

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** **7<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2018**

**REPORT BY:** **CHIEF OFFICER (PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY)**

**SUBJECT:** **PROPOSED EXTENSION OF EXISTING HOLIDAY PARK TO ALLOW FOR THE RELOCATION OF APPROVED STATIC AND TOURING CARAVANS TO FACILITATE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE LAYOUT OF THE EXISTING PARK TOGETHER WITH THE CREATION OF AN AREA FOR 6 GLAMPING PITCHES AND ADDITIONAL LANDSCAPING AT BARLOWS CARAVAN PARK, PEN Y CEFN ROAD, CAERWYS**

**APPLICATION NUMBER:** **058733**

**APPLICANT:** **COED MAES MYNAN ESTATES LTD**

**SITE:** **BARLOWS CARAVAN PARK, PEN Y CEFN ROAD, CAERWYS**

**APPLICATION VALID DATE:** **17/07/2018**

**LOCAL MEMBERS:** **T JONES**

**TOWN COUNCIL:** **CAERWYS TOWN COUNCIL**

**REASON FOR COMMITTEE:** **OUTSIDE OF SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

**SITE VISIT:** **NO**

**1.00 SUMMARY**

1.01 This application is for the extension of an existing holiday park to allow for the relocation of approved static and touring caravans to facilitate improvements to the layout of the existing park together with the creation of an area for 6 glamping pitches and additional landscaping. The main issues for consideration in this application are the principle of development at this location, the potential visual impact on the open countryside, impact on residential amenity, access, and impact on the adjacent Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

**2.00 RECOMMENDATION: TO GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:-**

2.01 Conditions:

1. Time limit on commencement of development
2. In accordance with plans
3. Development to be restricted to holiday accommodation only and not for permanent residential occupation
4. Prior to siting of any caravans full details of elevations and floor plans to be submitted for LPA approval
5. Prior to siting of any caravans full details of materials of construction to be submitted for LPA approval
6. Permitted development rights removed
7. Scheme of hard and soft landscaping to be agreed
8. Landscape management scheme to be submitted and agreed prior to commencement
9. Parking and turning facilities to be made available within the site prior to commencement of use
10. Footpath and bridleway to be kept free of obstruction during development works
11. Details of any external lighting to be submitted and agreed prior to commencement

**3.00 CONSULTATIONS**

3.01 Local Member - Cllr T Jones

Has seen the documents in the pre application public consultation and has no fundamental objections to the proposed development

Caerwys Town Council

Supports the application for the following reasons:

1. The submitted reports seem to be professional and comprehensive, and they answer many of the question the Town Council might have asked.
2. The development of the business will enhance the area, both for the business itself and for the local economy, and improve the outlook for the future.

Highways DC

No objection to the proposal subject to conditions.

Public Rights of Way

Footpath No 2 and 1 in the community of Caewys abuts the site but is unaffected by the development. The path must be protected and free from interference during construction.

Pollution Control

No Objection to the proposal.

Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water  
No objection to the proposal

Natural Resources Wales  
NRW does not object to the proposal. However they have requested an advisory note in relation to the existing sewage treatment plant.

Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB  
No objection subject to conditions regarding landscaping and the proposed materials.

Ramblers Cymru  
Makes the following comments on the proposal:

- The increase in touring vans on this narrow track may interfere with walkers - we would ask that a verge is provided for walkers. Adequate passing bays need to be provided here and on narrow approach road to accommodate modern (large - size) touring caravans.
- The landscape impact of the development needs to be carefully assessed from both local and more distant higher viewpoints in the AONB to the west. Substantial boundary screening should be required by condition at an early stage.
- The public footpaths should be clearly marked out and kept available for the public - and also so park residents can use them to enjoy the countryside and walk into Caerwys village to access services

#### **4.00 PUBLICITY**

4.01 Press Notice, Site Notice and Neighbour Notification  
No responses received at the time of writing

#### **5.00 SITE HISTORY**

5.01 11/1458 Use of land as caravan site  
Approved 20.10.61

497/68 Use of land as caravan site  
Approved 13.01.68

11/3461 Use of land as a site for touring caravans, adjoining Barlows Caravan Park  
Approved 23.05.73

19/4599 Proposed increase in number of caravans from 263 to 305  
Approved 02.09.80

37/96 Certificate of Lawful Use - Use of area of land as touring

caravan site without compliance with condition 3 of consent ref: 11/3461 dated 23.05.73  
Approved 20.08.97

037821 Variation of condition to allow for an extended holiday occupation from 1st March in any one year to 14th January in the following year  
Approved 24.08.04

## **6.00 PLANNING POLICIES**

- 6.01 Flintshire Unitary Development Plan  
Policy GEN1 – General Requirements for Development  
Policy GEN3 – Development within the Open Countryside  
Policy T5 – Extensions of Existing Static Caravan and Chalet Holiday Sites  
Policy STR6 – Tourism  
Policy AC13 – Access and Traffic Impact

Planning Policy Wales  
Technical Advice Note 13: Tourism.

It is considered the proposal generally complies with the above planning policies.

## **7.00 PLANNING APPRAISAL**

- 7.01 The Site & Surroundings  
Barlows Caravan Park has planning consent and a Site Licence for 305 static holiday caravans and 90 touring caravans over approximately 35 ha with the planning application site area amounts to approximately 6.1 ha. The site is located 1km north west of Caerwys Town Centre, 3km south of the A55 Expressway and 1.6km east of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The site is accessed via two footpaths and two existing points of vehicular access.
- 7.02 The northern boundary is defined by a well maintained hawthorn hedge, while the western, saunter and eastern boundaries are defined by post and wire fences. The site currently consists as mainly open pastures with a small number of caravans located on the eastern edge of the site.
- 7.03 The topography within the site falls from the north to the centre of the site, then rises again to the south This topographic effectively screens the majority of the site from the public footpath to the south. Views from the north of obstructed by the mature hedgerow growing along the highway boundary.
- 7.04 The site is located on a country road near the historic town of Caerwys

which includes a designated conservation area and a large number of listed buildings. It is also located some distance away from the parkland and garden of Bryn Gwyn Hall which is included in Cadw's register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales

7.05 The Proposal

This application seeks consent to extend the western boundaries of the park to allow for the relocation of static and touring caravans which will facilitate improvements to the layout of the existing static holiday caravan park over time. The application can be summarised as follows:

- a) Relocation of 50 static holiday caravans;
- b) Relocation of 90 touring caravan pitches with hardstanding pitches;
- c) 6 "glamping" pitches;
- d) Demolition of existing toilet/amenity block;
- e) Siting of new toilet/amenity building

7.06 This application relates to the upgrading of the entire site; including both static and touring areas. The layout of the static area of the park is historic; there having been no major changes to this layout since the development was approved. The static area requires modernising, including larger pitches and wider spacing between units, which will undoubtedly result in the loss of caravans.

7.07 The 50 relocated static caravans will benefit from larger pitches which measure approximately 12.8m x 4.26m (42ft x 14ft) whilst attaining at least 7m spacing between units. The density of development will amount 22.7 caravans per hectare which represents a low density. Furthermore, the redevelopment of the existing site will result in larger plots and in turn the density of the existing development will be reduced.

7.08 It is envisaged that once the existing static element of the park has been developed to accommodate larger plots, the overall number of static caravans will reduce to approximately 220. Even with the proposed relocated 50 static caravans, this represents a reduction in numbers from 305 to 270.

7.09 The existing touring caravan provision will be relocated to the adjoining field to the west which amounts to approximately 2.67 ha and will accommodate 90 touring pitches. Each pitch has been designed to accommodate a touring caravan and awning, whilst also maintaining no less than 6m spacing between pitches. The density of development on this section of the site is 33 touring pitches per hectare with the low density design allowing for greater landscaping and amenity around the site and between pitches.

7.10 The toilet/amenity block on the touring element of the site is an

express requirement of the Site Licence. The external area of this building will measure 14m x 8m and 5m to the pitch of the roof. The 6 'glamping' pitches are to be located within the northern touring element of the park.

7.11 The Main Issues

The main issues for consideration in this application are the principle of development at this location, the potential visual impact on the open countryside, impact on residential amenity, access, and impact on the adjacent Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

7.12 Principle of Development

Policy T5 of the FUDP permits extensions to existing caravan sites where they meet a number of criteria. These will be addressed in turn below.

- 7.13 *a) any increase in the number of standings or units is marginal.  
b) any physical extension of the site is modest.*

The application seeks to relocate 50 No. pitches upon the site. The site currently consists of and has consent for 305 with the total overall caravans following redevelopment to reduce to approximately 270. The existing caravan site extends to some 35 hectares in area with the proposed extension seeking to add a further 6.1 hectares which amounts to a 17% increase. The site is well screened on all boundaries and is proposed to be the subject of further supplementary planting in these areas which will only serve to reinforce these boundaries.

- 7.14 *c) the scheme incorporates substantial internal and structural landscaping.*

The site has established hedgerow boundaries to the northern boundaries and additional boundary planting is proposed. This issue is discussed in greater detail separately below in my assessment of landscape impact.

- 7.15 *d) the proposal involves improved on site facilities.*

The static area of the existing site requires modernising, including larger pitches and wider spacing between units, which will undoubtedly result in the loss of caravans. The proposal allows for the reduction in overall site density along with additional toilet facilities.

- 7.16 *e) the proposals would not have a significant adverse impact upon existing residential amenity or the community in general.*

The proposed site lies within an area of open countryside with the nearest dwellings being some 100 metres to the North and West. I do

not consider, given these degrees of separation, coupled with the significant screening which intersperse these distances, that the proposals will give rise to adverse impacts upon amenity.

#### Highways Safety

7.17 The main entrance to Barlows Caravan Park is located approximately 800 metres from the B5122 via a C Class road. Whilst it is envisaged that this entrance will be retained as the principal access into the park, it is also proposed to utilise the entrance to Blorant Farm for touring caravans which is some 450 metres to the west of the main entrance.

7.18 Taking into account the existing use of both the primary and secondary access, Highways Development Management have raised no objection to the proposal subject to a condition to provide parking and turning facilities prior to the use commencing

#### Impact on Residential Amenity.

7.19 Whilst the nearest residential properties are over 100m from the proposed development, both the primary and secondary means of access are shared with these dwelling. Given that the application does not propose an increase in the number of static or touring caravans, it is considered that there will be no material change from the existing use.

7.20 In terms of visual impact from the proposed development, both the existing and proposed boundary treatments will obscure the majority of the development from view.

#### Landscape Impact

7.21 The site is located near to the historic town of Caerwys which includes a designated conservation area and a large number of listed buildings. It is also located some distance away from the parkland and garden of Bryn Gwyn Hall which is included in Cadw's register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales, and the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

7.22 The existing static caravan park is well integrated into the local landscape and is screened by mature trees and woodland, but the current proposal involves a significant extension of the site into open land which is much more prominent when viewed from the AONB. However, with the extensive landscaping proposed these impacts can be mitigated. The proposed landscaping scheme involving new hedgerows and tree planting, which should comprise native local species, will help break up views of the site, but the AONB committee is of the view that deeper, more substantial blocks of tree planting are required along the south and south-west facing boundaries. The AONB committee also recommend that conditions be attached to ensure that all landscaping is in place prior to the use commencing.

7.23 To further reduce visual impact, the AONB committee would recommend that any new static caravans should be finished in recessive colours (e.g. environmental green or timber finishes) with dark grey roofs. Further details of any external lighting are also required to ensure that the lighting scheme is designed to conserve the AONB's dark skies.

7.24 It is noted that the documents suggest that existing seasonal use conditions should be amended to allow all year round use, but the AONB committee would recommend that the existing limits on seasonal use for the touring area should not be extended. In addition, suitable conditions should be attached to ensure that the caravans are used for holiday purposes only, including appropriate arrangements for monitoring compliance. The recommendations of the AONB committee can be dealt with via a number of conditions outlined in section 2 above with specific reference to conditions 4,5,7,8, and 11.

7.25 In terms of impact upon both heritage assets, given that there is an established holiday park use currently on the site and that the proposed development is a significant distance away from both the Caerwys Conservation Area and the gardens of Bryn Gwyn Hall, it is considered that it will not have an adverse impact upon either heritage assets and therefore will comply with policies HE1, HE2, HE5 of the Flintshire Unitary Development Plan.

## **8.00 CONCLUSION**

8.01 The scale of the extension should be balanced against the overall benefits attributed to this scheme. The proposals overall creates a development with less density allowing for an enhanced scheme of landscaping. A sympathetic scheme of additional landscaping serves to ensure that both the proposed and existing development are well integrated into the wider landscape. The scheme serves to meet the increasing expectations which visitors have of the North Wales Tourism industry and in this part of the County, this sector is a significant employer. Accordingly, I consider that subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 2 of this report, Planning Permission should be granted.

### **8.02 Other Considerations**

The Council has had due regard to its duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable increase in crime and disorder as a result of the recommended decision.

8.03 The Council has acted in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998 including Article 8 of the Convention and in a manner which is necessary in a democratic society in furtherance of the legitimate aims of the Act and the Convention.

8.04 The Council has had due regard to its public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010.

8.05 The Council has had due regard to its duty under Section 3 of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable impact upon the achievement of wellbeing objectives as a result of the recommended decision.

**LIST OF BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Planning Application & Supporting Documents

National & Local Planning Policy

Responses to Consultation

Responses to Publicity

**Contact Officer:** Daniel McVey  
**Telephone:** 01352 703266  
**Email:** Daniel.McVey@Flintshire.gov.uk