



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 August 2025

by **R Bartlett PGDip URP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D2510/W/25/3364804

Lakeside Camping and Fisheries, Main Road, Saltfleetby, Lincolnshire, LN11 7SS

- 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 R Bowers against the decision of East Lindsey District Council.
- The application Ref is N/145/01086/24.
- The development is use of land as a camping and caravan site.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for use of land as a camping and caravan site at Lakeside Camping and Fisheries, Main Road, Saltfleetby, Lincolnshire, LN11 7SS, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref N/145/01086/24, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The land shall be used for the siting of tents, touring caravans, campervans and motorhomes for holiday use only, and these shall not be occupied as any person's sole or main place of residence.
 - 2) From 1st January 2050 onwards, no tents, touring caravans, campervans or motorhomes stationed within the area of land hereby approved, shall be occupied for overnight stays except between 15th March and 31st October each year.
 - 3) Within 2 months of the date of this decision, an emergency flood plan, as detailed in Section 5 of the Flood Risk Assessment produced by Roy Lobley Consulting, dated June 2024, shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. Once approved, the emergency flood plan shall be adhered to at all times, for the life of the development.
 - 4) The existing landscape buffer adjacent to the southern boundary of the site, measuring approximately 15 metres in depth from the rear gardens of adjacent houses on Main Road, shall be retained for the life of the development. Any trees, shrubs or hedging in this area that die or become damaged shall be replaced with new ones of similar species in the first planting season following their loss, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of development on the application form is "proposed touring caravan pitches". The Council amended this to "change of use of existing land to provide 8no. touring caravan pitches". Caravan pitches are not a use of land and the laying of some stone to provide these is not development. I have therefore amended the description of development to "use of land as a camping and caravan site".

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on occupiers of nearby dwellings with regard to noise and disturbance.

Reasons

4. The appeal site forms part of an existing long-established camping and fishing site, comprising three large ponds, a café and shop, several static caravans and touring caravan pitches, a toilet and shower block, and associated access and parking. It is unclear from the information before me how any material change of use would occur from siting additional touring caravans within an existing part of the site already occupied by caravans and ancillary facilities, or what the use of the land is changing from. The appeal site is not physically or functionally separated from the remainder of the camping field it forms part of, and it appears to be part of the same planning unit. I have not been advised of any planning permissions or conditions limiting the number of caravans that can be sited within this area or restricting any areas from use.
5. It is undisputed that the appeal site has been used for the siting of touring caravans since 2003. Whilst I am advised that an Enforcement Notice was served in 2005, in relation to the unauthorised use of land for the siting of tents and caravans, which was not appealed or withdrawn, I am also advised that this use recommenced shortly afterwards. I have not been provided with a copy of the Enforcement Notice, which I understand was served on previous landowners not the current owner, or advised what the use of the land had allegedly changed from. Nevertheless, it appears that a previous certificate of lawful development application was withdrawn due to this enforcement notice remaining in force.
6. Notwithstanding the above, I must determine what is before me based upon the submitted evidence and I have therefore assumed that the Council consider the appeal site to be a separate planning unit or the existing lawful use of the site to be something other than a campsite, and this has not been disputed by the appellant.
7. The area of land in question comprises eight generously spaced, modest camping pitches, formed by crushed stone surfaces, in an otherwise grassed area, and served by electric hook up points. These pitches are physically and functionally connected to the existing grassed area to the north, which at the time of my visit was occupied by a mixture of static and touring caravans and motorhomes on crushed stone surfaces and a toilet/shower block. The pitches subject to this appeal are well within the established boundary of the wider camping and fishery site.
8. Fishing ponds, additional caravans and associated facilities are located to the north and west of the main camping field, and Louth Town Football Club is located to the east, beyond a high hedge and netted fencing. The dwellings along Main Road are separated from the camping area by an enclosed site maintenance compound and a substantial landscaped buffer. The only exception to this is an area of extended garden, which appears to belong to the dwelling known as 'Former Vickers Store'. This extended garden area wraps around the rear gardens of Woodlands and Brookside, up to the edge of the site maintenance compound. The area of the garden adjoining the appeal site contains a garage and vehicular access from the shared access drive to the side, which also serves the camping and fishery site. Pitch 1 would be adjacent to the very end of this garden, a substantial distance

from the dwelling and separated from it by a long garden, vehicular access, garage and neighbouring gardens. A high hedge runs along most of this garden boundary, which also has a fence measuring approximately 2.5m high.

9. The adjacent houses are all approximately 30 metres or more from the touring caravan pitches in question. The landscape buffer is approximately 15 metres wide, more in places, comprising mature trees and shrubs. The garden to the dwelling known as 'Ossington', appears to wrap around the rear of the three adjacent properties. Most of the dwellings and gardens are therefore separated from the appeal site by dense landscaping, a fenced maintenance compound, garden fences, extended gardens, garages and parking areas. The pitches do not directly back onto any main garden areas immediately outside of any dwellings, where people are likely to sit out and have their doors open during periods of warmer weather.
10. There is no evidence before me of any complaints having ever been made to the existing or previous site owners or managers, or to the Council, regarding noise and disturbance arising from the camping element of the site. The single neighbour objection submitted in respect of the application relates primarily to alleged errors and ownership issues. Whilst noise and smell resulting from campers sitting and cooking outdoors or in awnings are briefly mentioned, no evidence or examples have been given to verify the extent to which noise and smell from the campsite occur, how often, how significant the harm is, or whether it has ever been reported or investigated. I note that no concerns have been raised by other local residents or by Environmental Health.
11. I am advised that in the reasons for serving an enforcement notice in 2005 it was stated that the retention of the use would cause harm to occupiers of adjacent properties by reason of noise and disturbance, and that a planning application in 2010 was refused partially due to its proximity to residential properties and the use potentially leading to noise and disturbance at unsociable hours. However, these cases date back some time, and I have not been advised of any evidence or complaints that may have been submitted at those times to substantiate those concerns.
12. I must base my decision on the current situation and the evidence before me. There is now a substantial mature landscape buffer along the boundary shared with residential properties, and Louth Town Football Club has relocated onto the adjoining site to the east. I saw that this comprises numerous playing and practice pitches, large flood lights indicating use at nighttime, as well as spectator stands, a large clubhouse and car parking. This use no doubt generates significant noise during practices and matches on evenings and at weekends, when local residents are most likely to be out in their gardens, and when customers camping and fishing are hoping to relax in peaceful surroundings. I saw no acoustic fencing around the football club site. Unlike fishing and camping, which tend to be very peaceful activities, football is a team sport which requires a lot of shouting from players, coaches, referees whistling, in addition to spectators cheering, and lots of comings and goings at the same or similar times.
13. At the time of my visit, which was around midday, the traffic noise on Main Road to the front of the houses was quite loud. To the rear of the dwellings and landscape buffer, it was very quiet despite the presence of people fishing and the presence of multiple static and touring caravans and motorhomes. No activity was taking place

at the Football Club. Despite my visit being during the school summer holidays, I did not see any children on site or any children's facilities or play areas, with larger family sites clearly being well catered for elsewhere in the nearby area.

14. It was apparent from signage outside the site shop and café, that caravan pitches are available for long and short stays. Long stay season pitches, whereby customers can leave their caravans on site for a full season or year, and visit it as and when they wish, are beneficial in terms of reducing caravan movements and generating income for site owners outside of peak holiday and weekend periods. It also means that even when all of the pitches are occupied by caravans, all of the caravans are not necessarily occupied by people, which in turn means no noise or disturbance will be generated from them.
15. Fishing is a peaceful sport, which people tend to do to relax. Whilst I have not been advised that the use of the campsite is limited to fishing customers, the nature and location of the site is unlikely to attract noisy visitors. Furthermore, most campsites have onsite managers and strict rules regarding noise after certain hours, playing music, campfires and barbeques. Whilst sitting and cooking outdoors is part of the camping experience for many, and is particularly common for those camping in tents, most caravans and motorhomes have cooking facilities inside. Sitting and cooking outside is only likely to occur on warm light summer nights. The same can be said of neighbouring residential dwellings and gardens in summertime, when many people will sit outside their homes, have barbeques and entertain friends and family. The low level of noise that would be generated by the minor increase in the number of caravans on the site, and their likely low level of occupancy, would be insignificant, particularly in comparison to the use of the football club and road traffic noise, which is already experienced by occupiers of adjacent dwellings.
16. I therefore conclude that the use of this small additional area of the existing camping field as a camping and caravan site for tents, touring caravans, campervans and motorhomes for holiday use only, would not result in unacceptable noise or disturbance to occupiers of nearby dwellings. It would therefore accord with policy SP10 of the East Lindsey Local Plan Core Strategy July 2018 (the Core Strategy) and paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which require amongst other things that development does not unacceptably harm nearby residential amenity.

Conditions

17. As the pitches have already been provided and used, it is not necessary to condition a time limit within which the development must commence or to condition the plans that the development must be carried out in accordance with. Moreover, the precise siting or layout of camping pitches is not a planning matter, it is only the use of the land that requires planning permission. Matters relating to measures necessary to meet caravan site licensing requirements do not need to be replicated by planning conditions where they are not necessary to make the proposal acceptable in planning terms. Works required to meet licensing requirements are generally permitted development.
18. The site has an existing amenity block and those using their own toilet, shower and washing up facilities within caravans and motorhomes would empty wastewater from these into existing chemical disposal points on site. As such a foul water disposal condition is unnecessary.

19. Due to the location of the site being at high risk of flooding, which will increase with climate change, it is necessary to impose conditions to ensure that caravans are occupied only for holiday use and not as a main place of residence. As the development would increase the number of caravans present on the wider site, it is reasonable to restrict their long term future occupancy during the winter months when the risk of flooding is greater, and to ensure a flood emergency plan is submitted to and approved in writing by the Council in accordance with the mitigation measures set out in section 5 of the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and policy SP17 of the Core Strategy.
20. In the absence of any evidence of noise or justified complaints from the use of the camping site, I do not consider the provision of acoustic fencing to be necessary in relation to the small additional number of pitches proposed. Such fencing would be unsightly and would restrict the movement of wildlife through the site and adjacent gardens. Furthermore, a fence exceeding two metres in height would need planning permission and would need to be subject to consultation with neighbours, who may well prefer the view of the existing landscaping to a high solid fence. I do however consider the retention of the landscape buffer to be essential to protecting and preserving the amenity of occupiers of adjacent dwellings. As such, a condition to ensure this is necessary.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons given above, I conclude the appeal should be allowed.

R Bartlett

INSPECTOR