



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 July 2010

by **Louise Crosby MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State
for Communities and Local Government

The Planning Inspectorate
4/11 Eagle Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6PN

☎ 0117 372 6372
email: enquiries@pins.gsi.gov.uk

Decision date:
5 August 2010

Appeal Ref: APP/G2713/A/10/2124585

Toft Hill Farm Caravan Park, Hill Road, Kirkby-in-Cleveland, North Yorkshire, TS9 7HJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr Billy Ward against the decision of Hambleton District Council.
- The application Ref: 09/03847/FUL, dated 13 November 2009, was refused by notice dated 5 February 2010.
- The development proposed is change of use of agricultural field to site 15 No additional pitches for static caravans or log cabins (for year round holiday occupation only), together with ancillary landscaping works, package treatment plant and second access.

Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal.

Procedural matter

2. I am aware that the proposed second access has since been granted planning permission by the Council. I shall deal with the appeal on this basis.

Main issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on:
 - i) the character and appearance of the surrounding area and whether it would conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the adjacent North Yorkshire Moors National Park and;
 - ii) highway safety.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located in open countryside, at the foot of the Cleveland Hills, adjacent to the North Yorkshire Moors National Park. It is intended to extend the existing site into an open field to the north. The existing site appears low key, with space for 30 modest sized static caravans and a small portable amenity building. While these caravans are conspicuous because of their light colour, this part of the site benefits from mature boundary treatment.
 5. This proposal would result in a 50% increase in the number of pitches for holiday homes and the erection of a new amenity block. The new holiday homes could be designed in a more sympathetic manner than the existing. Indeed details have been submitted of some log cabins. However, most of these appear much larger than the existing static caravans with some
-

containing five bedrooms. While I realise that details, including the size, could be controlled by planning conditions, even a two bedroom unit would measure around 9m x 6m.

6. With good landscaping along the boundaries and careful choice of materials the holiday homes would not appear unduly prominent from Hill Road. Nevertheless, despite existing or proposed landscaping, when viewed from the elevated public footpaths to the south, particularly the Cleveland Way, they would appear incongruous in the generally open and rural landscape. Moreover, one would not only see the holiday homes, but cars and domestic paraphernalia. I realise that CS policy CP15 seeks to encourage tourism, but in a way which enhances the environment.
7. While Mr Ward claims that the appeal site has in the past been used for camping, this is disputed by the Council and Parish Council. In any event, the proposal before me would have a significantly greater visual impact than an even larger number of tents since they would have a much more urbanising effect on the landscape. As such, the proposal would have a significant harmful effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and fail to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the adjacent North Yorkshire Moors National Park, thus conflicting with CS¹ policies CP1, CP16 and DP30.
8. Turning to consider highway safety, Hill Road is a single carriageway lane. While there are passing places along Hill Road they are few and far between. I saw that the lane is very popular with walkers, dog walkers and for horse riding. I also noted that a gate at the end of Hill Road gives access to a Scout Centre, which will attract vehicular traffic at certain times. I understand that the wider site has a license for more tents than the proposed number of static caravans, but camping in my experience tends to be seasonal thereby creating less constant, intensive traffic all year round. By contrast, these types of holiday homes would be very popular throughout the year, even in winter when travelling along Hill Road would be difficult, at times, due to poor weather conditions such as snow and ice. Also, some of the proposed holiday homes may be large and so accommodate more than one family or group, thus resulting in more than one car per unit.
9. Even taking into account the fact that this part of the site would be accessed slightly closer to the village, traffic would still need to travel some distance along Hill Road. Given the width of the lane, the lack of adequate passing places and its use by other more vulnerable groups, such as walkers, I consider that the proposal would be detrimental to highway safety. I am aware that the appellant has offered to provide additional passing places along Hill Road, but in the absence of a scheme which shows that the verges are wide enough to accommodate these at regular intervals, a Grampian planning condition to secure such highway improvements would not accord with Circular 11/95. Regarding the junction of Hill Road and Kirkby Lane I saw that the visibility in a westerly direction, when exiting Hill Road, is very poor. The increase in vehicular traffic using this sub-standard junction, as a result of this proposal, would add to the harm to highway safety. As such, the proposal would conflict with CS policies CP2 and DP4.

¹ Hambleton Local Development Framework Core Strategy April 2007

10. I realise that the proposal would provide a modern utility block for users of the wider site and help finance further improvements. While I saw that these would be beneficial to existing tourists using the site, this does not outweigh the harm that I have found in relation to my main issues.
11. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Louise Crosby

INSPECTOR