

**20 DCNW2004/3130/F - CHANGE OF USE TO SITE FOR FIVE STATIC HOLIDAY CARAVANS AT SWAN INN, LETTON, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR3 6DH****For: Mr & Mrs T Lewin per Mr J E Smith, Parkwest, Longworth, Lugwardine, Hereford, HR1 4DF****Date Received:**  
**31st August 2004****Ward:**  
**Castle****Grid Ref:**  
**33819, 46265****Expiry Date:**  
**26th October 2004**

Local Member: Councillor John Hope

**1. Site Description and Proposal**

- 1.1 The application site comprises The Swan Inn, which is located on the south west side of the A438 within the small hamlet of Letton. The public house is a substantial building located within an otherwise residential frontage. To the rear of the public house and along the northern boundary is an existing hardstanding area, with the remainder of the site being a roughly rectangular area of unused agricultural land.
- 1.2 The hardstanding area along the northern boundary of the site is used for the siting of 5 touring caravans and benefits from a Caravan Club License which has been in operation for some 15 years. There is another Caravan Club certified site immediately to the north of the application site.
- 1.3 The site lies within open countryside and is also within the Indicative Flood Plain. The whole of the surrounding area is designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value. Part of the site is bounded by the gardens of The Forge and Northlea.
- 1.4 Planning permission is sought for the siting of 5 static caravans to provide holiday accommodation and compliment the existing touring caravan site. The static caravans would be sited adjacent to the southern boundary of the application site close to the garden boundaries with Northlea and The Forge and the agricultural land associated with The Old Forge. A landscaping scheme is proposed as part of the new static caravan site.

**2. Policies**PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas  
PPG21 – TourismHereford and Worcester County Structure PlanPolicy E20 – Tourism Development  
Policy CTC2 – Areas of Great Landscape Value  
Policy CTC9 – Development Requirements  
Policy TSM1, TSM2 – Tourism Development  
Policy TSM6, TSM7 – Tourist Accommodation

Leominster District Local Plan (Herefordshire)

Policy A1 – Managing the Districts Assets  
Policy A2(D) – Settlement Hierarchy  
Policy A9 – Safeguarding the Rural Landscape  
Policy A12 – New Development and Landscaping Schemes  
Policy A15 – Development and Watercourses  
Policy A16 – Foul Drainage  
Policy A18 – Listed Buildings and their Settings  
Policy A24 – Scale and Character of Development  
Policy A35 – Rural Tourism and Recreational Activities  
Policy A39 – Holiday Chalet, Caravan and Camping Sites  
Policy A54 – Protection of Residential Amenity  
Policy A70 – Accommodating Traffic from Development

Herefordshire Unitary Deposit Plan (Revised Deposit Draft)

Policy S1 – Sustainable Development  
Policy S2 – Development Requirements  
Policy S7 – Natural and Historic Heritage  
Policy S8 – Recreation, Sport and Tourism  
Policy DR1 – Design  
Policy DR2 – Land Use and Activity  
Policy DR7 – Flood Risk  
Policy DR13 – Noise  
Policy E6 – Expansion of Existing Businesses  
Policy E11 – Employment in Smaller Settlements and Open Countryside  
Policy LA2 – Landscape Character and Areas Least Resilient to Change  
Policy LA6 – Landscaping Schemes  
Policy HBA4 – Setting of Listed Buildings  
Policy RST14 – Static Caravans, Chalets, Camping and Touring Caravan Sites

**3. Planning History**

3.1 None relevant.

**4. Consultation Summary**Statutory Consultations

4.1 Environment Agency raises no objection in relation to the Flood Risk Assessment received on 15 November 2004 and subject to conditions relating to foul and surface water drainage, a limitation on the number of caravans and the display of flood warning notices at the entrance to the site and on booking slips for visitors.

Internal Consultee Advice

4.2 Head of Highways and Transportation raises no objection subject to conditions relating to the provision of adequate parking and turning areas.

4.3 Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards raises no objection but advises that applicant should seek a license from the local authority.

4.4 Chief Conservation Officer comments as follows:

Landscape Officer comments that the static caravans would not have a significant impact on the landscape and would not be visible from the A438. Subject to an appropriate scheme of landscaping no objection is raised.

Historic Buildings Officer raises concerns in respect of the impact of the proposed static caravans on the setting of adjacent listed buildings.

## 5. Representations

5.1 A total of 9 letters have been received from the following persons:

Mr & Mrs Cadman, The Forge, Letton (3 letters)  
Mr & Mrs Maddox, The Old Forge, Letton (3 letters)  
T & T Collins, Old Post Office, Letton (1 letter)  
Mr Valentine, Swan Cottage, Letton (2 letters)

5.2 The concerns raised can be summarised as follows:

- dispute ownership of land adjacent to The Forge and The Old Forge
- occupation should be limited to summer months only
- boundary treatments need to be improved
- additional surfacing and structures would worsen the current flooding situation
- too many caravan sites in the locality
- increase in traffic using dangerous access onto A438
- impact on setting of listed buildings
- existing sites are all under-occupied
- lack of local facilities to support holiday makers
- potential to become low-cost dwellings
- eyesore in beautiful rural surroundings

5.3 Staunton-on-Wye Parish Council comment as follows:

- site is subject to risk of flooding and proposed development could increase risk of more flooding
- concern about capacity of existing septic tank
- increased traffic on and off busy A438
- not in keeping with an area of listed buildings
- significant screening would be needed
- time limits would need to be imposed (March - November)

5.4 Letton Parish Council raise no objection.

5.5 The full text of these letters can be inspected at Central Planning Services, Blueschool House, Blueschool Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

## 6. Officers Appraisal

- 6.1 The main issues for consideration in the determination of this application are as follows:
- (a) the principle of extending the existing touring caravan site to provide an additional 5 static caravans;
  - (b) the impact of the proposed additional static caravans on the Indicative Flood Plan;
  - (c) landscape impact and effect upon the setting of adjacent listed buildings;
  - (d) residential amenity and
  - (e) access and highway safety.

### Principle of Development

- 6.2 The site lies in open countryside where Policy A2(D) establishes a presumption against new development unless it accords with one of the exceptional circumstances identified. The small scale expansion of an existing holiday chalet, caravan or camping site is permissible subject to the requirements of Policy A39 of the Local Plan, which requires proposals to be of an appropriate scale and in keeping and compatible with their surroundings, include landscaping schemes and ensures that chalets and caravans remain in holiday use.
- 6.3 Having regard to Policy A39, it is considered that the principle of providing additional static caravans is one that can be supported subject to the merits of the submitted proposal, the details of which are discussed in greater depth in the remainder of this appraisal.

### Flood Risk

- 6.4 The determination of this application has been much delayed by the requirement to overcome the initial concerns raised by the Environment Agency. The siting and layout of the proposed static caravan site has been revised in consultation with the Environment Agency who have subsequently withdrawn their objection. The Flood Risk Assessment demonstrates that the revised proposal lies beyond the 1960 historic flood level and that the site benefits from a dry vehicular and pedestrian access. It is confirmed that warning signs will be displayed and that the surface water arising from the concrete pads and static caravans will be dealt with by way of appropriately designed soakaways.
- 6.5 Whilst acknowledging the local concerns raised it is considered that development at the scale proposed would not increase the risk of flooding in the locality and as such Policy A15 of the Local Plan is satisfied. It is stressed that conditions will ensure the provision and implementation of the requirements requested by the Environment Agency.

### Landscape Impact/Setting of Listed Buildings

- 6.6 The application site benefits from a generally inconspicuous location to the rear and relatively well related to the existing public house. The site would not be readily visible from the A438, which is the only public vantage point from which the site can be viewed.

- 6.7 The boundaries of the site provide reasonable screening from the surrounding countryside and it is proposed that additional landscaping will improve this situation by strengthening existing boundary planting and providing more planting adjacent to the proposed static caravans.
- 6.8 It is not considered that the presence of these additional structures will cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the Area of Great Landscape Value, although conditions relating to landscaping and external appearance of the units are suggested.
- 6.9 The relationship of the proposed static caravans to the existing listed buildings adjacent to the public house is not a direct one given the distance between the two and the intervening vegetation. The principle elevations of the listed buildings face onto the A438 and since these buildings will not generally be seen in context with the static caravans it is not considered that their setting will not be unduly affected.

#### Residential Amenity

- 6.10 The introduction of additional holiday makers is considered to be consistent with the established use of the site as a public house and small touring caravan site, which will not impinge unduly upon the residential amenities of neighbouring occupiers. The occupation of the static caravans would be limited and the existing and proposed landscaping provide a reasonable buffer between the site and the neighbouring property.
- 6.11 No objections are raised by the Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards and as such it is considered that this proposal accords with Policy A54 of the Local Plan.

#### Access and Highway Safety

- 6.12 The introduction of 5 static caravans would attract a limited amount of additional car borne traffic, which when set against the activity associated with a public house and existing 5 pitch touring caravan site would not result in any measurable increase in the current use of the access onto the A438. The existing access benefits from good visibility and subject to conditions the Highways and Transportation Manager raises no objection.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:**

- 1 - A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission) )**

**Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.**

- 2 - A07 (Development in accordance with approved plans ) 29 October 2004 and received on 4 November 2004**

**Reason: To ensure adherence to the approved plans in the interests of a satisfactory form of development.**

**3 - E31 (Use as holiday accommodation ) static caravan**

**Reason: The local planning authority are not prepared to allow the introduction of a separate unit of residential accommodation, in this rural location.**

**4 - No static caravans shall be occupied between 31 September - 31 March in the succeeding year.**

**Reason: To prevent the establishment of a residential use in the countryside where it would not normally be permitted.**

**5 - No more than 5 static caravans and 5 touring caravans shall be stationed on the site at any one time.**

**Reason: To clarify the terms of the permission, minimise visual intrusion and in accordance with the requirements of the Environment Agency in respect of flood risk.**

**6 - E36 (Static Caravan colours )**

**Reason: To minimise visual intrusion.**

**7 - F18 (Scheme of foul drainage disposal )**

**Reason: To ensure that satisfactory drainage arrangements are provided and to prevent increased risk of flooding.**

**8 - G01 (Details of boundary treatments )**

**Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure dwellings have satisfactory privacy.**

**9 - G04 (Landscaping scheme (general) )**

**Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.**

**10 - G05 (Implementation of landscaping scheme (general) )**

**Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.**

**11 - G09 (Retention of trees/hedgerows )**

**Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the area.**

**12 - G37 (Access for disabled people ) static caravans**

**Reason: In order to ensure that the development is fully accessible.**

**13 - H16 (Parking/unloading provision - submission of details )**

**Reason: To minimise the likelihood of indiscriminate parking in the interests of highway safety.**

- 14 - Prior to the first occupation of the static holiday caravans hereby approved, details relating to the display of flood warning signs within the site shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The approved signage shall thereafter be retained such that it is visible at all time during the occupation of the static caravans.

Reason: To minimise the risk of a threat to human life during a flood event.

- 15 - The static caravan site and the public house known as the Swann Inn, Letton shall not be sold seperately from each other.

Reason: To minimise the risk of the static caravans becoming self contained residential units and in the interests of the amenities of neighbouring residents.

**Informatives:**

- 1 - N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of PP/LBC/CAC
- 2 - In the interests of safety for occupiers of the site, flood warning and evacuation procedure notices should be clearly displayed on the site and within each static caravan.

Decision: .....

Notes: .....

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**Background Papers**

Internal departmental consultation replies.