

PROPOSAL DETAILS AND JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT

**Variation Of Condition 5 Of Planning Consent
NYM/2012/0785/FL
To Allow Extension Of Holiday Season To 12 Months**

**Ladycross Plantation Caravan Park
Egton Whitby
YO21 1UA**



**Prepared by
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13 July 2015

1. Introduction

This report has been prepared by Robert Barrs BSc Hons MRICS. Robert has an honours degree in Land Economics and is a professional associate member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. For over twenty years Robert has specialised in rural tourism and the sustainable development of holiday caravan parks. During that time he has represented both leading national operators and small private caravan park owners across all parts of the UK.

2. Background to Longer Holiday Seasons

With milder winters and the increased use of long weekend and mini break vacations, operators of caravan parks want to offer their customers the chance to use their modern, well insulated caravans and lodges during the winter months.

Traditionally, holiday parks are subject to planning conditions limiting the occupation of caravans to 9 or 10 months in each year. The purpose of such conditions is usually stated as being to ensure that caravans were not used for residential occupation, however the use of better worded conditions can still prevent residential use and allow the business to open for a longer season.

Following recent national planning guidance particularly the Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism caravan parks across the country have been able to extend the season they can offer customers. The Good Practice Guide provides a new model planning condition and sets out the advantages to the businesses which provide the accommodation and to those host communities which are supported by the spending that an extended holiday season can generate.

3. Proposal Summary

Ladycross Plantation Caravan Park is a well established caravan park which has been attractively developed within mature woodland. The site is exceptionally well screened and lies just off the A171 approximately three miles west of Whitby.

The business makes a small but important contribution to the local economy bringing tourists to the area who use other local businesses during their stay.

In order to continue to meet the demands of customers this application seeks to extend the holiday season to allow visitors to stay all year round.



4. Highways and Road Access

The proposal does not create any highway issue as there is no change to the access arrangements. There will be no increase in the number of caravans allowed on the park so the number of daily traffic movements to and from the site will not be affected under the proposal.

5. Landscape and Neighbourhood Issues

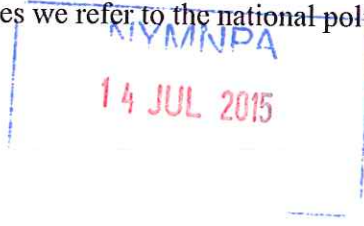
The caravan park is exceptionally well screened by mature woodland and makes no visual impact upon the surrounding landscape. During our site visit we viewed the park from all public vantage points and it is our view that there are no visual or landscape issues arising from this proposal.

6. Local Plan Policies

The North York Moors National Park Authority Local Development Framework Core Strategy document contains a number of policies relating to rural tourism and caravan park development. Policy 16 relates specifically to caravan park development and sets out criteria controlling the physical expansion of sites and new development, the policy does not discuss the holiday season or suggest occupancy conditions.

Policies 13 and 14 of the Core Strategy document support rural tourism and acknowledge the contribution that tourism can make to the local economy.

In the absence of any directly relevant local policies we refer to the national policies set out below.



7. National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF, published 2012, sets out the governments' planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Paragraph 14 states that at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which is seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking.

The NPPF goes on to state that where the development plan is absent, silent or that relevant policies are out of date permission is to be granted, unless any adverse impacts from doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the NPPF.

This proposal to extend the holiday season is in accordance with the NPPF's three strands of sustainable development, economic, social and environmental, as set out below.

Firstly regarding economic sustainability, the proposal will allow the expansion of an existing rural business providing an opportunity for customers to come to the park throughout the whole year not just in a prescribed holiday season, thus benefiting the park and the other complementary local business.

The proposal is socially sustainable as it will attract further new customers from outside the area, thereby helping to support a strong, vibrant and healthy local and wider community, responding to new and changing social aspirations for quality leisure and tourism all year round.

Thirdly the proposal is environmentally sustainable as it relates to an existing business which is already well integrated into the landscape and has proven to be compatible with all surrounding land uses.

Paragraph 28 of the NPPF goes on to state that in order to promote a strong rural economy, LPA's should support tourism and leisure proposals that help support rural communities and attract visitors which respect the character of the countryside.

Good Practice Guide On Planning For Tourism

National Planning policy is set out within PPS7 and also within The Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism published by the Department for Communities and Local Government. These documents set out a range of policies regarding caravan parks, their contribution to the local rural economy and the issue of occupancy restrictions.

We specifically refer to Annex B of The Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism which specifically discusses holiday caravan park occupancy conditions and suggests model conditions for local planning authorities to adopt, which allow the business to trade for a twelve month season whilst preventing any residential use of caravans.

It is clear that the national guidance acknowledges a need to continue to prevent residential occupancy of caravans but finds that overly restricting the duration of the holiday season is not a reasonable method of achieving this control as it greatly restricts the economic potential of the business in contributing to the local economy.



8. Summary

This caravan park is an asset to the local economy and can help support many complementary business within the community. The park wants to offer customers a longer holiday season so they can visit the area throughout the year. The application will allow the business to reach it's potential and contribute further to the local economy.

In our view the application is in accordance with the relevant local plan policies and national policies particularly NPPF and also The Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism.

We trust this application can be approved by delegated powers.

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Barrs & Co Chartered Surveyors
13 July 2015**

