

AGENDA ITEM NO: 8/3(i)

Parish:	Stoke Ferry	
Proposal:	Erection of 6 timber holiday lodges	
Location:	Land At Greatmans Way Stoke Ferry Norfolk	
Applicant:	Mr John Coleridge	
Case No:	15/01695/F (Full Application)	
Case Officer:	Mr Bryan Meredith	Date for Determination: 19 September 2016 Extension of Time Expiry Date: 10 February 2017

Reason for Referral to Planning Committee – The views of Stoke Ferry Parish Council is contrary to the Officer recommendation.

Case Summary

The site lies on an area of land measuring 3.25ha to the east of the settlement of Stoke Ferry. The site is located outside the development of Stoke Ferry.

Whilst the proposal is on land designated as countryside, where new development is normally restricted; the proposal represents a development which complies with Policy DM11 (Touring and Permanent Holiday Sites) of the Site Allocation and Development Management Policies Plan. Conditions are attached to this recommendation that require the new holiday accommodation use to be operated and maintained as tourist facilities in the future.

The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of six timber holiday lodges.

Key Issues

The key issues in relation to this application are:

- Principle of development
- Design and layout
- Impact on the character and appearance of the countryside
- Impact on neighbour amenity
- Flood risk
- Highway safety
- Any other material considerations

Recommendation

APPROVE

THE APPLICATION

The application is made for full planning permission for the erection of 6 timber holiday lodges on land at Greatman's Way, Stoke Ferry.

The site is in an area of land measuring 3.25ha. The site lies outside the defined settlement boundary for Stoke Ferry as set out in the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan document (2016). The site lies in an area identified at risk from flooding, with the application site designated as Flood Zone 2 and 3 in the Council's adopted Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

The site is bounded by the A134 highway to the west, the River Wissey to the south, existing trees and hedgerows to the west and residential properties and Greatman's Way to the north.

There are detached properties adjacent to the application site on the northern boundary, along Greatman's Way.

SUPPORTING CASE The Application is accompanied by an extensive Design and Access Statement which sets out the:

- proposal of this application, which seeks to construct 6 timber holiday lodges on the application site,
- site area,
- existing site use, its features and the use of adjacent land,
- design process and placing the design in the context of the surrounding area,
- planning history,
- relevant planning policies which are relevant for this proposal,
- design principles, including the layout of the proposal, scale of the proposal and its appearance and the landscaping of the site,
- planning issues, which are set out as the attempt to address the benefit to local businesses, the plans to overcome the concern of flood risk on this site, the visual impact of the proposal on the area, the accessibility of the site, the wider sustainability of the proposal and the impact of the proposal on the ecology of the site.

The statement describes how the proposed design is consistent with material planning policy in relation to encouraging sustainable tourism activity within rural areas, adding to local economy and promoting rural diversification. The lodges will be visible from the riverside; however their construction will mean that they will blend into the wider landscape in time. The proposal will make a positive contribution to its immediate setting by bringing additional leisure expenditures to the village and will as a result support local businesses and services.

The proposed lodges design has paid attention to ensure respect for the surrounding context to allow the new lodges to integrate well with its surroundings, and takes full account of the neighbouring properties, site features and local character by means of layout form, massing and proportions.

The site of the proposed development is bigger than adjacent residential properties to the north of the site. Boundary treatments of vegetation, trees and hedgerow will screen the proposed lodges from neighbouring properties. Along with this, the A134 borders the site to the east and the River Wissey and a bridleway border the site on the southern boundary.

The statement concludes that the proposal is for 6 attractively designed wooden holiday lodges to be located in an attractive riverside location close to the village of Stoke Ferry and as such is not in a truly isolated location far away from local services, the lodges can be installed without harm to flood risk and ecology and will bring significant benefits to local businesses.

The statement considers that the proposals are consistent with both the NPPF and material local plan policy, in particular DM11 and as such it is requested that planning permission be granted.

PLANNING HISTORY

11/01904/F: Application Permitted: 03/01/12 - Retention of shed/barn - Ferry End House, Greatman's Way, Stoke Ferry, Norfolk, PE33 9SZ;

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Parish Council: Stoke Ferry Parish Council **OBJECTED** to this application on the 15/11/2015 for the following reasons:

This narrow road is not suitable for extra traffic, neither is it suitable for the heavy plant required during development. At least 100 yards of the roadway is mostly a dirt track not made up.

Is the owner of the land prepared to repair any damage to the roadway following construction should the application be approved. A Section 106 Agreement should be entered into whereby money is put in for road improvements once development is completed.

There will be no mains drainage only soakaways for foul/sewerage. The area is on a flood plain.

It is felt this planning application should be called in for further discussion by the Borough Council.

Highways Authority: A Highway Officer commented when the original application was submitted in 2015 that having examined the plans submitted it would appear that the applicant did not have rights over Greatman's Way at the last section towards the site. The Officer therefore sought confirmation that the applicant has control / right of access over the area and recommended that the applicant be asked to provide a revised plan if they are able to address this matter.

Following the resubmission of the application, the Highways Officer commented on the 01/12/16 that Greatman's Way is narrow, of single track width, and passing is currently only available on grass verges and private points of access. Should the application be considered in its current form then the officer would recommend a holding objection as the unclassified road serving the site is considered to be inadequate to serve the development proposed, by reason of its restricted width / lack of passing provision. However, the Officer did remark that they are aware that Greatman's Way has wide verges (which are highway) along its length and that there is scope therefore for the applicant to mitigate the concerns set out above by incorporating a scheme of some localised carriageway widening (Passing bays) to achieve safe access/passing.

Following the comments above, the applicant agreed to the provision of passing bays on Greatman's Way. The Highways Officer has as a result withdrawn their holding objection and states **NO OBJECTION SUBJECT TO CONDITION AND PROVISION OF FOPUR PASSING BAYS ALONG GREATMAN'S WAY.**

Internal Drainage Board: Stoke Ferry IDB has **NO OBJECTION** to the application subject to conditions attached to the informative submitted to the application being adhered to.

Environmental Quality: Based on the information supplied, I have no comments to make regarding contaminated land or air quality.

CSNN: NO OBJECTION to the proposal subject to conditions attached to this informative being attached to a decision notice, which relates to foul water drainage arrangements for the site and a protection scheme from construction.

This is also on the basis that the applicant is able to satisfy EA concerns regarding flood risk and that satisfactory surface water provisions are in place subject to any prior discharge permissions from the drainage board and EA.

NCC Public Rights of Way Officer: The Officer had commented on the proximity of the proposed development to the adjacent public bridleway, which might have had a negative impact on the enjoyment of the use of the route and for the privacy of the lodges.

Following the submission of the revised plan, the Officer notes that the revised plan does increase the separation between the two and this proposal is more acceptable with regards to the public right of way.

The Officer notes further that the revised application introduces moorings to the proposal. It is not entirely clear how these will be accessed. While the Officer has no objection to their inclusion they will be on the other side of the bridleway to the lodges, but request that any aids to crossing the bank for private means, steps, handrails or surfacing for example, must not interfere with access along the bridleway.

REPRESENTATIONS

There were no representations submitted supporting the application. There were **17** representations received in 2015, when the application was initially considered, objecting to the proposal. There were 14 representations received in 2016 objecting to the amended application, with some of those representations made on the same grounds as those which were submitted with the original application in 2015. Below are a summary of the issues and concerns raised:

- High flood risk
- Access to the site inadequate and route cannot cope with additional traffic
- Pollution concerns
- Highway safety
- Drainage on this site and proposal is inadequate
- Construction traffic the road if permitted
- Query relating to the ownership of the upkeep and repair of the road following construction
- Negative affect on local amenity, species and their habitats
- Site is on a flood plain
- Septic tanks will be an impossible addition to the existing water table
- Noise and effects of construction on exiting neighbours to this site
- Right of Way and public bridleway affected by proposal

- Proximity of the proposed lodges to the bridleway affects public amenity
- Not enough facilities in the village to support this proposal

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework – sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

National Planning Practice Guidance - Provides National Planning Practice Guidance, in support of and in addition to the NPPF

LDF CORE STRATEGY POLICIES

CS06 - Development in Rural Areas

CS07 - Development in Coastal Areas

CS08 - Sustainable Development

CS10 - The Economy

SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES PLAN 2016

DM1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

DM11 – Touring and Permanent Holiday Sites

DM15 – Environment, Design and Amenity

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

In this case, the main considerations are:

- Principle of development
- Design and layout
- Impact on the character and appearance of the countryside
- Impact on neighbour amenity
- Flood risk
- Highway safety
- Any other material considerations

Principle of development

National and local policies expect new buildings relating to tourist accommodation to be located in or adjacent to existing towns and villages. Section 3 of the NPPF, Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy, and in particular paragraph 28 sets out the need to support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. Local Planning Authorities should ensure that new sites are not prominent in the landscape and that any visual intrusion is minimised by effective high quality screening.

The application site is located on land classified as a mixture of Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural land, on a site designated as open countryside outside the development boundary of Stoke Ferry. In terms of the services and local business that will be supported by this proposal in Stoke Ferry, there is a village hall and church, a pub, two takeaways, a post office and a shop. To the south of the application site lays the River Wissey and to the west the A134 highway acts as a permanent boundary to this area. The location of the proposed development to the east of the settlement of Stoke Ferry is not considered to be isolated from facilities and there are neighbouring tourist accommodation sites in the locality.

Policy CS10 of the Core Strategy (2011) promotes opportunities to improve and enhance the visitor economy: supporting tourism opportunities throughout the borough and smaller scale tourism opportunities will also be supported in rural areas to sustain the local economy, providing these are in sustainable locations and are not detrimental to the natural environment. This application for 6 timber holiday lodges is of an appropriate size and scale for this area adjacent to the settlement of Stoke Ferry and following consultations with various statutory bodies and amendments by the applicant to the proposed development, the proposed use will not be detrimental to the local environment or local residents in relation to its impact on flood risk, highway safety, community safety and neighbourhood nuisance.

Policy DM11 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (SADMP) Plan (2016) is the relevant policy when judging this. In terms of the requirements:

- The proposal is supported by a business plan and planning statement which demonstrates how the site will employ a single employee who will manage the holiday lodges year round and it will support tourism in the area;
- The proposal demonstrates a high standard of design with stilted platforms and raised floor levels overcoming flood risk concerns, screening and landscaping ensuring minimal adverse impact on visual amenity and the historical and natural environmental qualities of the surrounding landscape and surroundings; and
- The site can be safely accessed following the provision of four passing bays along Greatman's Way in accordance with guidance provided by the Highway Authority;
- It is in accordance with national policies on flood risk and the submitted FRA overcomes concerns of the Environment Agency;
- The site is not within the Coastal Hazard Zone indicated on the Policies Map, or within areas identified as tidal defence breach Hazard Zone in the Borough Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and the Environment Agency's mapping.

In relation to permitting such a use, the LPA includes conditions which have been supplied from statutory bodies to ensure that such uses are genuine and will be operated and maintained as tourist facilities in the future. To achieve this aim, occupancy conditions will be placed on future planning permissions requiring that:

- The accommodation is occupied for holiday purposes only and shall be made available for rent or as commercial holiday lets;
- The accommodation shall be for short stay accommodation only (no more than 28 days per single let) and shall not be occupied as a person's sole or main place of residence; and
- The owners / operators shall maintain an up-to-date register of lettings/occupation and shall make these available at all reasonable times to the Local Planning Authority.

The remaining land would be centrally managed by the owner with communal landscaped areas and a centralized waste and recycling area. A neighbouring resident will manage the site 7 days a week. In addition the business expects to employ two local part time cleaners

and two local groundsmen on a part time basis to maintain the exterior of cabins and the surrounding grounds.

The applicant has stated that the cabins will have displays advertising local amenities and leaflets from the tourist information centre. In addition local businesses will be advertised and used as much as possible with a booklet of maps and directions being provided in the lodges with information on the local stores for groceries and provisions, pubs and restaurants in the village and immediate surrounds and it is hoped that these established businesses will benefit from holiday makers using the proposed development.

This creation of additional tourist related development throughout the borough is in accordance with the general economic policies in CS10 as well as the more specific tourism policy in DM 11.

Overall, the proposal complies with national policy statements and the Development Plan.

Design and the effect on the character and appearance of the countryside

The site is located in an area of open countryside as defined by the SADMP document. The application site is bounded to the east by the A134, which bypasses the village with the River Wissey located south of the site. Beyond the river to the southeast is an existing caravan park at Grange Farm on the opposite site of the river. The western boundary is defined by an existing field boundary which incorporates a partial hedgerow and a number of mature trees. The site currently consists of rough pasture running along the east boundary and domestic boundaries. It was also noted on the site visit that there was a hedgerow, mixed with mature willow trees lining the western boundary of the site.

The majority of the proposed development is located to the south of the site. The development on the whole is screened from the public domain by the existing mixture of hedgerows, trees and planting. The visual impact of the proposal will be lessened by natural and existing screening on the site but the development will be visible from the A134 and riverside.

The timber lodges are of timber construction and relate to 6 x 3 bedroom units. The lodges would be served by an internal road and parking and turning facilities are provided for 18 vehicle spaces. The applicant intends to retain the 'wild' character of the site and its setting and is not proposing to carry out any major landscaping works or planting. The grass within the site will be cut periodically to provide an area for sitting out and playing, but it is not intended that this will become manicured lawn. However, the applicant has noted that should this be an issue for the LPA, they request a condition requiring a landscape management/maintenance plan be included for this scheme.

The design of the two storey units, including their elevation, will make these units more visible on site than alternative units but the level of screening provided by the row of planting and trees north of the bridleway will limit the visual impact of the units. As a result of the existing screening on site, the proposal is considered acceptable. The Tree Officer raises no objection to the scheme.

Impact on neighbour amenity

Whilst the holiday lodges are two storey buildings, the units are located to the south of the site and as a result there would be little impact regarding noise and disturbance or overlooking from their location.

The access road and entrance to the site would be located to the north of the site adjacent to the nearest neighbouring properties and runs through the middle of the site giving limited opportunity for noise and disturbance.

Despite the fact that the southern boundary of the site only has sporadic planting, the location of the front elevations of the lodges, which are south facing, are located at an acceptable distance from the bridleway to remove any concerns of impacting on the privacy and amenity of people using the bridleway.

Flood risk

There were objections from the Environment Agency, members of the public and Parish Council concerned with the flood risk on this site and the possibility of an increase in localized flooding as a result of proposed development. The applicant has acknowledged these flood risk issues in their Planning Statement which accompanies the application and as a way of overcoming these concerns, the proposal mounts the lodges on stilts which raise the floor level of the timber holiday lodges above the existing ground level at 3.00m aOD. It is also noted that this proposal is for timber holiday lodges and not permanent residential dwellings.

The flooding issues relate mainly to the proposed development and these concerns have been addressed with the revised FRA, which the Environment Agency has approved of. Furthermore the IDB raise no comment and CSNN and the Environment Agency raise no objection subject to the provision of a scheme for surface water drainage based on sustainable drainage principles and a scheme for foul drainage and the submitted FRA being complied with.

Highway safety

The scheme proposes to access onto Greatman's Way using an access point to the north of the site. Third party representations and objections have been received with regard to the narrow, single track width on the roadway, and that passing is currently only available on grass verges and private points of access.

The Highways Officer initially had concerns that the applicant did not have the rights over Greatman's Way at the last section towards the application site, with their records indicating the public highway terminated at Bramble Hall. The Officer therefore sought confirmation that the applicant has control / right of access over the area and recommended that the applicant be asked to provide a revised plan if they are able to address this matter.

Following the submission of the amended plan, the Highways Officer commented that Greatman's Way is narrow, of single track width, and passing is currently only available on grass verges and private points of access. The Officer commented that they would not consider the section of highway to be suitable in its present form to cater for the additional traffic that this site would generate resulting in a Highways objection.

The Officer did remark that they are aware that Greatman's Way has wide verges, which are highway, along its length and that there is scope therefore for the applicant to mitigate the concerns set out above by incorporating a scheme of some localised carriageway widening, in the form of passing bays, to achieve safe access/passing. Such similar facilities have previously been considered and approved in relation to recent approvals (Reference numbers: 16/00230/O and 15/01595/O) on Greatman's Way however the Highways Officer noted that these are yet to come forward.

The Agent has since confirmed that they accept the condition as proposed by NCC highways on the understanding that the condition will require assessment prior to first use of the cabins and the number of bays to be provided will be assessed at that time having regard to the provision (or otherwise) of bays to the north to the site along Greatman's Way.

Traffic generation as a result of 6 holiday lodges is not considered to be so significant as to warrant a reason for refusal and the concerns raised above by the Parish Council, public representations and Highways Officer have been overcome by attaching conditions supplied by the Highway Officer. The LPA has no objection to the proposal in highway terms subject to conditions regarding the provision of 4 passing areas along Greatman's Way, to accord with the NCC specifications being included in any recommendation which may come forward from previously approved schemes.

Other material considerations

Public comments were received objecting that there are already holiday developments within the local area. The proposal has been considered on its merits and considered to comply with national and Development Plan policies.

Environmental Quality considers that the application raises no issues with regard to contamination.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development for six holiday lodges is located in an area east of the settlement of Stoke Ferry. The proposal would have little impact on the character and appearance of the countryside and complies with Policy DM11 of the SADMP Plan. The proposal would not create additional flood risk in the area and would have limited impact on highway safety. Furthermore it is considered that these units would not be materially harmful to the amenity of any neighbouring properties.

For the reasons outline in this report it is considered that the proposed development accords with the aims of the national and local policy, specifically Policy CS10 of the Core Strategy (2011) and Policy DM11 of the SADMP Plan (2016).

On this basis, the application is considered acceptable and therefore recommended for approval subject to the following conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE subject to the imposition of the following condition(s):

- 1 Condition The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 1 Reason To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.
- 2 Condition The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans titled:
 - Proposed Site Plan, drawing number 205-01SK01, Revision E,
 - Typical Lodge Details, drawing number 205-01SK02,

- Proposed Location Plan, drawing number 205-01SK04, Revision B and
- Site Sections, drawing number 205-01SK05.

- 2 Reason For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
- 3 Condition No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include finished levels or contours, hard surface materials, refuse or other storage units, The soft landscape works shall include planting plans showing native trees, shrub and hedgerow species giving written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment), schedules of plants noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers and densities where appropriate.
- 3 Reason To ensure that the development is properly landscaped in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with the NPPF.
- 4 Condition No development or other operations shall commence on site until the existing trees and/or hedgerows to be retained have been protected in accordance with a scheme that has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall provide for the erection of fencing for the protection of any retained tree or hedge before any equipment, machinery, or materials are brought on to the site for the purposes of development or other operations. The fencing shall be retained intact for the full duration of the development until all equipment, materials and surplus materials have been removed from the site. If the fencing is damaged all operations shall cease until it is repaired in accordance with the approved details. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any fenced area in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavations be made without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.
- 4 Reason To ensure that existing trees and hedgerows are properly protected in accordance with the NPPF. This needs to be a pre-commencement condition given the potential for damage to protected trees during the construction phase
- 5 Condition Prior to the commencement of development details of the method of lighting and extent of illumination to the holiday lodges, access roads, footpaths, parking, and circulation areas shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The lighting scheme shall be implemented as approved prior to the occupation of the development or any phase of the development to which it relates and thereafter maintained.
- 5 Reason In the interests of minimising light pollution and to safeguard the amenities of the locality in accordance with the NPPF.
- 6 Condition No development shall commence until full details of the foul water drainage arrangements for the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage details shall be constructed as approved before any part of the development hereby permitted is brought into use.
- 6 Reason To ensure that there is a satisfactory means of drainage in accordance with the NPPF.
- 7 Condition The owners/operators of the site shall maintain an up-to-date register of the names and the main addresses of all owners/occupiers of individual lodges visiting the

site together with details of their arrival and departure dates and this information shall be made available at all reasonable times to the local planning authority.

- 7 Reason To ensure that the use of the site and occupation is inappropriate in this location in accordance with Policy CS10 of the Council's LDF Core Strategy and the provisions of the NPPF.
- 8 Condition The development hereby permitted shall only be used as short stay holiday accommodation (no more than 28 days per single let) and shall not be occupied as a person's sole or main residence at any time.
- 8 Reason For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the approved holiday accommodation is not used for unauthorised permanent residential occupation which would be inappropriate in this location and contrary to provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and Policies CS01, CS06 and CS10 of the Core Strategy (2011).
- 9 Condition Notwithstanding the details indicated on the submitted drawings no works shall commence on site until a detailed scheme for the off-site highway improvement works; provision of two passing bays, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 9 Reason To ensure that the highway improvement works are designed to an appropriate standard in the interest of highway safety and to protect the environment of the local highway corridor.

This also needs to be a pre-commencement condition as these fundamental details needs to be properly designed at the front end of the process.
- 10 Condition Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the off-site highway improvement works referred to in condition 10 of this condition shall be completed to the written satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
- 10 Reason To ensure the highway improvement works are designed to an appropriate standard in the interest of highway safety and to protect the environment of the local highway corridor.

This also needs to be a pre-commencement condition as these fundamental details needs to be properly designed at the front end of the process.
- 11 Condition The minimum ground floor level of any building involved in the development shall be at least 3.00m aOD unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 11 Reason In order to prevent an increased risk of flooding in accordance with the principles of the NPPF.
- 12 Condition Prior to the first occupation or use of the development hereby permitted the proposed access, on-site parking, servicing, turning and waiting areas shall be laid out, levelled, surfaced and drained in accordance with the approved plans and retained thereafter available for that specific use.
- 12 Reason To ensure that parking and servicing facilities will be available to serve the development.