

Development Services,
West Lindsey District Council,
Guildhall,
Marshall's Yard,
Gainsborough
DN21 2NA

Supporting information to an application for pre-application advice.

3rd February 2017

Proposal for an 84 no. tourist chalet lodge park, Holywell Grange, Moor Road, Snitterby.

Dear Sirs

I act on behalf of my client, Mr Stewart Smith, the landowner and potential operator of the above scheme. Mr Smith has extensive experience of the lodge park and holiday park industry, and since acquiring the site some 20 years ago, has invested in extensive on site landscaping and tree planting.

Site Description and Location

The site is located just outside the village of Snitterby and one mile south of the larger village of Waddingham. The A15 is approximately 1.5 miles due west of the site. The site comprises a largely square plot bounded on its southern and eastern boundaries by adopted highway and on its western side by a watercourse.

Planning History

In 2003 planning permission was granted for “the regeneration of existing and previously demolished barns to provide holiday lets & new garage & sheds”, application ref MO3/P/0138. Whilst the subject of this consent primarily related to the barn site which lies at the southern site access and fronts on to the existing dwelling at Holywell Grange, it should be noted that the extent of the consent granted is based on a red line boundary that encompasses my clients wider site, and hence the entire 10ha (30 acre) site benefits from consent for change of use to Use Class D2 (Assembly & Leisure) of the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended).

In 2014/15 my client paid for pre planning advice (ref 132159) regarding the potential to site chalet lodges for holiday/tourism purposes, and was advised by the then case officer, Zoe Raygen, to prepare a draft site layout before more detailed advice/feedback could be provided. We understand that that pre-application case has expired, and hence we hereby resubmit with a more detailed draft layout and supporting evidence as previously requested.



Relevant Planning Policies

The **National Planning Policy Framework 2012** (at para 28) lists sustainable tourism as one of a range of acceptable uses in rural areas and requires that Local Planning Authorities should:

“support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres;”

The **West Lindsey Local Plan (First Review)** runs from 2006 to 2016 and has hence been held at appeal (see Appeal ref APP/N2535/A/14/2223170) in 2015 as “cannot be considered up-to-date for the purposes of paragraph 49 of the (National Planning Policy) Framework”. The most relevant policy in the West Lindsey Local Plan (First Review) is *Policy CRT19 - Caravan Sites* (although it is considered this has limited relevance to Chalet Lodge sites which are fundamentally different in appearance and impacts to touring or static caravan sites which this policy appears to solely address):

“Outside areas that are the subject of special protection proposals for the development or extension of caravanning and camping facilities will be permitted provided that:

- i. The development is associated with existing or proposed tourist attractions;*
- ii. The site can be suitably screened by existing land forms and /or vegetation and will not be visible from long distances;*
- iii. The provision of any ancillary development is restricted to those facilities which are required to service the site;*
- iv. The development is of appropriate scale with regard to its setting and would not have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the open countryside or settlement;*
- v. The proposal has regard to the existing overall provision of other sites in the locality and will not lead to an over concentration in the area.”*



The **Proposed Submission Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2016** has been the subject of an Examination in Public in November/December 2016, and Proposed Main Modifications have very recently been published for public consultation, ending March 2017. Hence at this advanced stage towards adoption the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan must be considered to be the relevant development plan for the determination of this proposal. *Policy LP7: A Sustainable Visitor Economy* is highly relevant to this proposal, the preamble to the policy highlighting the considerable economic benefit that tourism and supporting visitor accommodation bring to the economy of the Central Lincolnshire area. Policy LP7, including proposed Modifications, reads:

“Development and activities that will deliver high quality sustainable visitor facilities such as culture and leisure facilities, sporting attractions and accommodation, including proposals for temporary permission in support of the promotion of events and festivals, will be supported. Such development and activities should be designed so that they:

- a. contribute to the local economy; and*
- b. benefit both local communities and visitors; and*
- c. respect the intrinsic natural and built environmental qualities of the area; and*
- d. are appropriate for the character of the local environment in scale and nature.*

Development should be located within existing settlements, or as part of planned urban extensions, unless it can be demonstrated that:

- such locations are unsuitable for the nature of the proposal and there is an overriding benefit to the local economy and/or community and/or environment for locating away from such built up areas; or*
- it relates to an existing visitor facility which is seeking redevelopment or expansion.”*



Description of proposal and proposed approach.

I attached a draft layout of the proposal.

The proposal is to locate 84 luxury chalet lodges on the site, with an additional lodge to accommodate a permanent on site manager. At approx 8 lodges/ha, this is considered an appropriately low density to reflect the rural setting of the site. A chandlery is also proposed to supply day to day staples to visitors so as to reduce unnecessary car journeys. The site has been extensively planted since my client acquired the land in the mid 90's, with extensive blocks of tree planting and high perimeter hedging. As can be seen from the proposed layout, as well as retaining and enhancing all existing on site planting and landscape features, extensive additional green infrastructure is proposed. The scoping report for a Landscape and Visual Assessment, proposed as evidential support for a planning application and produced by Influence Landscape Architects, is attached. It is also intended that a draft Ecological Management Plan be submitted as part of an application, to demonstrate and secure the considerable identified potential to maintain and enhance ecology and habitats on the site following development of the lodge park.

The economic benefits of the proposal are considerable, with the potential to generate a minimum of £430,000 per annum of visitor expenditure into the local economy (key initial economic findings by Hallette Environmental Ltd are attached and will be expanded to form an Economic Viability report to support an application). Measures will be investigated and incorporated within the proposal to ensure that the site captures this expenditure in the very local area and that recruitment of all jobs created on the site will also be very local. We are already working with a range of local businesses who might potentially supply goods, services (including a minibus operator), and on site visitor activities. In summary, the potential to support and enhance the long term viability of existing services in the nearest villages of Snitterby and Waddingham is considerable and highly material in consideration of a planning application.

We will demonstrate that the proposal site meets a significant identified shortfall in all types of visitor accommodation in the area of the A15 corridor between Lincoln City and the M180, an area with multiple and significant features of visitor interest. These include historic Lincoln and the historic market towns of Brigg and Kirton in Lindsey, and yet this is an area that is demonstrably seeing an increase in visitor numbers that is not being translated into increased length of stay and visitor spend, due to a supply shortfall, and the lack of choice and range of quality visitor accommodation. The cross boundary nature of the proposal's visitor influence, into the North Lincolnshire Council area, must also be considered.



The site, as discussed in the section “Planning History” above, benefits from a consent for D2 use, and hence the proposal site is “an existing visitor facility which is seeking redevelopment or expansion” under the terms of emerging Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Policy LP7. In terms of location, the site is considered the best available site given the extensive investment already secured by my client in on-site planting and landscape and the lack of realistic and available alternative sites. The scoping paper for a Traffic Assessment, produced by BSP Ltd, is attached for your consideration. Note how bringing in a local public transport operator offers the potential to significantly reduce car based travel to major local features of visitor interest, and indeed offers potential for an entirely car free holiday through offering collection at Scunthorpe, Brigg or Kirton railway stations as a booking option. Modest improvements to public transport services for existing local residents are also on offer, given that it is intended to offer spare spaces on scheduled trips to local residents via the parish Councils.

Local Consultation and Engagement.

In mid January, a local consultation event was undertaken (Saturday 21st Jan, Snitterby and Waddingham village halls) following liaison with the respective Parish Councils. A total of 40 visitors attended and were shown the draft layouts and provided with an opportunity to talk to the applicant and the project team. The majority of comments related to assessment of traffic impacts, and this has been incorporated and reflected in BSP’s scoping paper.

Summary and Next Steps

In summary, we seek your overall views on the proposal, agreement to the scope of supporting evidence we are producing, and advice on how the application would be best worded given that the principle of D2 use on the site is already established. We are working towards a May/June submission of a planning application.

Kind Regards

Neil Boughey
Executive Director

For and on behalf of Acorn Planning Ltd.

