

Application No: 09/0514M

Location: CLAYTON FIELD, SCHOOLFOLD LANE, ADLINGTON, MACCLESFIELD, CHESHIRE

Proposal: EXTENSION TO CARAVAN PARK TO INCLUDE THE ADJOINING CAMP SITE TO PROVIDE AN ADDITIONAL 25 CARAVANS.

For MISS LISA FIRBANK

Registered 28-Apr-2009

Policy Item No

Grid Reference 393671 381167

Date Report Prepared: 29 May 2009

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Refuse approval

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact of proposal on visual amenity & openness of the Green Belt
- Sustainability of the location
- Ecological impact of development

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

The application seeks full planning permission for the extension to Eastwood End Caravan Park into Clayton Field. The extension into the caravan park would provide a further 25 twin caravans to the north of the existing site. The description of the application states that consent is sought for an extension into the adjoining campsite. From looking into the planning history of the site, no evidence can be found as to whether the site has planning consent for this use. From visiting the application twice no touring caravans or tents were viewed on Clayton Field. It is considered that if the applicant and agent wish to confirm this use on the site on a permanent basis that a certificate of lawful use should be submitted to the Council for formal assessment. As such it is considered that the current proposal seeks a change of use for the site which is currently held in agriculture.

The application states that the proposed caravans would be static caravans positioned on concrete bases. The information supplied with the application suggests that the caravans would fall within the statutory definition of a caravan, however, further information is awaited from the agent to confirm this. For the purpose of this assessment the assumption is made that the units are caravans.

The application site falls within an Area of Special County Value and Green Belt as defined within the Local Plan. The site is also bordered by the canal

Conservation Area, therefore the visual impact of the proposal is important to assess.

Due to the relative isolation of the application site it is considered there would be no significant impact on residential amenity as a result of the development.

RELEVANT HISTORY

75747P	Single storey timber building for recreational use 3/11/1993
49109P	Access Road Approved 28/5/1987

POLICIES

Regional Spatial Strategy

RDF4	Green Belt
DP1	Spatial Principles
DP7	Promote Environmental Equality
W6	Tourism and the Visitor Economy
W7	Principles of Tourism Development

Local Plan Policy

NE1	Areas of Special County Value
NE2	Protection of Local Landscapes
NE7	Woodland Management
NE11	Nature Conservation
RT13	Promotion of Tourism
BE1	Design Guidance
BE3	Conservation Areas
BE6	Macclesfield Canal Conservation Area
DC3	Amenity
DC6	Circulation & Access
DC8	Landscaping
DC9	Tree Protection

Other Material Considerations

Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts
Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism
Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

CONSULTATIONS

Highways: No comments to date

Public Rights of Way Unit: No comments to date

Environmental Health:	No objections to the proposal
Leisure:	No comments to date
Manchester Airport:	No comments to date
MOD Safeguarding:	No safeguarding objections to the proposal
Environment Agency:	No comments to date
British Waterways:	No comments to date

VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL

Adlington Parish Council: No comments to date

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

None received to date. The expiry date for public consultation is the 10 June, therefore any objections received will be provided for the committee via an update report.

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

A design and access statement was submitted with the application. A summary of the information within has been provided below. The full document can be viewed on file and online.

- Caravan park has a license and planning permission for 75 caravans within the Eastwood End Caravan Park
- The existing site is licensed for use between 1 March – 15 January annually
- The application site is comprised of timber buildings providing accommodation and toilet facilities. The site has its own water supply and sewerage system
- There is significant demand for additional caravans on site due to the increased number of "stay at home" holidays. The caravan park operates with a waiting list of customers
- No through road is proposed at the site in order to protect the amenity of the potential guests, the access road will instead surround the site.
- Parking facilities would be provided for 25 cars, 2 disability spaces and 8 buses

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

Eastwood End Caravan Park has a long established use for holiday lets. The proposal seeks to extend this into Clayton field with a further 25 twin caravan

units. The existing buildings on site are currently used for recreational purposes; however, these buildings are to be demolished. A more accurate description of development is change of use of the field from agriculture to the siting of 25 static caravans for recreational use.

The application site falls within the Green Belt, and as such the proposal must be assessed in terms of the potential impact to the character and appearance of the countryside, and the impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Policy

In land use terms the application site currently provides some tourist accommodation within the existing dormitory building formerly utilised by Toc H a charitable organisation. The surrounding sites in ownership by Eastwood End Caravan Park are used to house 75 tourist caravans, with associated parking facilities.

In order to assess the application the most relevant guidance to consider are PPG2, PPS7 and the Good Practice Guide.

PPG2 seeks to protect the countryside from inappropriate development. Paragraph 3.12 seeks to protect the openness of the Green Belt, whilst paragraph 3.15 states that development within the Green Belt should not be visually detrimental to the character and appearance of the countryside by means of the siting, materials or design.

PPS7 paragraph 39 offers advice on tourist accommodation within rural areas, stating extensions to existing facilities should act to improve facilities and improve the appearance within the landscape.

The Good Practice Guide for Tourism offers further advice. Paragraph 20 seeks to ensure that tourist facilities do not adversely affect the local landscape.

Sustainability

The site is situated within a rural location with few amenities available in close proximity of the site. Bollington would be the closest town to the application site, located 5.7km away. The main form of transport to the site would be via private car, no alternative means of transport have been put forward by the applicant, however parking facilities are proposed within the site for buses. Similarly, no public transport links have been identified within the supporting documentation.

Comments from the highway department are currently awaited in terms of assessing whether the site falls within a sustainable location, however as discussed above there are some concerns in relation to this.

Green Belt & Tourism

A key consideration when assessing the application is the potential impact on the openness of the Green Belt. The application proposes to clear the existing buildings on Clayton Field and replace them with improved tourist accommodation in the form of 25 further static caravans.

Paragraph 3.12 of PPG2 states that *“any material change of use of land are inappropriate development unless they maintain openness”*. Whilst it is possible to move static caravans, they are designed to be retained in the same position, until they are no longer required, and therefore it is considered that they will have a significant impact on the openness of the Green Belt and as such, the proposal represents inappropriate development. In order to outweigh harm to the Green Belt, very special circumstances need to exist to allow for a departure from the Development Plan.

Within the planning statement, reference has been made to the generated demand of the site’s facilities, justifying the need for the extension to the existing caravan site. Whilst this information has been put forward, no evidence has been offered to substantiate this claim and therefore this can only be given limited weight when assessing the proposal. No information has been offered regarding the need for the site within this location, or any information regarding the other tourist facilities made available within close proximity of the site, thus necessitating the location.

The development would have a substantial impact on the openness of the Green Belt. In terms of the potential benefit generated by the additional tourist accommodation, it is considered that on balance the harm to the openness of the Green Belt would far outweigh this benefit.

In terms of the potential impact on visual amenity the application site is currently well screened, however views are afforded from the public right of way. Clearly the caravans would also be visible from within the site, and would change the character and appearance of site. The views from the Council’s landscape architect are currently awaited, and are of particular importance in the determination of this application.

Ecology

An existing pond is located within the site. The pond is known to support Great Crested Newts which are a protected species. No information has currently been submitted providing details of the species, and the potential impact the development would have on the habitat. This information is required prior to the determination of the application.

A plantation woodland surrounds the western side of the application site. The information submitted with the application does not identify whether any loss of the woodland would occur as a result of the proposal. Any loss of this area would fall contrary to NE7 of the Local Plan.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION

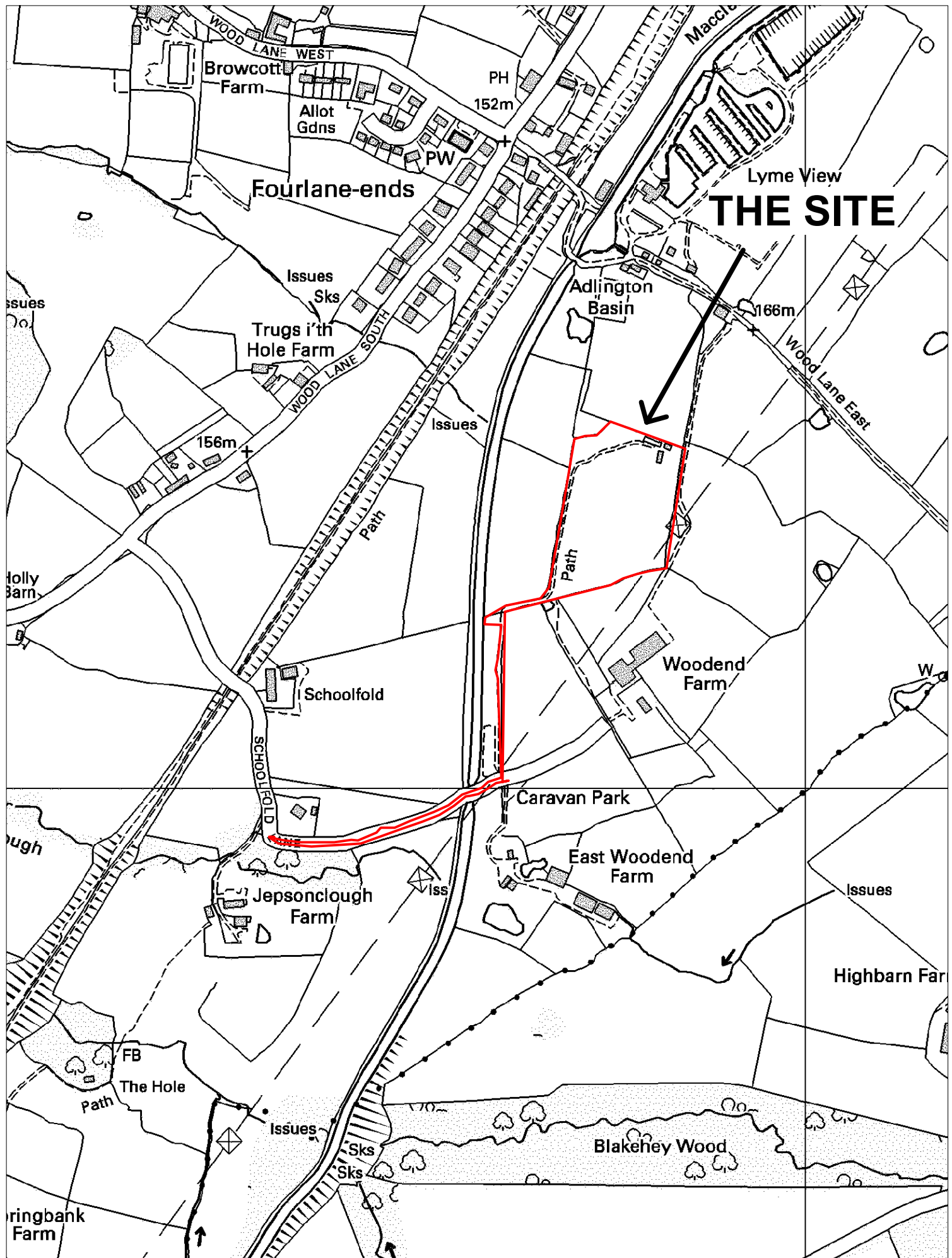
The proposal would have a significant impact upon the openness of the Green Belt due to the number of caravans proposed at the site. The development of the site would provide further provisions for tourism; however no evidence has been submitted in support for this need.

Further information is required in the form of mitigation measures for the protection of Great Crested Newts, a protected species and the intention of any reduction on the woodlands evident in close proximity of the site.

The views from the highways department are also awaited regarding the sustainability of the location.

The significant factor in the decision making process of the application is the impact upon the openness of the Green Belt and the impact on the character and appearance of the countryside.

Whilst the addition of tourism facilities may be considered beneficial, it is considered that on balance the provision of additional facilities does not outweigh the harm to the openness of the Green Belt. As such the application is recommended for refusal on the grounds of insufficient information and potential harm to the openness of the Green Belt.



09/0514M - CLAYTON FIELD, SCHOOLFOLD LANE, ADLINGTON, MACCLESFIELD

N.G.R. - 393,720 - 381,210

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Application for **Full Planning**

RECOMMENDATION: Refuse approval

1. R03NC - Insufficient ecological information
2. R04MS - Insufficient information to assess whether the caravans fall within the statutory definition of a caravan
3. Adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt