

Planning, Design and Access Statement

In accordance with DCLG Circular 01/2006 Section 3

Introduction

This statement has been prepared by Cunnane Town Planning LLP on behalf of Mr M Cole in support of a planning application on land rear of Aldingbourne Farm Shop, Nyton Road, Aldingbourne. The application seeks permission for a change of use from agricultural land to provide four permanent plots for travelling showpeople and a pony paddock. Each plot incorporates space for mobile homes, storage, and maintenance and repair of showground vehicles and equipment.

In April 2011, temporary planning permission was granted for change of use from agricultural land to provide 3 permanent plots for travelling showpeople & pony paddock – to include the landscaping of part of the frontage to the current application site. All pre-commencement conditions had been discharged by the Council. The work has been carried out in accordance with the approved drawings. The landscaping buffer zones have been created along Nyton Road and plants have been planted. The first plot was occupied in August 2012, and therefore, in accordance with Condition 7 of AL/119/10, the permission will expire in August 2014. However, on 21st May 2014, an application for removal of Condition 7 of permission AL/119/10 was granted which allows permanent use of the site for travelling showpeople. The application site abuts the existing showpeople's site.

Site and Surroundings

The application land is located on the west site of Nyton Road (B2233) and has an area of approximately 3.3 hectares. Nyton Road merges with Arundel Road (A27) to the north-east which is approximately 0.5 kilometres from the site. Arundel Road is a major distributor road linking Chichester to the east and Arundel to the west. The site has a frontage of some 320 metres to Nyton Road, and has a safe, easy and convenient access via Nyton Road. Please refer to the attached location plan.

The application land is positioned at a lower level than Nyton Road by approximately 1.0 metre. On the eastern side a substantial area has been hardsurfaced with a barn (use as a 'farm shop') towards the road frontage. A mobile home is sited close to the farm shop. There are two polytunnels close to the eastern boundary and a touring caravan. The rest of the land is relatively level agricultural land and currently used for grazing of horses and rearing chickens. There are various sheds, animal shelters/hutches being used for agricultural purposes. The land is located in the open countryside and has no other designations on the Arun District Local Plan Proposals Map.

The nearest settlements are Aldingbourne, about a kilometre to the south; Nyton, Westergate and Eastergate, approximately within 2.0 to 3.0 kilometres radius to the east; and Norton approximately 1.1 kilometres to the northeast. In the wider context, Chichester and Tangmere are located to the east approximately 6.5 and 2.2 kilometres respectively; and Barnham some 4.4 kilometres to the southwest. These settlements provide a good range of services; these include post offices, a variety of shops and supermarkets, garages and fuel stations, public houses, churches, village halls, GP surgeries, primary and secondary schools, and recreation grounds.

The site is located outside of Flood Zones 2 or 3, as defined on the Environment Agency's website.

Proposal

This application seeks permission for a change of use from agricultural land to provide four permanent plots for travelling showpeople and a pony paddock. Each plot incorporates space for mobile homes, storage, and maintenance and repair of showground vehicles and equipment. The existing mobile home would be relocated to proposed plot A. All other buildings, polytunnels, hardstanding areas, and access would remain unchanged.

Need for sites within Arun District

The DCLG published 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites' (PPTS) in March 2012. This document provides up to date Government policy for Traveller Sites which includes Travelling Showpeople's sites. The Government's overarching aim is to ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates their traditional and nomadic way of life while respecting the interests of the settled community. Amongst other identified aims in respect of traveller sites, Paragraph 4 of the PPTS document requires the promotion of more private traveller site provision. It also recognises that local authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purpose of planning, and increase the number of traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission.

Due to the nature of the Travelling Showpeople's requirements, the sites generally combine residential, storage and maintenance uses which are unlikely to be accommodated on land within a settlement. A site outside of a settlement boundary is therefore often suitable for Travelling Showpeople.

Opinion Research Services (ORS) and Peter Brett Associates (PBA) were commissioned by the Costal West Sussex authorities (including Arun District Council) and the South Downs National Park, to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment. The main objective of this study is to provide the Councils with robust, defensible and up-to-date evidence about the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the Costal West Sussex authorities during the period until 2027. A 'Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment' report was published in April 2013.

The report recommended that there is a minimum need for 5 additional plots for Travelling Showpeople between 2012 and 2017; 1 plot between 2018 and 2022; and 1 plot between 2023 and 2027. Overall, there is a need for additional 7 plots between 2012 and 2027. Paragraph 6.7 of the report recognises that the land adjacent to application site has a temporary planning permission (which has now permanent permission) for 3 plots and has therefore been counted as need within the assessment. In summary, it is clearly demonstrated that there is an immediate need for 5 additional plots to be met by 2017.

Furthermore, 'Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites Study (September 2013)' identifies that the application site is suitable for an extension of the existing site. It also recognises that the application site could achieve 4 travelling showpeople's plots between 2012 and 2017. With regard to the application site's achievability, the report recognises that *"the existing plots are already established and have temporary permission therefore full planning permission is achievable. There appear to be no reasons why the site could not be also be extended by the existing occupants. The land is available, policy and physical constraints are capable of being overcome and mitigation measures are feasible subject to the ability of the owner to finance the development. The development appears to be viable."*

In summary of the Site Study assessment for the application site (Appendix 4 of the Site Study) states that *"This is an existing Travelling Showpeople site which needs to be safeguarded and provided full planning permission. The adjacent land to the east is in the same ownership and would be suitable for an extension of the existing site, subject to suitable landscape mitigation measures to protect the public rights of way"*

and reduce the visual impact from the site on the countryside and neighbouring uses.” Therefore, there would be a clear advantage to grant permanent permission for the application site to meet the identified needs of additional plots within the Arun District.

Effect of the proposal on visual amenity of the Countryside

As the application land is positioned at a lower level than Nyton Road by approximately 1.0 metre, the development has limited visibility from Nyton Road. Furthermore, the proposed landscape buffer zones along Nyton Road screen the site effectively. Due to its location and siting, the proposed development would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the countryside and its is an ideal site for Travelling Showpeople's use as identified in 'Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites Study (September 2013)'. Therefore, in principle, the use of the site for Travelling Showpeople outside of the settlement boundary would be acceptable and comply with the Local Plan Policy GEN 2.

Should the permission be given for the future development of the site, a row of trees will be planted along the proposed internal road which would provide further screen the proposed development. This would result in very limited visibility of the development. Please refer to the attached Proposed Site Layout, drawing ref: CTP/5153/PRO1. In summary, the proposed landscape works would obviate any harm to the visual amenity of the countryside or passing traffic on Nyton Road and thus comply with the Council Local Plan Policy GEN3.

Highways

The site has a safe, easy and convenient access via Nyton Road. The site has excellent access to the main highway network via Nyton Road (B223) to the A27 and the region in which the applicants' fairgrounds operate. There are two bus stops located at the junction of Nyton Road and Marsh Lane which are less than 450 metres from the application site. In addition, there are two bus stops located close to Church Road and Nyton Road which are approximately 700 metres south-west of the site. The bus stops serve regular and frequent bus services running between Chichester, Barnham and Bognor Regis. Barnham Railway Station is located to the southwest which is approximately 4.0 kilometres to the south-west of the application land. It provides services to London Victoria via Gatwick Airport, Brighton, Portsmouth, Southampton and various destinations in West Sussex. Therefore, the site enjoys good public transport facilities.

Access to Services and Facilities

Chichester is located some 6.5 kilometres to the east of the site and has a local supermarket with other local community facilities. Nyton, Westergate and Eastergate, are approximately within 2.0 to 3.0 kilometres radius to the east; and Barnham approximately 4.4 kilometres to the southwest. These settlements provide a wide range of services include post offices, varieties of shops and supermarkets, garages and fuel stations, public houses, churches, village halls, GP surgeries, primary and secondary schools, and recreation grounds. Residents of the application site would not be required to travel great distances to access facilities or services and access to these existing facilities would be made by public transport.

The application site is an ideal site for Showpeople's use and owned by the applicants. It is suitable, appropriate and sustainable development therefore the 'Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites Study' identifies as a suitable site for Travelling Showpeople.

Landscaping

The landscaping proposals would soften the appearance of the operational development on the site and improve boundary screening. The applicant would accept a suitable landscaping mitigation condition, if necessary.

Scale

The proposals are for the siting of caravans, mobile homes and equipment storage, all of which tends to be single storey height.

Appearance

The existing earth burn/landscaping buffer zone has been created all along the Nyton Road including frontage along the application site. This would result in very limited visibility of the caravans and do not harm the visual amenity of the countryside or passing traffic on Nyton Road.

Access

The site has a frontage of some 230 metres to Nyton Road, and has a safe, easy and convenient access via Nyton Road. The access point to and from the site would remain unchanged.

Conclusion

The recent study recognises that there is an immediate need for additional plots for Travelling Showpeople in Arun. Allowing this land as a permanent site for Travelling Showpeople would meet the needs of additional pitches within the Arun District. The study also recognises that the application site is the best suitable, available, achievable, and sustainable site in comparison with all other sites within West Sussex. The application site has a safe, easy and convenient access via Nyton Road. It is served by public transport, with regular bus services to local settlements which allows residents to travel to local centres in a sustainable way.

For the reasons set out within this planning statement, this proposal accords with, and is supported by, national and local planning policies including the adopted National Planning Policy Framework and its Technical Guidance and Planning Policy for Traveller Sites. Therefore, it is requested that planning permission should be granted.