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# Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 8 June 2021

**by William Cooper BA (Hons) MA CMLI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 5<sup>th</sup> August 2021**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/P1045/W/21/3267401**

**Field adjacent to Oldfield Lane, Warren Carr DE4 2LN**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mr P Evans against the decision of Derbyshire Dales District Council.
  - The application Ref: 20/00974/FUL, dated 1 October 2020, was refused by notice dated 27 November 2020.
  - The development proposed is use of land for the stationing and use of 3 no. camping pods and associated parking area.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Preliminary Matters

2. The description in the banner heading above is taken from the decision notice, in the interests of precision.
3. Since the Council's decision, a new version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in July 2021. The new Framework echoes and reinforces policy relevant to the main issues in this case. I shall determine the appeal on this basis.

## Main Issues

4. The main issues in this case are:
  - whether the proposed development would be sustainably located, with particular regard to reliance on private motor vehicles;

and the effect the proposed development on

- the character and appearance of the area; and
- highway safety.

## Reasons

### *Sustainability of location*

5. The appeal site comprises a field to the south-west of a stretch of unlit country road without a pavement. It is not within or in close proximity to a settlement with a comprehensive range of facilities and services. Regular public transport services are not easily accessible from the site. The above together would

result in people camping in the proposed pods being reliant on a private motor vehicle to access the site, and shops and facilities.

6. In conclusion, the proposal would not be sustainably located, with particular regard to reliance on private motor vehicles. As such, it would conflict with Policies S1, S4 and EC9 of the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan (LP), which together seek to ensure that development is accessible by modes of transport other than private motor vehicles, and thus sustainably located.
7. That various permitted development 'fallback' scenarios cited by the appellant would not achieve locational sustainability does not alter the above.

#### *Character and appearance*

8. The appeal site is located to the south-east of a cluster of dwellings abutting Oldfield Lane.
9. While there are industrial works on the north eastern side of Oldfield Road and along the southern half of Oldfield Road, these are visually separated from the appeal site by land, highway and vegetation.
10. Furthermore, the site is a lush meadow, adjacent to a public footpath which adjoins its south-eastern boundary. Woodland sits to the south-east, and fields to the south and west. Middle distance views of wooded hillside beyond, to the west and south-west further reinforce the rural feel of the site and its context. As such, the site reads on the ground as part of an area of verdant countryside to the south-west of the northern half of Oldfield Lane, that is largely free from development.
11. Intervening hedgerows, woodland and rolling topography would limit the visual influence of the proposed development on the Peak District National Park, the nearest boundary of which is around 350m away. Accordingly, the proposal would not diminish appreciation of the landscape from within the National Park.
12. However, the proposal would entail the addition of the following to the site. Holiday accommodation in the form of arch shaped timber-faced camping pods with largely glazed front elevations, and lighting would be introduced. A new vehicular access off Oldfield Lane and a parking area would be installed. It would also bring vehicles and camping paraphernalia and activity onto the site.
13. Leylandii type plants have been planted on the site boundary. However, established leylandii boundary hedging would have suburban and industrial associations that would jar with the rural character of the meadow and its countryside context on the south-western side of Oldfield Lane. Furthermore, even if non-native conifer hedging were supplemented with further, native planting, the presence of the proposed camping pod development would be visually and audibly perceptible from the adjoining public right of way through the boundary hedge, including through gaps and after seasonal leaf fall. Its presence would also be noticeable within the site and looking into the site towards the parking area, down the access off Oldfield Lane.
14. Therefore, the proposal would erode the spaciousness, verdancy and undeveloped character of the site and its rural landscape context. As such, I cannot agree that the proposal would appear as a curiosity that would not detract from local landscape character. Furthermore, the fact that the proposal

would entail less camping pods than a previously refused scheme<sup>1</sup> does not negate the identified adverse impacts.

15. To conclude, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would conflict with Policies S1, S4, PD1, PD5, EC8 and EC9 of the LP, which together seek to ensure that development complements and contributes positively to local character.

### *Highways*

16. The proposal would entail extending part of the south-western verge by approximately 0.4m into the carriageway of Oldfield Lane, to provide a visibility splay. The resultant, reduced road width would be approximately 5.5m. The Local Highway Authority and local residents are concerned that the proposed verge extension would obstructively and hazardously protrude into the road.
17. Nevertheless, judging by the highways assessment (HA) by the appellant's highways consultant HAS, and what I saw during my site visit albeit a snapshot in time, the stretch of road in front of the site is relatively lightly trafficked. When fully booked, the proposed development is likely to add a modest maximum volume of around 12 vehicle trips per day<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, while higher speeds cannot be ruled out, the HA indicates that in the vicinity of the proposed access, speeds in the region of 30 to 40mph are more typical. Moreover, while the proposed access would be on a gently curving stretch of country road, Crashmap data cited in the HA indicates an absence of serious accidents in its vicinity.
18. Furthermore, judging by the HA, the modest narrowing of the carriageway is likely to have a moderately calming effect on drivers' speed. The proposed expanded verge would also provide additional walker refuge from traffic, approaching the entrance to the nearby public footpath.
19. No substantive analysis of the HA is presented by the Council or Highway Authority to indicate otherwise.
20. I therefore conclude that the proposal would provide a safe access and would not generate a significant additional volume of traffic. Thus, it would not harm highway safety, and would accord with Policy S4 of the LP.

### **Other Matters**

21. The absence of harm in terms of highway safety is a neutral factor that does not weigh in favour of the proposal.
22. The proposal would contribute to the area's tourist accommodation in the form of three camping pods. This would increase capacity for 'staycation' holidays in the area and contribute to the local economy. The lack of detail about additional landscaping and landscape management limits the weight that this suggested benefit carries. An enlarged verge would provide some pedestrian refuge from traffic, and modest carriageway narrowing is likely to have a moderately calming effect on drivers' speed in the vicinity of the site. However, the benefit of the proposal would be limited in scale and would not outweigh the significant totality of harm identified in terms of locational sustainability and character and appearance.

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<sup>1</sup> Planning application Ref: 18/00458/FUL.

<sup>2</sup> As set out on p2 of the HAS letter 18<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

## **Conclusion**

23. The proposal would be contrary to the development plan and there are no other considerations which outweigh this finding. Accordingly, for the reasons given, the appeal fails.

*William Cooper*

INSPECTOR

