

COMMENTS ON THE COMMITTEE REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED LEISURE USE AT SPAUNTON QUARRY PLANNING APPLICATION: NYM/2018/0791/FL

On behalf of the Spaunton Estate, we request that this letter is emailed to Members in advance of the planning committee and read when the application is considered by Members of the Authority in their determination of the planning application.

- The recommendation to grant planning permission for the proposed leisure use is welcome.
 - There are however issues within the report which are incorrect and which we hereby seek to bring to your attention.
 - The photograph contained within the report is wrong. The photograph does not show the site for the leisure use (except partly in the far distance) nor the building which is proposed to be retained.
 - The building to be retained is a solid structure which was formerly used as an office for the mineral operations at the site and public weighbridge.
 - Figures 1-5 overleaf show the building in question which is proposed to be used as a reception / site manager's office / communal facility (including the provision of loos and showers).
 - It is a single storey building that is well screened on the west side by existing tree and shrub growth which provides a natural backdrop when viewed from the east. Demolition of the building will compromise this screening.
 - The building already has the benefit of all services: mains electric, water (mains and borehole available on site) and telephone service. It has a large septic tank which services this building and the canteen / staff welfare building opposite which would be demolished as part of the final stages of implementing the Master Restoration Plan for the quarry and in order to implement this scheme / new use.
-



Figure 1: The building to be retained and sustainably reused.
Note the weigh bridge and the railings will all be removed.



Figure 2: The retained building structure to be used as a reception / site manager's office facility (including loos and showers). Clearly the appearance of the roof will change as pantiles are proposed along with new window frames and doors. If exception is made to the brick in the building, the applicant is willing to clad the structure in timber.



Figure 3: The current interior of the building is robust but will be completely refurbished



Figure 4: The interior - The existing kitchen.



Figure 5: The interior – the former loos.

- The building already exists and can be appropriately and sensitively upgraded.
- To retain and re-use this building creating a more attractive exterior is far more sustainable and environmentally friendly than demolishing it and rebuilding a timber structure.
- The planning case officer has referred to the existing building as being ugly. It is proposed to upgrade the structure with pantiles on its roof and refurbished windows and doors. Clearly the whole of the interior will have to be suitably refurbished. No internal partition is structural so a completely new internal layout is feasible.
- External utilitarian clutter such as signs, metal railing, etc. will be removed. It will be one of the first elements of the scheme visitors experience and it will be important for it to be attractive and welcoming.
- NYMPA have the use and very existence of the building in their control at all times. Spaunton Estate will accept a condition attached to any planning permission which seeks to ensure that the proposed reception and communal/loo/shower facility is removed from the land within 6 months of the leisure use not being operational.

The proposal is in accord with planning policy

The proposal fulfils the development aspirations of existing development plan policy I4 on tourism and recreation in the adopted Core Strategy which states that schemes:

will make use of an existing building. Proposals for new buildings will be expected to demonstrate that the facility cannot be **satisfactorily accommodated within an existing building** in that location (our emphasis).

The proposal fulfils the development aspirations of the emerging local plan especially:

- Strategic Policy C – Quality and Design of Development;
- Strategic Policy G- Landscape;
- Strategic Policy J – Sustainable Tourism and Recreational Development; and
- Strategic Policy K – The Rural Economy.

In particular, in the justification text for Strategic Policy J it specifically states that:

New buildings will only be permitted if the diversified use cannot be suitably accommodated through the conversion or alteration of an existing building;

In the case of camping or caravan sites the expectation is that that amenity blocks should utilise existing buildings on the site. If there are no suitable buildings, new structures may be acceptable if they are of lightweight design and construction so that it can easily be removed from the site. (Our emphasis).

The NYMPA had adopted a standard which follows the 'principles of sustainable tourism'; the planning application and its retention, refurbishment and re-use of the existing building also follows those standards.

Summary

The Spaunton Estate require retention of the existing redundant building for the reception / communal facilities. This will be upgraded both internally and externally and can be timber clad if required. This preferred option is the most sustainable one with the least disturbance to the natural environment.

If additional details are required to facilitate the above or any other option, we request that the application is delegated back to officers to oversee the submission of these details.

Thank you for taking into account these material considerations when determining the planning application.

16th April 2019