



# The Planning Inspectorate

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Our Ref:  
T/APP/W9500/A/95/259503/P2  
01 MAR 1996  
Date:

Dear Sir

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990, SECTION 78 AND SCHEDULE 6  
APPEAL BY MRS S M WINKFIELD  
APPLICATION NO:NYM4/024/0044H/PA

1. The Secretary of State for the Environment has appointed me to determine your client's appeal against the refusal of the North York Moors National Park Committee to grant planning permission for the construction of an ablution block, roads and hardstandings and the stationing of upto 50 touring caravans on land at Rockwood Farm, Gowlands Lane, Cloughton. I have considered the written representations made by you and the Park Committee and also those made by the North Yorkshire County Council and the Cloughton Parish Council and other parties and interested persons, including those made directly to the council and forwarded to me. I inspected the site on 26 February 1996.
2. From the representations made and my inspection of the site and its surroundings, I consider that the main issues in this case are whether the development proposed would encroach upon and detract from the rural character of the national park; give rise to significant problems of highway safety; and harm the amenities of nearby residents because of noise and disturbance.
3. The appeal site consists of some 12ha of land between Gowlands Lane and the conifer plantations which line the main Whitby to Scarborough road as it crosses Cloughton Moor. It is in an area of very attractive open countryside with long open views to the south and west. In seeking to conserve that countryside, Policy E1 of the approved North Yorkshire Structure Plan and Policy G2 of the adopted North York Moors Local Plan reflect the aims of national park designation. Policy TR4 of the local plan states that touring caravan sites will only be permitted where the local environment can absorb them.
4. The eastern section of the site, on which the hardstandings and buildings would be located, is covered by a scrubby growth of conifers and birch interspersed with denser rhododendron thickets. You argue that the tree cover would screen the caravans but my view is that the amount of clearance which would be necessary to allow 50 touring caravans to be towed easily into and out of position on a regular basis would inevitably open up some views. Moreover, the western half of the site is very open and prominent from Gowlands Lane, as are the farmhouse and outbuildings. The addition to the existing group of buildings of a new access suitable for caravans, a winding 6m wide surfaced carriageway and a commodious parking bay for arriving and departing visitors would have a marked and adverse impact on the rural character of the area. The regular passage of touring vans across that open land would further emphasise the intrusive nature of the development.

NYMNP	
Rec'd - 4 MAR 1996	
Ack'd _____	
Ans'd _____	

5. While, in time, the additional planting proposed would partly screen both the works and some of the activity on the site, the wide view through the access would remain. Moreover, the fact that steps could be taken to make a development less intrusive is not, to my mind, a good argument for allowing it in what is, essentially, an inappropriate location. Almost any plot of land could be so treated and the face of the countryside would soon be changed out of all recognition if proposals were to be considered in that light. I come to the view that the proposal would conflict with the aims of the development plan.

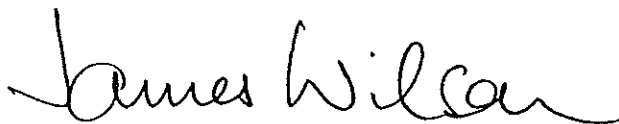
6. I turn now to the second issue. With an average width of barely 4m, Gowlands Lane is too narrow for large vehicles to pass each other. Deeply rutted verges bear witness to the problems which arise when large vehicles meet. Drivers wishing to enter the lane with a caravan are likely, therefore, to wait on the principal road for another large vehicle to emerge. The establishment of a large touring caravan site would inevitably increase the level of use of Gowlands Lane and, hence, the risk of accidents at the junction. It would also add to the risks for anyone walking or riding a horse along the verges of the lane. Furthermore, despite the improvement of its junction with Road A.171, visibility to the south for drivers emerging from the lane is still below the standard recommended for such junctions by Planning Policy Guidance Note 13. I come to the view that the proposal would give rise to problems of highway safety which would only be partly mitigated by the construction of passing places.

7. A further shortcoming of your client's proposal is that the appeal site is very close to Gowland Cottage. The constant comings and goings of a large number of touring caravans and the recreational activities of families on holiday would, I consider, encroach on the privacy of the occupiers of that cottage and, at times, be a source of disturbance. It would be very difficult to control those activities in the interests of neighbourliness, as is suggested, without impinging markedly on the holidaymakers' enjoyment of the open air and their break from routine. That gives added weight to my conclusion that the appeal should not be allowed.

8. In coming to that conclusion I have borne fully in mind the aims of national park legislation and the structure plan in respect of providing recreational opportunities. I have also noted that a temporary permission was granted for the use of a part of an existing building at Linglands Farm in connection with 'recycling' activities. From what I saw on my site visit, that activity does not appear to have had a significant visual impact on the area. In any case, that permission does not, in my view, justify allowing a substantial caravan site in a location which would clearly undermine the aims of the development plan for the area, add to road hazards and disturb nearby residents. I have considered all other matters raised in representations but find nothing to be so compelling as to alter the balance of my conclusions on the main issues in this case.

9. For the above reasons, and in exercise of powers transferred to me, I hereby dismiss this appeal.

Yours faithfully



JAMES WILSON BA(Hons) FRTP  
Inspector

