

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO:	Development and Conservation Control Committee	6th October 2004
AUTHOR/S:	Director of Development Services	

**S/1217/04/F - Waterbeach
Redevelopment of Existing Caravan Park to Comprise
34 Touring Pitches, New Toilet/Shower/Laundry Block, Reception Building and
Internal Road.
Extension of Season to 11 Months from 6th February to 5th January,
'Travellers Rest' Caravan Park, Chittering
for C. Crickmore**

Recommendation: Delegated Approval

Site and Proposal

1. The above application was Deferred at the 4th August Committee (Item No. 5) in order that further time could be given for the preparation of revised plans for the site access, together with the widening of School Lane, and also for the drafting of safeguarding conditions to cover the length of time a caravan(s) could stay on site. A copy of the August Report is attached as Appendix 1.

Update - Highways etc

2. i) **Access.** The applicant has employed a Highway Engineer who has worked closely with the local Highway Authority. A revised plan has been submitted, approved by the latter, which proposes:-
 - widening the existing access from School Lane from 4.4 metres to 6.8 metres, together with the provision of 1.5 metres wide footway on its western side;
 - its junction with School Lane would be provided with a 10.5 metre kerb radii and 4.5 metre x 45.0 metre visibility splay to the west i.e. towards the A10. The opposite side of the bell-mouth would have a smaller radii and 2.4 metres x 70.0 metres visibility splay.
3. ii) **School Lane.** At present School Lane, from the caravan park entrance to the A10, varies in width between 4.0 metres - 5.5 metres. Further east it is less than 4.0 metres wide. The revised plan widens School Lane to 6.8 metres from the inner-most point of the kerb radii with the A10, to just beyond the caravan park entrance. Thereafter, it reduces with a 1:25 taper, 40.0 metres long, to its present width.
4. iii) **Public House Access.** As recommended by the Local Highway Authority, it is proposed to close the present access to the public house car park onto the A10. Members agreed this closure in August. Access will now be achieved via the new caravan park access.
5. iv) **Guest Bedrooms.** Members will also recall at the August meeting, granting Delegated powers of approval for 8 guest bedrooms sited to the rear of the

public house. This was subject to the current access being closed and revised access plans being submitted. The same plans have been submitted for this scheme, but has resulted in a small change to the layout of the bedroom block. A new beer garden, to replace that to be built on, is also planned.

6. v) **Signage.** It is also proposed to install standard/corporate highway signs in the verge opposite the School Lane junction, one for the 'Travellers Rest', the other the usual brown and white logo sign of a caravan and a tent.
7. vi) **Caravan Park Layout.** This stays fundamentally the same but the widening of the access roadway has meant that the proposed Reception/Office building, now 12.0 metres x 7.0 metres, is to be re-sited on the opposite side of the road and the number of pitches reduced to 34.

Update - Conditions

8. The current consent for the site permits the use of the land and a '40 pitch camping and caravanning site' between the 1st April and 30th September in any one year.

The applicants wish to continue this use, but to bring it up to meet modern standards and expectations, and also to extend the season to 11 months i.e. from 6th February in one year to 5th January in the following.

Please refer to Appendix 2 - the letter from Humberts Leisure dated 6th May 2004.

9. Local concern centres on the fact that the site, if granted for the extended season, will become a permanent residential site. That is not the applicant's intention and is not relevant to this application. If matters were to change in the future then a decision will be taken at that time, taking into account the use(s) and relevant policies of the Development Plan. An application cannot be determined on what may, or may not, happen in the future.
10. Government advice and Case Law have both endorsed that the imposition of a condition requiring that the site should not be used outside the permitted time and that all touring caravans are removed is a valid condition.
11. The storage of caravans is a separate use for which consent would be required. Again, it is not part of this application.
12. It is suggested that a condition be imposed to the effect that a touring caravan can only stay for a specific number of days. This is more controversial due to severe problems of enforcement; the monitoring of pitch letting records being required.
13. As can be seen from the Agent's letter of 12th August, attached as Appendix 3, more sites are allowing a caravan owner to leave the caravan on site when not in use, so that they can return the following week, later in the month or whenever. Whilst I accept that this may have some effect on the visual quality of the area, there are obvious gains to the residents of Chittering, and users of the A10, in that traffic movements are reduced substantially. There are no such conditions on the present use of the land and 'what is to stop a caravan owner, if such a condition were to be imposed, leaving the caravan park with his caravan, turning round, re-entering the park, and booking onto another pitch?'

14. In light of the current, unrestricted consent on the land, and Case Law, I would recommend conditions restricting the use of the caravan park to touring caravans only, and only to be occupied by persons on holiday and only with a main place of residence elsewhere and that all caravans are removed on or before 5th January, not to return until the 6th February at the earliest.
15. Again, from Case Law, it is clear that a 'static caravan' is one that is 'plugged in', i.e. permanent connections for electricity, water and foul drainage. This is a separate use for which planning permission would be required. A touring caravan will probably have a temporary connection to an electrical hook-up point only. Water would be collected from a water point and waste water/foul waste disposed of at a disposal point within the central shower block.

Planning Comments - Key Issues

16. Although the land has the benefit of a consent for 40 pitches, there are no restrictive conditions other than that it can only operate for 6 months of the year. It is clear that the holiday industry has changed dramatically in the 30 years since consent was granted, as have people's life-styles and spare time. Expectations are also far higher.
17. The proposed layout, now for 34 pitches and facilities, is what the public expects today. As explained above, it is extremely difficult, if not impracticable and unenforceable, to impose conditions restricting length of stay etc. However, those suggested above are felt to be reasonable.
18. Since the August Committee the **Environment Agency** has asked for the submission of a Flood Risk Assessment. The applicant has an engineer investigating this issue and a verbal report will be made in this respect.

Recommendation

19. Delegated approval, subject to the satisfactory resolution of the Flood Risk Assessment, and as amended by Drawing No. 2004-11-2 Rev A and 2004-11-3, by M. S. Ford Associates, together with letter dated 10/9/04 and Drawing No. 01/B franked 15/9/04, and to the following conditions:
 1. Standard Condition 'A' - Time limited permission (Reason 'A')
 2. The site shall not be used other than for holiday purposes only, with any touring caravan, camper van or tent occupied by holidaymakers whose main place of residence is elsewhere. (Rc - To ensure that the site is used in connection with the tourism industry only and is not occupied by persons other than holiday makers and not for residential purposes.)
 3. No touring caravans, camper vans or tents shall remain on site during the period 6th January and 5th February in any one year. (Rc - To ensure that the site is used in connection with the tourism industry only and is not occupied by persons other than holiday makers and not for residential purposes.)
 4. No pitches or any other part of the site shall be occupied at any time by a static caravan. (Rc - To ensure that the site is not used for temporary, seasonal and/or permanent residential purposes.)
 5. SC51 - Landscaping Scheme. (Rc51)

6. SC 52 - Implementation of Landscaping. (Rc52)
7. SC60 - Boundary Treatment 'all'. (Rc60)
8. SC5f - Hardsurfing and 'individual pitches, parking and patio areas'. All such areas shall be constructed with their finished surface level at the same level as existing ground levels. (RC5f) 'and to protect its rural qualities'.)
9. SC5a - Materials 'walls and roofs' (Rc5a ii)
10. No development shall be commenced until detailed elevations of the Reception/Office building have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; the development shall be completed in accordance with such plans. (Rc - To ensure the details of the development are satisfactory.)
11. SC66 - Archaeological investigation. (Rc66)
12. The existing access into the present car park from the A10/Ely Road shall be permanently and effectively closed prior to the commencement of the use hereby approved. (Rc - Para.) (Rc10 - safety.)
13. All highway improvements to School Lane shown on Drawing Number 2004-11-2 Rev A (M. S. Ford Associates), together with the widened access into the touring caravan site shall be completed prior to any development hereby approved commencing. (Rc - Para.) (Rc10 - safety.)
14. + any additional conditions requested by the Environment Agency.

Informatives

Reasons for Approval

1. The approved development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:**
P7/6 (Historic Built Environment)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**
EN15 and RT11
2. The proposal conditionally approved is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - too large a facility for such a small community and would put a strain on local services;
 - if 11 months, the site would become a permanent residential one;
 - noise and disturbance to neighbours;
 - poor access; increase in traffic on A10;
 - layout too dense.

3. All other material planning considerations have been taken into account. None is of such significance as to outweigh the reason for the decision to approve the planning application.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
Planning Application File S/1217/04/F

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