

**FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF
BUILDING ADJACENT TO THE EXISTING CENTRAL RECEPTION BUILDING TO
PROVIDE AN OWNERS LEISURE AND RELAXATION FACILITY AT;**

CHURCH FARM HOLIDAY VILLAGE

PAGHAM

CHICHESTER

WEST SUSSEX. PO21 4NR

PLANNING STATEMENT

CLIENT:	BOURNE LESIURE LTD
PROJECT REF:	3150/KE/EF
ISSUE:	ONE
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BACKGROUND

Bourne Leisure Ltd own holiday parks throughout the country and are the largest operator of holiday parks in the UK.

Church Farm Holiday Village is a large holiday park located to the south of Pagham, West Sussex and comprises static caravans. As part of ongoing investment upon the park, our clients Bourne Leisure Ltd propose the construction of a owners leisure and relaxation facility.

To respond to the ever-increasing demand for quality facilities upon established holiday park's in the UK and in particular within West Sussex, Bourne Leisure Ltd have been seeking to improve and expand their holiday parks to accommodate higher quality facilities and static holiday caravans in more attractively landscaped settings. Bourne Leisure Ltd is keen to improve the quality of the central facilities at Church Farm Holiday Village.

These proposals would further enhance the overall economy by greater visitor expenditure. The development accords with the main objective that emphasises the desire for higher quality tourist accommodation.

SITE AND SURROUNDING

The application site is located within the boundary of Church Farm Holiday Village, one of the UK's premier holiday parks, occupying some circa 43 hectares of land to the south of Pagham, West Sussex.

The holiday park currently accommodates static holiday caravans. Existing on park facilities comprise a playground/sports facilities, indoor clubroom, café-bar, indoor/outdoor swimming pool and entertainment facilities.

The site is accessed via one vehicular access point from Church Lane. There are no plans to alter or adapt any vehicular access points into the Park as a result of these works.

Church Farm Holiday Village is designated for permanent holiday accommodation in the Development Plan.

THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

At present the holiday park comprises holiday caravans together with facility buildings which include clubroom's/bars. The central complex building provides the main hub for park guests and provides an attraction within the overall park.

It is proposed to construct an owner's leisure and relaxation facility to be constructed adjacent to the existing reception building.



Existing Central Reception Building

The proposed building is detailed upon Drawing Nos. 3150-120, 121, 122 and 123. The proposed building accommodates the proposed owners leisure and relaxation facility within the central part of the site where the site lends itself to accommodating a building of this size.

The application site being in the centre of the existing holiday park is not viewed from the surrounding areas from any direction.

The proposal would contribute to the upgrading of the park, providing improved holiday leisure facilities for visitors and will assimilate aesthetically with their surroundings.

PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS 7) - applies to rural areas, including country towns and villages and the wider, largely undeveloped countryside up to the fringes of larger urban areas. It therefore applies to the application site.

The PPS 7 states that local planning authorities should *"support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit rural businesses, communities and visitors which utilise and enrich, but do not harm the character of the countryside, its towns, villages, buildings and other features"* (paragraph 34/i). In this way the PPS supports the proposed development.

In Paragraph 37 the Statement advises, *"The Government expects most tourist accommodation requiring new buildings, to be located in, or adjacent to, existing towns and villages"*. In this way the PPS supports the proposed development.

In Paragraph 38 the Statement advises, *"Similarly, planning authorities should adopt a positive approach to proposed extensions to existing tourist accommodation where the scale of the extension is appropriate to its location and where the extension may help to ensure the viability of such businesses"*. In this way the PPS supports the proposed development.

The Statement advises that when considering proposals for static holiday parks, local authorities are to *"ensure that new or expanded sites are not prominent in the landscape and that any visual intrusion is minimised by effective, high-quality screening"* (paragraph 39). The proposals are already extremely well screened such that there will be no visual intrusion in the landscape.

The Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism offers support for rural based schemes including those offering holiday accommodations such as touring caravan, static caravans or holiday lodges. Annex A states that sites that are close to existing settlements will generally be more sustainable as some local services may be accessed by means other than the car. The application site is adjacent to Pagham, which provides local shops and services with Bognor Regis 4.3 miles to the east, which accommodates town centre shops and services. Bognor Regis also provides seafront beaches and the associated attractions. To the north is Chichester some 7.5 miles distance.

As an established and popular caravan holiday park, Church Farm Holiday Village contributes greatly to the local economy, drawing in visitors at all times of the year. Allowing for the development of quality tourist accommodation will allow the park owner to respond to the changing nature of domestic tourism, offering a high-quality product to an increasingly discerning market.

At a time of contraction in other sectors of the economy the domestic tourism industry is experiencing something of an upturn, due to a reduction in foreign holidays fuelled by a poor Sterling exchange rate, and a trend towards 'greener' holidays. It is imperative that local authorities acknowledge the needs of tourist businesses to take advantage of the changing nature of the market by offering a full range of high-quality accommodation.

The Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism (May 2006)

The Good Practice Guide (GPGPT) offers support for rural based schemes including those for static holiday and touring caravan parks and holiday chalet developments. The GPGPT discusses, at paras. 2.5 and 2.6, the benefits of tourism to the local environment. Para 2.5 states that: *"The revenue generated by tourism can help to: (1) support and enhance local services and facilities such as shops and pubs particularly in rural areas; (4) aid diversification within the rural economy; and, (5) underpin the quality of the local environment and facilitate further enjoyment of it by residents and visitors"*. Para 2.6 states that: *"Tourism depends heavily on the natural and built environment and can also be the key to maintaining and enhancing the environment: (1) the economic benefits of tourism in particular can help to sustain and improve both the natural and built physical environment; (4) in rural areas the health of the environment and of the community depends on the viability of the local economy. So areas which attract visitors for their scenic beauty and which enjoy income from tourism will be better able to sustain the local environment: and (5) proposals involving high quality design improve the visual and environmental experience for visitors and the local community alike."*

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY – continued

Planning Policy Statement 4 “Planning for Prosperous Communities”.

PPG4 is in the process of being revised and the consultation paper on Planning Policy Statement 4 (PPS4): ‘Planning for Prosperous Communities’ is currently in draft form. The consultation paper sets out the need to recognise that sustainable economic development is an important material consideration in the planning process and that economic benefits should not be discounted unless without proper and thorough consideration of the whole range of issues.

Policy EC12 sets out guidance on determining applications for economic development. It is noted that the first objective reflects guidance that was previously found in the Draft PPS4 (paras 27-28). EC12.3 (1) states that:

“local planning authorities should: consider proposals for economic development other than town centre uses, favorably unless there is good reason to believe that the social, economic and/or environmental costs of development are likely to outweigh the benefits”.

In other words, the onus will in the future be on the local planning authority to demonstrate why a business proposal should not go ahead and if it can’t, then that proposal should be approved.

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

As detailed in the Planning Statement, the proposal meets with the relevant local planning policies in the following ways:

- The application site is well screened and forms a natural extension to the existing park layout within the existing site boundaries. The proposal will not adversely affect the character and appearance of the surrounding area and has no adverse impact on nature conservation interests or residential amenity. The site is in a sustainable location with good road access and well related to the public transport network. The proposal therefore meets all the criteria of the Local Plan and accords with the national planning policy guidance in the GPGPT.
- The proposal will make a significant contribution to the local economy through increased visitor spend, as well as supporting local jobs employed in the holiday park sector.
- Policy allows for the enlargement of permanent holiday accommodation provided that there will be no adverse visual impact from the permanent accommodation on the rural character. It is submitted that the proposals will have no adverse visual impact on the rural character. Planning applications for the expansion of existing permanent (holiday) accommodation sites, should be approved where the following criteria can be met:
 - a. They adjoin, or are directly related to, the existing built facilities;
 - b. They do not detract from their surroundings;
 - c. They enhance the environment and will improve the visual appearance of the site;
 - d. New or replacement buildings are appropriate in design and appearance and the resulting density of the site does not adversely affect the rural character of the area.

The application site falls into the category which '*adjoins the existing built facilities*' (holiday park) and the site's proposed use for holiday facility accommodation would be directly related to the existing holiday park (criteria a). The proposed building is confined within the existing site area and would not detract from the sites surroundings. The proposed building would not adversely affect the rural character.

In addition, proposals for the development of holiday facility accommodation should only be acceptable in principle where:

- a. They are associated with an existing permanent accommodation site; or
- b. A new hotel, similar serviced accommodation or self-catering accommodation is provided; or
- c. Existing accommodation is upgraded; or
- d. The extension of the tourist season is promoted; or
- e. They are small scale and ancillary to an existing agricultural enterprise; or
- f. An existing touring caravan and camping site is upgraded without detriment to the visual amenity and rural character of the area and does not become permanent holiday accommodation; and
- g. It does not involve the loss of bed spaces considered to be important to the tourist industry unless required by development to upgrade accommodation at a lower density; and
- h. The Council is satisfied; the development will be retained for holiday use.

The proposals comply with this policy on the basis that (a) the proposals are associated with permanent accommodation site, (c) existing accommodation would be upgraded, (d) season is extended, (f) the proposals have been sited and designed, to limit impacts to the visual amenity and rural character of the area, (g) the proposal does not involve the loss of bed spaces (h) use can be controlled by condition.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The objective of Local Policy seeks to add quality to the existing portfolio of tourism products with particular promotion of green tourism. All tourism and leisure related proposals would be assessed in relation to their impact on:

1. Delivering a high quality experience for visitors.
2. Enabling existing tourism businesses to adapt to change and improve their services.
3. Increasing opportunities to improve skills levels.
4. The development of the green tourism product.
5. The development of new niche tourism projects.
6. The viability and functioning of local communities.
7. The built and natural environment and its capacity for further development.

Support will be given to sustainable proposals, which improve the quality and diversity of existing tourist facilities, accommodation and infrastructure and have a particular focus on growth in the off-peak tourism periods.

The proposals would comply with criterion *1.* of the above policy as the proposals are centred on delivering a higher quality experience for visitors. The proposal would offer a high-quality product to an increasingly discerning market.

KEY PLANNING ISSUES

Following on from the planning policy discussion above, we now summarise the main reasons why the principle of the proposal should be considered positively.

SUSTAINABLE SITE LOCATION

The site is well located to benefit from the existing local services and facilities of Pagham and Bognor Regis.

TRAFFIC IMPACT

In terms of the location of the site and highway safety, it is submitted that the proposals would not have a detrimental effect on the road system.

LANDSCAPING

The proposed use of sympathetic materials that keep the proposal in keeping with its site context.

IMPACT UPON THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Improving the central facility accommodation at the park will aid business within the local economy and bring additional trade to the shops and other businesses in Tattershall and Woodhall Spa. This all helps to spread the benefits of tourist spending throughout the year, thus assisting local businesses in the less busy off season as well as during the summer months. Tourism supports local economies through direct spending on local goods and services by holidaymakers and through the provision of goods and services by the owner of accommodation in implementing and maintaining the development. This in turn may lead to the creation (or retention) of jobs both directly and indirectly.

CONCLUSION

Our client proposes to provide enhanced leisure and relaxation facilities within an existing holiday caravan's site that would satisfy the aims of Council and national policies and meets the future needs of visitors to the holiday park.

It is evident that the proposals are insignificant and will not cause any detrimental impact to the surrounding areas or to the visual appearance of the countryside.

On the balance of all material considerations and giving regard to the existing site usage and history it is considered that the application should be approved.