period expired on 22 April 2014. No objections have been received.

### **4.0 APPRAISAL**

#### 4.1 KEY ISSUES

- Impact on the Green Belt
- Sustainability

#### APPLICATION SITE

4.2 The site is part of a long, narrow site (referred to here as 'the holding') formerly used as a horticultural nursery. The holding is in a predominantly rural area in the Green Belt. Access is from Wigginton Road. The holding is now occupied by a mixed commercial use including amenity lake, touring caravan park, farm shop and café. The holding still has a number of horticultural glasshouses which appear to be no longer in use. The application site comprises part of the central section of the holding and used to contained a large glasshouse, which was demolished in 2013.

Access to the compound is via the main internal road through the holding. To the east of the compound is the holding's caravan site, largely laid to lawn. To the west (towards Wigginton Road) are redundant greenhouses with the café and farm shop beyond. To the north and south is agricultural land.

## PLANNING POLICY

4.3 The site is located within the Green Belt. One of the twelve core planning principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is to protect the Green Belt around urban areas, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside (Paragraph 17).

4.4 Section 3 of the NPPF says that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development.

4.5 Section 9 of the NPPF says that the essential characteristics of green belts are their openness and their permanence (para.79). One of the five purposes of including land within the Green Belt is to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment (Paragraph 80). Once defined Local Planning Authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the green belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land (para.81). The construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate. Exceptions to this include the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation as long as the openness of the green belt is preserved and proposals do not conflict with the purposes of including land within the green belt (para.89).

4.6 Paragraph 87 says inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the green belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Substantial weight should be given to any harm to the green belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the green belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations (Paragraph 88).

4.7 Paragraph 90 says certain forms of development are also not inappropriate in green belt provided they preserve the openness of the green belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it. The list within paragraph 90 does not include the change of use of land save in relation to re-use of certain types of building.

4.8 The application site falls within the general extent of the Green Belt as shown on the Key Diagram of the RSS (the Yorkshire and Humber Plan) (RSS) saved under the Regional Strategy for Yorkshire and Humber (Partial Revocation) Order 2013.

Polices YH9 and Y1 (C1 &C2) and the key diagram on page 214 of the RSS form the statutory Development Plan for York. Policy YH9 says the detailed inner boundaries of the Green Belt around York should be defined in order to establish long term development limits that safeguard the special character and setting of the historic city. All other policy documentation can be accorded weight as material considerations in accordance with Annex 1 of the NPPF.

4.9 The York Development Control draft Local Plan was approved for development control purposes in April 2005. Its policies are material considerations in the determination of planning applications although it is considered that their weight is limited except when they are in accordance with the NPPF.

4.10 Development Control Local Plan Policy GB1 'Development in the Green Belt' states that planning permission for proposals involving essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation will only be granted where:

- a) the scale, location and design of such development would not detract from the open character of the Green Belt; and
- b) it would not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt; and
- c) it would not prejudice the setting and special character of the City of York.

4.11 Policy V1 says that visitor related development will be encouraged. In determining applications account will be taken of whether the proposal has made adequate servicing arrangements; is accessible by public transport; will result in increased traffic; is likely to improve the prosperity of the tourism industry and the city's economy; will adversely impact on the reasonable use and enjoyment of adjacent buildings and land and adverse impacts on the countryside setting of the city.

4.12 Development Control Local Plan Policy V5 'Caravan/Camping Sites' states that planning permission for new caravan/camping sites outside settlement limits will only be granted provided:

- a) the number of pitches does not exceed 20; and
- b) there will be no pitches for static caravans; and
- c) the proposal does not involve the erection of permanently-sited ancillary buildings other than toilets/washrooms and a site office; and
- d) the site is associated with an existing settlement and of a compatible scale to the settlement; and
- e) the site is readily accessible by public transport; and
- f) there is no adverse effect on the openness of the Green Belt; and
- g) it provides a direct benefit to the local residential workforce; and
- h) the approach roads are suitable for caravans; and
- i) there is no adverse effect on the provision of local services; and
- j) the proposal is complimentary to recreational opportunities in the vicinity; and
- k) it provides a direct benefit to the local residential rural community.

4.13 Policy GP4a 'Sustainability' of the DCLP seeks, amongst other things, to ensure that developments are accessible by other means than the car and be easily accessible for pedestrians and cyclists.

## IMPACT ON THE GREEN BELT

4.14 The types of development that are not inappropriate in the Green Belt exclude change of use, therefore the use of land as a campsite is inappropriate development and is by definition harmful to the green belt. This is accepted by the applicant. Such development should not be approved except in very special circumstances, which will not exist unless potential harm to the green belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

4.15 Officers consider that any harm to the Green Belt is extremely limited because:

- Most of the holding is already in leisure use;
- The pods are well screened behind a 2m perimeter fence and cannot be seen from outside of the site. They are of a sensitive design which is entirely appropriate to their rural setting;
- The proposal improves a damaged/derelict part of the site previously occupied by a large single storey glasshouse, which had fallen into disrepair;
- The combined footprint of the eight pods and reception building is approximately 130sqm, which is significantly less than the glasshouse, which had a footprint of 1200 sqm.

4.16 Any effect on the openness of the Green Belt is therefore very limited, the purpose of including the site in the Green Belt would not be materially infringed and there would be no material harm to the character and appearance of the area. However, in demonstrating 'very special circumstances', it is important to consider whether the potential harm caused to the Green Belt is outweighed by other considerations. The applicant argues that the following factors are considered to be relevant:

- There is a clear demand for this type of accommodation within the city and this is demonstrated by the campsite having operated successfully since July 2013.

- Potential locations for such uses are limited. If camping facilities are to add to variety of tourist accommodation available in the York, then they need to be in the Green Belt in order to provide access to both the open countryside as well as the tourist attractions of the city. The principle of camping, caravanning and similar recreational uses in the Green Belt has been accepted by the Council in the past. Indeed, the land to the east of the camping pods already operates as a successful caravan site.
- The proposal is in accordance with paragraph 81 of the NPPF, which seeks to enhance the use of the Green Belt by looking for opportunities to provide access and to provide opportunities for outdoor recreation.
- The Willow Farm site is already fully equipped with the necessary infrastructure to support the proposed use. There are shower and toilet facilities located to the west of the camping area and there is also a small farm shop and café in this area, offering drinks, food and convenience goods. Other than the pods themselves, there are no additional facilities required to support the proposed use.

4.17 Furthermore, the site is in a moderately sustainable location because:

- The holding fronts onto Wigginton Road, which is served by two separate hourly bus services running between York and Wigginton Road (nos 20 and 40);
- Shops and services within Haxby and Wigginton can be reached via a public footpath at the eastern end of the caravan park.

## OTHER MATTERS

4.18 Highways officers have asked for the application to be deferred pending submission of details of parking, access and circulation space. Planning officers consider that the number of vehicle movements associated with the development would be small and that the information supplied is sufficient for the application to be determined. All other matters are acceptable or could be dealt with by conditions.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 On balance, officers consider that the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations that amount to very special circumstances and that consequently the application is acceptable. In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009, It is not considered that the matter need

be referred to the Secretary of State as the development is in total less than 1000 sq.m and does not have a significant impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

## **COMMITTEE TO VISIT**

### **6.0 RECOMMENDATION:** Approve

1 The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with approved drawings YWF1402A.LP.CP, YWF1402A.CP.GH, YWF1402A.SP.GH, WFRM001 and un-numbered site layout all received by City of York Council on 5 March 2014. The number of camping pods at the site shall not exceed eight at any one time.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to achieve an acceptable form of development.

2 The pods shall not be used for residential purposes other than holiday letting. For the purpose of this condition "holiday letting" means letting to the same person, group of persons or family for period(s) not exceeding a total of 28 days in any one calendar year.

Reason: The premises are unsuitable and inappropriate for permanent residential occupation due to the site's unsustainable location within the Green Belt, absence of a separate curtilage and absence of dedicated amenity space.

3 The owners/operators shall maintain an up-to-date register of the names of all occupiers of the holiday cottages on the site, and of their main home addresses, and shall make this information available at all reasonable times to the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that the holiday accommodation is not used for unauthorised permanent residential occupation. The premises are unsuitable for permanent residential occupation due to the site's unsustainable location, impact on the openness of the green belt, absence of a separate curtilage and absence of dedicated amenity space.

4 Prior to the development commencing details of covered, secure cycle parking for six cycles shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The holiday lets shall not be occupied until the cycle parking facilities have been provided within the site in accordance with such approved details, and these areas shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking of cycles.

Reason: To promote use of cycles thereby reducing congestion on the adjacent roads and in the interests of the amenity of neighbours.

## **7.0 INFORMATIVES:**

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

In considering the application, the Local Planning Authority implemented the requirements set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) by seeking solutions to problems identified during the processing of the application. In an attempt to achieve an acceptable outcome the council sought further information from the applicant to demonstrate very special circumstances and attached appropriate conditions to the consent.

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