

**APPLICATIONS REQUIRING REFERENCE
TO DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
(Reports by Planning Service Manager)**

Case No: 1001671FUL (FULL PLANNING APPLICATION)

Proposal: SITE IMPROVEMENTS AND UPGRADES TO PROVIDE AN ADDITIONAL 16 HARDSTANDINGS ON THE SITE AND AN EXTENSION TO THE INTERNAL ACCESS ROAD.

Location: CAMPING & CARAVANNING CLUB, HARDWICK ROAD, EYNESBURY

Applicant: THE CAMPING & CARAVANNING CLUB

Grid Ref: 517964 259360

Date of Registration: 29.10.2010

Parish: ST NEOTS

RECOMMENDATION - REFUSE

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

- 1.1 This is an existing camping and caravanning club site situated in the Area of Strategic Greenspace Enhancement (Huntingdonshire LDF Proposals Map) on the east side of the River Great Ouse between Eaton Socon and Eynesbury.
- 1.2 The proposal is for site improvements and upgrades to provide an additional 16 hardstandings on the site and an extension to the internal access road.

2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE

- 2.1 **PPS1: "Delivering Sustainable Development" (2005)** contains advice on the operation of the plan-led system.
- 2.2 **PPS5: "Planning for the Historic Environment" (2010)** sets out the Government's planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment.
- 2.3 **PPS7: "Sustainable Development in Rural Areas" (2004)** sets out the Government's planning policies for rural areas, including country towns and villages and the wider, largely undeveloped countryside up to the fringes of larger urban areas.
- 2.4 **PPG17: "Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation" (2002)** sets out the policies needed to be taken into account by regional planning bodies in the preparation of Regional Planning Guidance (or any successor) and by local planning authorities in the preparation of

development plans (or their successors); they may also be material to decisions on individual planning applications.

- 2.5 **PPS25: “Development and Flood Risk” (2010)** sets out Government policy on development and flood risk. Its aims are to ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages in the planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, and to direct development away from areas of highest risk. Where new development is, exceptionally, necessary in such areas, policy aims to make it safe, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, reducing flood risk overall.

For full details visit the government website <http://www.communities.gov.uk> and follow the links to planning, Building and Environment, Planning, Planning Policy.

3. **PLANNING POLICIES**

Further information on the role of planning policies in deciding planning applications can also be found at the following website: <http://www.communities.gov.uk> then follow links Planning, Building and Environment, Planning, Planning Information and Guidance, Planning Guidance and Advice and then Creating and Better Place to Live

3.1 **East of England Plan - Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (May 2008)**

Policies viewable at <http://www.go-east.gov.uk> then follow links to Planning, Regional Planning then Related Documents.

- **E6: “Tourism”** - Proposals for tourist development should be fully sustainable in terms of their impact on host communities, local distinctiveness and natural and built environments.
- **ENV6: “The Historic Environment”** - Within plans, policies, programmes and proposals local planning authorities and other agencies should identify, protect, conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the historic environment of the region including Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings.
- **ENV7: “Quality in the Built Environment”** - requires new development to be of high quality which complements the distinctive character and best qualities of the local area and promotes urban renaissance and regeneration.
- **WAT4: “Flood Risk Management”** – River flooding is a significant risk in parts. The priorities are to defend existing properties from flooding and locate new development where there is little or no flooding.

3.2 **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003)**

Saved policies from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk> follow the links to environment, planning, planning policy and Structure Plan 2003.

- None relevant.

3.3 **Huntingdonshire Local Plan (1995)**

Saved policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 are relevant and viewable at www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan95

- **R2:** "Recreation and Leisure Provision" – applications for recreational facilities will be considered on their merits bearing in mind: advice from sporting recreation authorities on the need for further provision; the effect on residential amenity; the effect on landscape, visual amenity, nature conservation and archaeological interest; access, parking and traffic generation; the siting, design and materials of any building and structures.
- **R13:** "Countryside Recreation" – provision of facilities for informal countryside recreation subject to the criteria of R2 will be supported.
- **En5:** "Conservation Area Character" - development within or directly affecting conservation areas will be required to preserve or enhance their character and appearance.
- **En9:** "Conservation Areas" - development should not impair open spaces, trees, street scenes and views into and out of Conservation Areas.
- **En17:** "Development in the Countryside" – development in the countryside is restricted to that which is essential to the effective operation of local agriculture, horticulture, forestry, permitted mineral extraction, outdoor recreation or public utility services.
- **To2:** "Tourism" – new or improved tourist facilities will be encouraged and permitted where the scale and location is not environmentally detrimental nor damaging to residential amenities. Satisfactory access and car parking must be approved.
- **To9:** "Caravan and Camping Accommodation" – indicates that the District Council will support the provision of caravan and camping sites for tourists where they are not environmentally detrimental, nor adversely affect residential amenity. Satisfactory road access and essential services are required.
- **CS9:** "Water" – development proposals that prejudice schemes for flood water management will normally be refused.

3.4 **Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alterations (2002)**

Saved policies from the Huntingdon Local Plan Alterations 2002 are relevant and viewable at www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan - Then click on "Local Plan Alteration (2002)

- None relevant

3.5 **Adopted Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2009**

Policies from the Adopted Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2009 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> click on Environment and Planning then click on Planning then click on Planning Policy and then click on Core Strategy where there is a link to the Adopted Core Strategy.

- **CS1:** “Sustainable development in Huntingdonshire” – all developments will contribute to the pursuit of sustainable development, having regard to social, environmental and economic issues. All aspects will be considered including design, implementation and function of development e.g., by making best use of land, buildings and existing infrastructure.
- **CS3:** “The Settlement Hierarchy” – states that any area not specifically identified are classed as part of the countryside, where development will be strictly limited to that which has essential need to be located in the countryside.
- **CS9:** “Strategic Green Space Enhancement” – coordinated action to safeguard existing and potential sites of nature conservation value, create new wildlife habitats and contribute to diversification of the local economy and tourist development through enhancement of existing and provision of new facilities.

3.6 **Development Management DPD: Proposed Submission 2010**

Policies from the Development Management DPD: Proposed Submission 2010 are relevant.

- **C5:** “Flood Risk and Water Management” – development proposals should include suitable flood protection / mitigation to not increase risk of flooding elsewhere. Sustainable drainage systems should be used where technically feasible. There should be no adverse impact on or risk to quantity or quality of water resources.
- **E1:** “Development Context” – development proposals shall demonstrate consideration of the character and appearance of the surrounding environment and the potential impact of the proposal.
- **E3:** “Heritage Assets” – proposals which affect the District’s heritage assets or their setting should demonstrate how these assets will be protected, conserved and where appropriate enhanced.
- **P7:** “Development in the Countryside” – development in the countryside is restricted to those listed within the given criteria.
 - essential operational development for agriculture, horticulture or forestry, outdoor recreation, equine-related activities, allocated mineral extraction or waste management facilities, infrastructure provision and national defence;

- development required for new or existing outdoor leisure and recreation where a countryside location is justified;
 - renewable energy generation schemes;
 - conservation or enhancement of specific features or sites of heritage or biodiversity value;
 - the alteration, replacement, extension or change of use of existing buildings in accordance with other policies of the LDF;
 - the erection or extension of outbuildings ancillary or incidental to existing dwellings;
 - sites allocated for particular purposes in other Development Plan Documents.
- **P12: "Tourist Accommodation"** - Proposals for touring caravan or camp sites will be acceptable where:
 - d. the site is adjacent to an existing settlement; or
 - e. well-related and with good links to an existing settlement; and
 - f. no adverse visual impact is caused on the surrounding landscape; and
 - g. the site is, or can be served by adequate water and sewerage services; and
 - h. safe physical access can be achieved.

The occupation of new tourist accommodation will be restricted through the use of conditions or legal agreements to ensure tourist use and not permanent residential use.

3.7 **Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism 2006**

4. **PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 7500595FUL – planning permission granted for camping caravan site, toilet facilities and office. There is no restriction imposed on numbers of caravan pitches.
- 4.2 9200928FUL – planning permission granted for two site amenity buildings for camping and caravanning site

5. **CONSULTATIONS**

- 5.1 **St Neots Town Council – recommend APPROVAL (copy attached)**
- 5.2 **CCC Archaeologist** – the site lies in an area of high archaeological potential, therefore consider that the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation and recommend that this work should be commissioned and undertaken at the expense of the developer.
- 5.3 **CCC Rights of Way and Access Team** – public footpaths on the east and west sides of the development site. It does not appear that these will be directly affected therefore no objection to the application
- 5.4 **Environment Agency – OBJECT**, as the proposed development falls into a flood risk vulnerability category that is inappropriate to the

Flood Zone in which the application site is located. Recommend that the application should be refused planning permission on this basis.

6. REPRESENTATIONS

- 6.1 There have been no third party representations received regarding this proposal.

7. SUMMARY OF ISSUES

Principle

- 7.1 The site is situated within the countryside where in accordance with Local Plan Policy En17 there is a general presumption against new development. However, Local Plan Policy To9 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan, Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy and Policy P12 of the Development Management DPD: Proposed Submission 2010 provide support for the enhancement of a camping and caravan site in this location subject to access and environmental considerations.

- 7.2 In this case the site is an established caravan site. Planning permission was granted in 1975 with no restriction on the number of pitches. The proposed additional hardstandings (these are proposed on areas already used as pitches) and internal access road are within the existing site and there is no expansion of the site area proposed. They are grass pitches at the moment and are being replaced with an all weather surface. There is extensive screening and tree planting around the edge of the site which will be unaffected.

Highways issues

- 7.3 The proposal does not involve a material increase in the number of pitches that can be provided at the site and therefore traffic entering the site is not considered to be an issue in relation to this application.

Flooding

- 7.4 PPS25 classifies development types according to their vulnerability to flood risk and gives guidance on which developments are appropriate in each Flood Zone. It requires decision-makers to ensure that as part of the Sequential Test, development sites are appropriate to the type of development or land use proposed.

- 7.5 In this case, the Environment Agency has advised that the application site lies within Flood Zone 3 defined by PPS25 as having a high probability of flooding. It also advises that the development type in the proposed application is classified as highly vulnerable in accordance with table D.2 of PPS25, and tables D.1 and D.3 of PPS25 make clear that this type of development is not compatible with this Flood Zone and should not therefore be permitted.

- 7.6 In response, the applicant contends that the site is within a lower flood risk zone (Flood Zone 2), the development type is classified as more vulnerable rather than highly vulnerable and, notwithstanding this, the proposal would not increase the number of pitches available and is 'minor development'.

Conclusion

- 7.7 The principle of the proposed development and its impact on the character and appearance of the area are considered acceptable. Based on the Environment Agency's recommendation at the time of compiling this report, the risk of flooding is unacceptable. Any further comments received from the Environment Agency in response to the applicant's contentions above will be reported to the Panel at or before the meeting but, having regard to applicable national and local planning policies, and having taken all relevant material considerations into account including the Environment Agency's current recommendation of refusal, it is recommended that planning permission should be refused in this instance.

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8. RECOMMENDATION - REFUSE, for the following reason:

- 8.1 PPS25 classifies development types according to their vulnerability to flood risk and gives guidance on which developments are appropriate in each Flood Zone. It requires decision-makers to ensure that as part of the Sequential Test, development sites are appropriate to the type of development or land use proposed.

In this case, the application site lies within Flood Zone 3 defined by PPS25 as having a high probability of flooding. The development type in the proposed application is classified as highly vulnerable in accordance with table D.2 of PPS25. Tables D.1 and D.3 of PPS25 make clear that this type of development is not compatible with this Flood Zone and should not therefore be permitted. The proposals are therefore contrary to PPS25, East of England Plan 2008 Policy WAT4, Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 Policy CS9 and Policy C5 from the Huntingdonshire LDF Development Management DPD: Proposed Submission 2010.

Background Papers:

Planning Application File Reference:
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan, 2003
Huntingdonshire Local Plan, 1995
Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration, 2002
Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Adopted Core Strategy 2009
Development Management DPD: Proposed Submission 2010

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