

From: John Purcell
Sent: 22 April 2021 14:15
To: Hilary Saunders
Subject: Cloughton Wood Lodges

Dear Hilary

Further to the planning committee meeting earlier in the month, I thought it would be useful to write to clarify a number of points that don't seem to have come across in an understandable way in our submissions regarding design, viability, the way the park would operate, what we are trying to create and the type of guests we expect.

Firstly the issue of footpaths seems to have been misunderstood. There is a footpath that runs through Cloughton woods down to Cloughton. It is not intended to change this footpath in any way.

Our original application proposed 21 6-person cabins. After consultation it was suggested that 15 units would be more appropriate and would, I believe, be in line with the Local Plan policy encouraging some larger units to improve the mix and access to different family sizes; and 15 units had already been consented.

Many families are now larger than 4 or 5 people, as a result of divorce, 2 families becoming one etc. and many families like to go on holiday together. Also, if there are young children, parents don't like leaving the children alone, but feel much safer if they are in the same cabin with them. We expect family groups including grandparents, families with children and their friends, 2 families together and all of the other combinations that one might imagine.

Consequently we accepted the proposal, re-designed the park and introduced some 8 and 10-person cabins.

It is essential to understand that the park isn't viable with 15 6-person tents. The amenity and reception buildings are expensive to build, and 8-10 staff then add to the overhead. We have redesigned the reception and amenities buildings and improved the quality of these substantially. These have been granted consent, which will improve the park, but also add to the cost of construction. Without enough customers the park would be loss making and could be allowed to deteriorate badly. We wouldn't embark on such a development, but other owners could certainly build the "cheap and cheerful" tent option. The current consent envisages lower quality buildings providing fewer amenities. The current extant consent suggests that the tents will be managed from the pub. We don't believe that this is a workable solution and would not provide night-time management of the site for the benefit of visitors and local residents. Highway improvements also add a meaningful amount to the budget, we have employed Arup to design the scheme, it has not been designed to a budget, but to highway requirements.

I know that there is concern about numbers, and it should be remembered that most hotels run at about 70% occupancy or less for much of the year. We too hope that we will build up to somewhere around 70-75% over a number of years. Furthermore, a 6-person cabin, or an 8, or a 10, doesn't mean that the cabin will be fully utilised. A 4 or 5-person group will book a 6 person cabin. 8 and 10 person cabins may not be full either for much of the year.

When it comes to booking we will obviously book the cabins to suit the party size. Should the small cabins be full we will then upgrade smaller parties into the 8 and 10-person cabins, with a price discount as appropriate. The larger units might be full during the summer holidays; for the rest of the year, we don't expect them to be completely full. Different types of holiday makers take their holidays at different times and will be of different sized parties.

Another concern that has been expressed is that of hens and stags. I really can't express strongly enough how we will resist this. We want to create something beautiful, restful, harmonious; somewhere where people can enjoy nature, the countryside, the woods, the moors, something as close to unique as a holiday park can be. We do not want hens and stags, they do not fit with our target demographic as they destabilize the park and erode reputation for quality peaceful accommodation.

We are developing our website and every page, every item, every word is aimed at the family market, that will respect the woods, the countryside (and our cabins). The leisure industry, particularly hotels is built on reputation, personal recommendation and repeat visits. It takes many years to build a reputation, and it is easily lost if it isn't carefully looked after. We propose to invest a significant amount of money and we want to build an exceptional holiday park. We will do everything we can to build that reputation, enhance it and preserve it. There will be no hens, stags, or rowdy parties.

Finally on this particular point, we are planning to build a very high-quality park, and it will be priced accordingly. We want our guests to feel that they received excellent value for money, that they paid for high quality and that the quality they received was higher than they expected. We also believe that these are the sorts of visitors that Cloughton wants to welcome to the area and to its economy.

This will not be priced for hens and stags and the website will make it expressly clear that they are not wanted in Cloughton Woods.

On management generally, the website will tell guests of the standards expected of them, and the onsite staff will also ensure that guests respect the woods, the park, nature and each other. This is a place where people can come and relax, and learn about woods (we plan to offer educational material for guests and their children; for anyone that wants to take part).

The website will have “park policies” to guide people during their stay, these will include amongst others: Security, privacy, smoking, noise, wildlife, nature, waste, environmental policy of the park, noise curfew after 10, and other T&C’s. We will have a FAQ’s section too.

The website will also have several pages and links highlighting external attractions, events, and leisure options such as the local pubs, restaurants, tea shops, grocery stores, butchers, farm shops, and everything else that our visitors will need. We will liaise with local businesses and hope to bring useful additional spending into the area. We believe that our website will be a great promotional tool showcasing the whole area.

The intention is to space the lodges in such a way that ensures as much privacy and distance between the units as possible. It is a suitably large area that will allow guests to enjoy the serenity of the woods in an authentic way while benefiting from centralised management and care.

While writing I thought it would also be useful to touch on our concept of husbandry. The woods fall under the regulatory regime of the Forestry Commission. We have employed Tillhill, the UK’s leading national Forestry consultants. They are preparing a 10 year plan for the forestry management. This is an optional level of management – the highest standard that can be adopted and we chose to do this from the beginning, because we think it is the right thing to do. The only reason this plan can’t be shown to you is the backlog at the RPA and with the benefit of hindsight we deeply regret involving them in the process as they have done nothing but slow us down. The 10 year plan will allow us to reflect our objectives for the woods and Tillhill’s role is to advise the best way to achieve these alongside that of managing a thriving and sustainable woodland, its biodiversity and the management of historical features amongst other things.

We have proposed to work with Tillhill, Elspeth Ingleby and Mark Antcliff with regard to the form and aim of the proposed Nature Zone and we are pleased to be doing this in addition to our planned care of the woods. We are happy to extend this as required. We have already reduced the number of internal paths in response to their request. The concept of a Habit Management Plan is also welcomed.

As a general note, we have agreed with the proposed planning conditions; I haven’t referred to each point that they cover in this email as that would be unproductive; being silent on them does not mean that we take any of them lightly.

I hope this is helpful, and I remain available to provide any information or clarification that might be required.

Kind regards

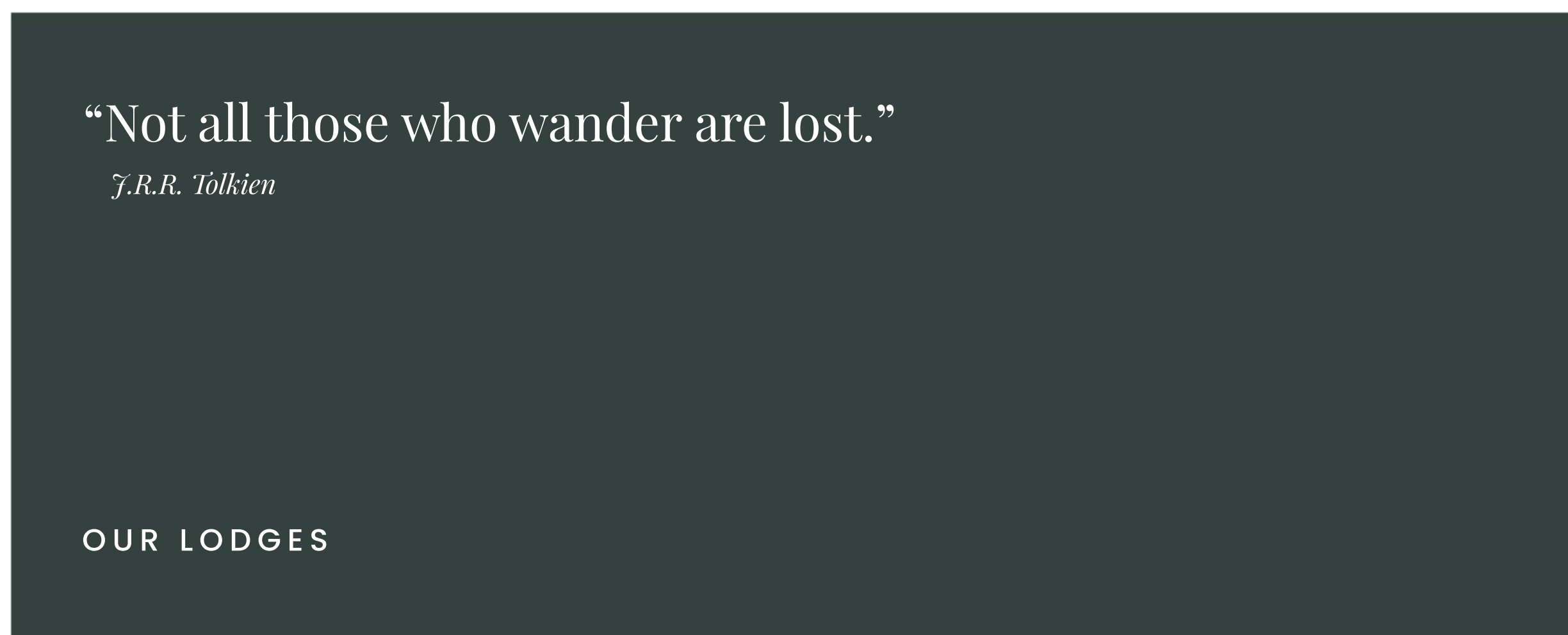
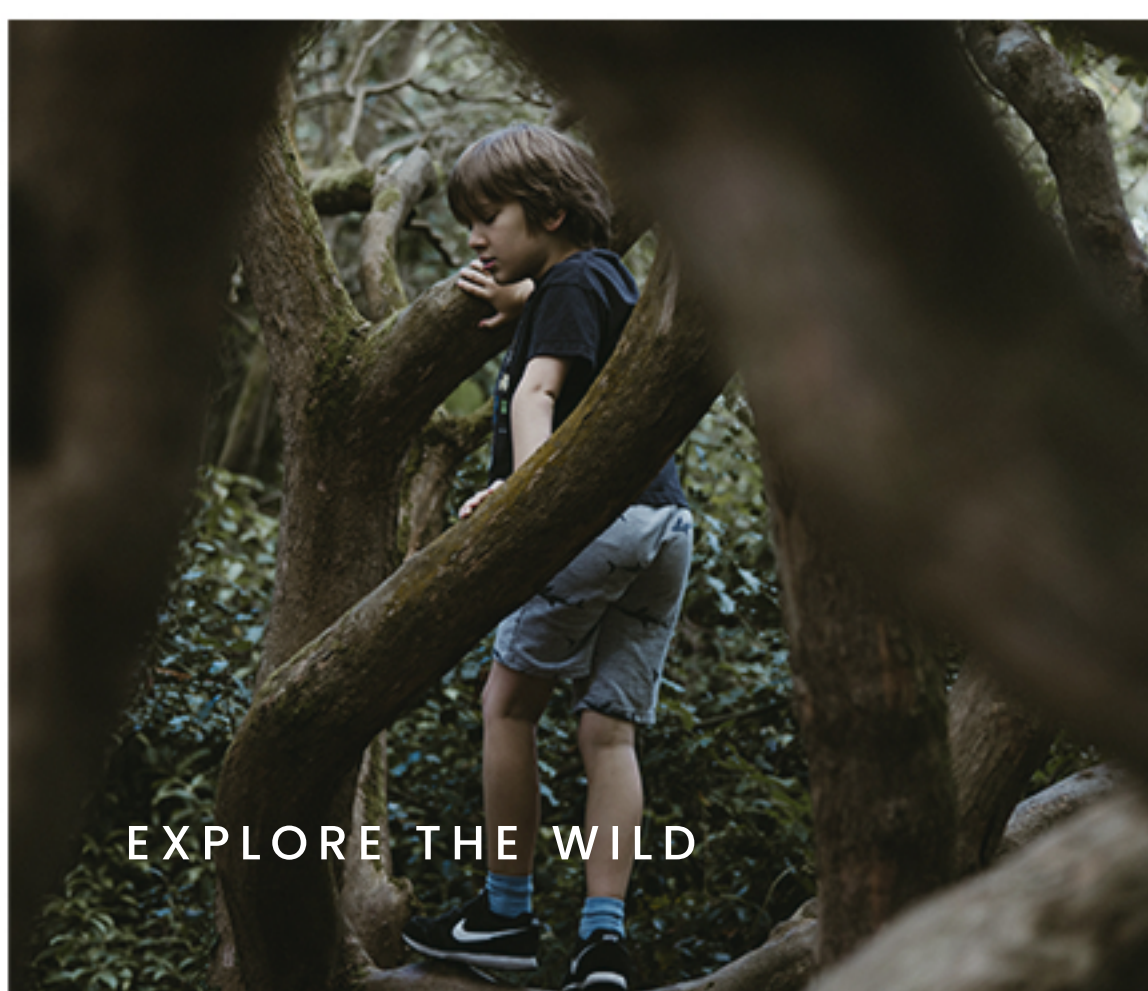
John Purcell

ESCAPE TO THE WILD

RELAX • ESCAPE • UNWIND

HOME BOOK LODGES ON SITE INFORMATION CONTACT

BOOK YOUR STAY WITH CLOUGHTON WOOD LODGES



EXAMPLE OF LARGE CALL TO ACTION

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HOME BOOK LODGES ON SITE INFORMATION CONTACT
TERMS & CONDIONS PRIVACY POLICY STAYING WITH US



ADDRESS LINE 1
ADDRESS LINE 2
ADDRESS LINE 3
ADDRESS LINE 4

00000 000 000
SALES@EMAILADDRESS.COM