

Application No: 09/2155M

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. RE-SUBMISSION OF 09/0514M

For MISS LISA FIRBANK

Registered 24-Jul-2009

Policy Item Yes

Grid Reference 393644 381167

Date Report Prepared: 21 August 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 the proposal

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site is located off Schoolfold Lane in Adlington. The application site is situated within the Cheshire Green Belt and conservation area.

The existing buildings on site are currently used for recreational purposes, the planning statement submitted with the application states that the buildings would be demolished.

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.

However, there is no evidence as to whether the application site has planning consent for this use. The agent has suggested that the land has had an established use for camping since 1924. Within the design and access statement submitted with the application, however, it is stated that the land is used for grazing during closed season. The buildings towards the site's northern end have received planning permission in connection with leisure use of the land but it is far from clear precisely what this amounted to and to what part of the site this use might have applied to. In the circumstances and in the absence of

evidence to answer these questions, it would be inappropriate to give this consideration much weight.

The application site comprises of 2 hectares of grass land, with an existing pond towards the centre. The site also contains some woodland towards the edge. To the south of the application site lies the existing caravan park housing 75 static caravans with associated access and parking.

The 25 caravans would be positioned towards the edge of the site looking onto the existing pond. An access track would be provided to the caravans connecting to the existing access to the field. Parking would also be provided on the site.

The caravans would be static caravans positioned on concrete bases each measuring 6.1m in width, 14.8m in length and an internal ceiling height of 2.6m.

The static caravans would fall within the statutory definition of a 'caravan' under the Caravan Sites Act 1968, as amended by the Caravan Sites Act 1968 and Social Landlords (Permissible Additional Purposes) (England) Order 2006 (Definition of a Caravan) (Amendment) (England) Order 2006.

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

09/051m	Extension to caravan park to adjoining camp to provide additional 25 caravans Withdrawn 9/6/2009
75747P	Single storey timber building for recreational use Approved 3/11/1993
49109P	Access road Approved 28/5/1987
13920p	25 static caravans and 42 parking spaces Refused 6/7/1978
8863p	Additional 25 recreational static caravans Approved 1968
6307p	Additional 25 recreational static caravans Approved 1963
4942p	25 recreational static caravans Approved 1961

POLICIES

Regional Spatial Strategy

RDF4	Green Belts
DP1	Spatial Principles
DP4	Making Best Use of Existing Resources & Infrastructure
DP5	Manage Travel Demand; Reduce the Need to Travel, and Increase Accessibility
DP7	Promote Environmental Equality
DP8	Mainstream Rural Issues
W6	Tourism and 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
GC1	Green Belt: New Buildings
BE1	Design Guidance
BE3	Conservation Areas
BE6	Macclesfield Canal Conservation Area
DC1	New Build
DC3	Amenity
DC6	Circulation and 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
Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

CONSULTATIONS

Highways:	No comments to date
Environmental Health:	No comments to date
Leisure:	No comments to date
Manchester Airport:	No objections
MOD Safeguarding:	No comments to date
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 publicity expiry date is the 17 September 2009.

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The following documents have been submitted in support of the application which are available to view on the planning file and on the Council's website (www.cheshireeast.gov.uk)

- Planning, Design & Access Statement
- Protected Species Survey

The agent has also provided a copy of the waiting list of potential purchasers of the proposed caravans.

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 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. This assessment must however be assessed against the potential benefits of tourist accommodation within the area.

National Planning 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 documents to consider are PPG2, PPS7, PPS9 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.

Paragraph 36 of PPS7 advises that facilities may be justified in the countryside where there are no suitable buildings or developed sites available for re-use.

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 published in May 2006 offers specific guidance in relation to holiday, touring caravan and chalet parks. It advises that parks are the largest provider of rural tourism bed spaces, and planners should carefully weigh the objective of providing adequate facilities and sites with the need to protect landscape and environmentally sensitive areas.

Local Planning Policy

RT13 of the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan (2004) encourages the provision of new tourist attractions. No specific guidance is available within the Local Plan with regards to static caravans.

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.

Public transportation to the site can be accessed via the bus route off Wood Lane West, approximately 1km from the application site.

The proposal would include an access track surrounding the site that would link to the existing access connecting to School Fold Lane. The site would also include a parking provision for 33 vehicles, 8 of which would be buses. There is no information to suggest why 8 spaces would be required for buses or, indeed, how they would be used and/or visitors encouraged to use them as alternatives to cars.

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 25 static caravans. The location of the caravans bears little relation to the existing buildings which are grouped in a small area to the north of the field. In contrast, the proposed caravans would be spread over the majority of the application site.

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 for very long periods. Accordingly, 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. This inappropriateness would be exacerbated by vehicles and other paraphernalia associated with the proposed development. By its definition, inappropriate development is harmful to

the Green Belt. 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 demand of the site's facilities, justifying the need for the extension to the existing caravan site. The agent has submitted information which is described as a waiting list of potential purchasers of the additional caravans. This consists of a typed list of names, addresses and tel nos. There are no further details or additional information regarding other tourist facilities available within this area.

The information submitted is not considered to offer sufficient justification for the addition to the caravan park. The potential increase in beds available for tourism in the area is noted, however the justification and need assessment is considered to be insufficient in order to assess whether this would offset the harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

In terms of the potential impact on visual amenity the application site is currently reasonably well screened, however views are afforded from nearby vantage points. 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

A protected species survey was submitted with the application demonstrating the presence of Great Crested Newts on site. At this stage comments for the departments Nature Conservation Officer are awaited, and will be provided to Members in an update report.

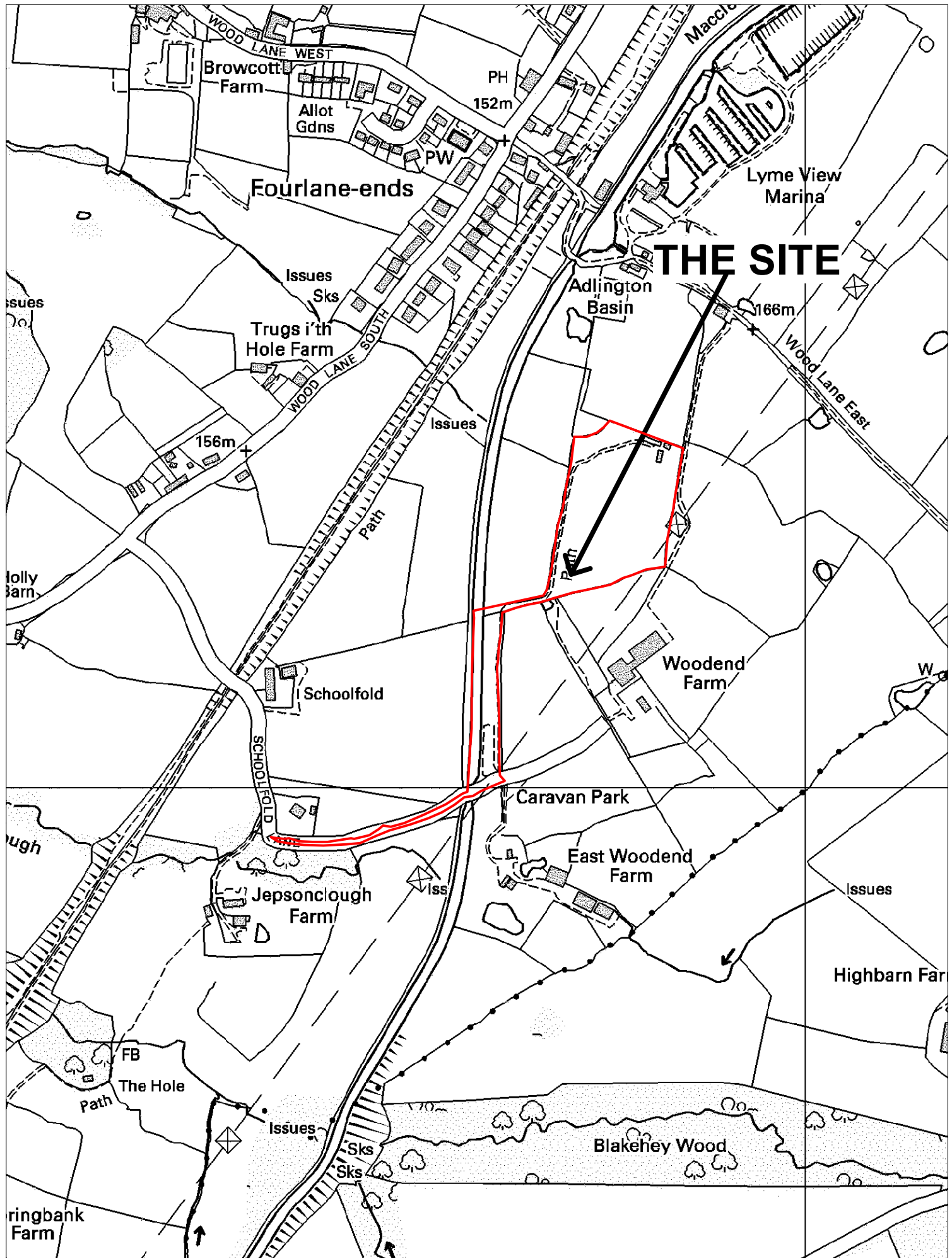
CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION

The proposal would have a significant impact upon the openness of the Green Belt due to the number of caravans proposed at the site, their appearance, and character as well as the cumulative effect of associated activities and developments. The development of the site would provide further provisions for tourism; however the information submitted with the application to justify this level of need is not considered to be sufficient in order to outweigh the harm that would be caused to the Green Belt.

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 is 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 potential harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

It is also noted that views are awaited from the highways, nature conservation, forestry & landscaping and will be provided to the committee as an update report.



09/2155M - CLAYTON FIELD, SCHOOLFOLD LANE, ADLINGTON, MACCLESFIELD
 N.G.R. - 393,650 - 381,180

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Application for **Full Planning**

RECOMMENDATION : Refuse approval

1. R04LP - Contrary to Green Belt / Open Countryside policies
2. Openness of the Green Belt
3. Visual Amenity