



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 June 2019

by Karen Taylor MSC URP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/A3010/W/19/3226608

Pilgrim Fathers Caravan Site, Saracens Lane, Scrooby DN10 6AS

- 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 Mark James against the decision of Bassetlaw District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00035/FUL, dated 9 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 26 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is the siting of 9 static caravans for holiday use 12 months of the year with hardstanding and parking space, construct internal access road.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the siting of 9 static caravans for holiday use 12 months of the year with hardstanding and parking space, construct internal access road at Pilgrim Fathers Caravan Site, Saracens Lane, Scrooby DN10 6AS in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/00035/FUL, dated 9 December 2018, and the plans submitted with it, subject to conditions set out in the schedule attached to this decision.

Procedure Matters

2. The Council altered the description of development. I consider this accurately describes the appeal proposal and I have therefore used this description as set out in my decision.
3. I am advised by the Council that a neighbourhood plan is being prepared: Scrooby Neighbourhood Plan. This is at the consultation and evidence stage. Given its stage of plan preparation the Neighbourhood Plan is afforded no weight in this appeal decision.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the countryside.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is a northern field which forms part of a wider caravan park which is currently utilised by touring caravans. It is within an area of open countryside with agricultural fields adjoining to the north and residential properties to the south and east. The site is flat grassland and is screened from the wider open rural area by vegetation and trees. The Council has identified the site as being within the Idle Lowlands Policy Zone 10, Landscape Character

Assessment, although I do not have this evidence before me. It was apparent from my site visit that the caravan park was in use with touring caravans utilising the site.

6. The site currently has planning permission for both fields to the south and north for up to 30 touring caravans, and the proposals would reduce the number of touring caravans to the grassed areas to 21. The hardstanding associated with each of the static caravans would be limited, this would be hidden underneath by the siting of the static caravans and the materials for this, associated parking and access road could be sensitively constructed in suitable materials to blend into the rural setting of the site, of all which can be agreed by condition. This would reduce the overall impact on the visual appearance of the proposals.
7. The site currently features permanent buildings which include a dwellinghouse, barn, outbuildings and a toilet and wash facilities block. There are considerable amounts of hardstanding along the east of the site which is utilised as domestic curtilage. The development would be sited adjacent to the existing barn and outbuildings, due to their height and size they contribute to screening the site and any backdrop when viewed from across the west and would screen the static caravans along any views of the east. The existing landscaping, with vegetation, hedgerows and trees running along the boundaries, reduces the openness of the site and the visual prominence appearance of the proposals within the countryside, the impact of the proposals on the character of the countryside would be very limited even without further landscaping proposed.
8. The site is relatively flat in nature and there are limited views outside of the site from the east, north and south due to this and its verdant appearance provides an enclosure of the built form within the site. There are hills towards the west as the topography of the area changes somewhat. There are existing views into the site from the west, these views into the site would not significantly change from those of the existing views of the caravan park with touring caravans and existing built development therefore the static caravans would not be seen in isolation as a separate entities or development.
9. Albeit, the static caravans would be sited throughout the year and touring caravans come and go I find that the static caravans would be no more intrusive than having the site at full capacity with touring caravans. The proposals would be well screened, and suitable landscaping to minimise the effect can be agreed by condition. The development would not adversely change the character and appearance of the landscape, reduce openness or be visually intrusive.
10. Therefore, with the site and boundaries properly landscaped, the proposed permanent siting of 9 static caravans would not have a materially harmful effect upon the character and appearance of the countryside. Indeed, the proposed landscaping along the boundaries would be a landscape enhancement.
11. The proposals would not conflict with Policies DM4 and DM9 of the Bassetlaw District Local Development Framework, Core Strategy & Development Policies DPD (2011), where developments in the countryside should respect their wider surroundings and landscape character; be designed sensitively to the landscape setting and create landscape forms and features accordingly. It would further comply with the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (The Framework),

Section 12 and Section 15, respectively relating to achieving well designed places; and contributing to and enhancing the local environment.

Other Matters

12. There is one residential dwelling on the site in conjunction with the caravan park, other residential dwellings are sited some distance away from the site. Due to the existing use of the site, the proposals would not cause any further noise and disturbance impacting on the living conditions of nearby residents.
13. I have had sight of the Council's Highway Officer comments, which raise no concerns of the proposed development in regard to highway safety for pedestrians, horse riders or other road users. The proposals would reduce the number of touring caravans from 30 to 21. This would result in traffic reduction of comings and goings from the site and along Saracens Lane, which is unadopted and outside of the appeal site. There is no factual evidence before me that the proposal would give rise to any increase in traffic for the village, parking, accidents or would cause any harm to highway safety.
14. Objections have been raised to the existing caravan licence previously issued by the Council, relating to the restrictions, number and type of caravans allowed at the site. This would be dealt with under separate legislation and any licence application to the Council.
15. There is an existing mains sewer connected to the existing drainage system and surface water will be disposed of by a soakaway, so the development would be acceptable in these respects. Although reference was made to the capacity of water and drainage, there is no evidence before me that the site could not be provided with adequate supplies.

Conditions

16. The Council suggested conditions in the event that the appeal was allowed. They include the standard time limit condition and one to identify the approved plans, these are necessary in the interests of providing certainty. As indicated above a condition to control design as well as materials adequately caters for absent details of the caravans themselves and is necessary to protect the character and appearance of the area. A condition stipulating the number of static caravans is also required in the providing certainty.
17. A condition ensuring holiday occupation is appropriate and it is necessary for clarity to include a reasonable timeframe of 3 months to ensure the static caravans remain, as such for holiday use. A register of guest using the static caravans is reasonable and necessary. An amalgamated condition relating to hard and soft landscaping has incorporated boundary treatments, planting, hardstanding areas, parking areas and the access road and includes lighting and functional services, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of protecting the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Karen Taylor

INSPECTOR

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Pilgrim Fathers Caravan Site, Saracens Lane, Scrooby DN10 6AS
Schedule of conditions attached to planning permission

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1828/LP Rev A, 1828/BP Rev A
- 3) No more than 9 static caravans shall be stationed on the land at any time.
- 4) No development shall take place until full details of the design of the static caravans and the materials to be used in the construction of their external surfaces have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 5) The static caravans hereby permitted shall be occupied for holiday purposes only. No person occupying the static caravans hereby permitted shall remain on the site / any one of those caravans for a continuous period of more than three months. Having vacated the site no person shall return to reside overnight on the site / any of the static pitches until a minimum period of three months has elapsed.
- 6) A register of occupancy of the static caravan, to include details of motor vehicle registration numbers, the type, number and ownership of all caravans, the names of all occupiers and their arrival and departure dates, shall be kept by the site manager and shall be made available at all reasonable times for inspection by officers of the local planning authority.
- 7) No development shall commence until details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include, planting plans and details of all trees and hedges; means of enclosure; car parking layouts; other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas; hard surfacing materials; lighting; proposed and existing functional services above and below ground; and a schedule of landscape maintenance for a minimum period of five years. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.