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WESTERN AND SOUTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2022

A recording of the meeting can be found using the following link to the Committee page:- [Link to committee page](#)

Present: Cllrs Dave Bolwell, Kelvin Clayton, Susan Cocking, Jean Dunseith, Nick Ireland, Louie O'Leary, Paul Kimber, Bill Pipe (Vice-Chairman), David Shortell (Chairman), Sarah Williams, Kate Wheller and John Worth

Also present:

Cllr Tony Ferrari - Dorset Council (Littlemoor and Preston)
Cllr David Walsh – Portfolio Holder - Planning

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Lara Atree (Senior Lawyer - Regulatory), Ann Collins (Area Manager – Western and Southern Team), Susan Hetherington (Engineer (Development Liaison)), Anna Lee (Service Manager for Development Management and Enforcement), Emma Telford (Senior Planning Officer), Jenny Williams (Technical Support Officer) and Denise Hunt (Democratic Services Officer)

96. **Apologies**

No apologies for absence were received at the meeting.

97. **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Louie O'Leary declared that he had predetermined application WP/20/00756/FUL - Waterside Holiday Park, Bowleaze Coveaway, Weymouth and would not take part in the debate or vote on this application.

98. **Public Participation**

Representations by the public to the Committee on individual planning applications are detailed below. There were no questions, petitions or deputations received on other items on this occasion.

99. **Planning Applications**

Members considered written reports submitted on planning applications as set out below.

100. **WP/20/00756/FUL - Waterside Holiday Park, Bowleaze Coveway, Weymouth, DT3 6PP**

Cllr Louie O'Leary did not take part in the debate or vote on this application.

The Committee considered an application for the extension and improvements to Waterside Holiday Park, comprising use of land for the siting of timber lodges for holiday use, outdoor recreation and play areas, associated access and parking, landscaping planting and infrastructure.

The Senior Planning Officer referred to an update sheet circulated to the committee prior to the meeting containing an additional consultation response from the Economic Development Team and a third party comment.

The application was presented including an aerial photograph, location plan, site wide plan, proposed development plans, a Local Plan map showing the site within the setting of the AONB / Heritage Coast and site photos.

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment had been submitted as part of this application and existing, 1 year and 10 year views were shown from different viewpoints. Computer generated imagery provided by the applicant also showed the proposed lodges with parking and planting.

The key planning issues were highlighted including:-

- Principle of development
- Residential amenity
- Visual amenity, setting of Heritage Coast and AONB
- Heritage assets
- Highway safety
- Biodiversity

Some of the written submissions were read out by the Technical Support Officer. All written submissions received were circulated to the committee prior to the meeting and are attached to these minutes.

Cllr Tony Ferrari addressed the Committee, as the relevant Ward Member for Weymouth Town Council and Dorset Council. He drew attention to damage to biodiversity integration, the narrow corridor created by the scheme that would be detrimental to wildlife and concerns associated with increased traffic along Bowleaze Coveway including parking.

In response to the issues raised during public participation, the Senior Planning Officer referred to the consultation response from Wessex Water contained in paragraph 8.16 of the report as well as comments by the Economic Development Team. She confirmed that the proposed lodges would not be located near homes.

The Senior Planning Officer responded to technical questions, including the following points:-

- That lodges fell under the definition of a caravan for the purposes of condition 11 and were for holiday use only;
- That the proposed development did not impinge on any footpaths; and
- That any upsizing of the commercial water supply would be subject to terms and conditions agreed between the applicant and Wessex Water.

It was noted that information relating to a new water tank recently installed at the park to help with the water supply problem had been circulated by the applicant in a separate briefing to members.

The Highways Officer confirmed that there was sufficient capacity in the road for two HGVs to pass one another with cars parked along the road.

Proposed by Cllr Bill Pipe, seconded by Cllr Susan Cocking.

The committee was minded to approve the application subject to conditions.

The Service Manager for Development Management and Enforcement, having considered the representations and the officer's presentation, and having taken into account the views of the committee, made the following decision under delegated authority.

Decision of the Service Manager: That the application be approved subject to the conditions outlined in the appendix to these minutes.

101. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

102. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

103. **Update Sheet**

Appendix - Decision List

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 10.56 am

Chairman

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Western & Southern Area Planning Committee

1 February 2022

Written Submissions

WP/20/00756/FUL - Waterside Holiday Park, Bowleaze Coveyay, Weymouth, DT3 6PP

1 Graham Embley

For many years I have been extremely concerned by the expansion of all the holiday parks in the Preston area and I feel very strongly that enough is enough. Together we must retain the green spaces that we still have left rather than allow the owners of the parks to develop all over what is undoubtedly a beautiful area.

I know all the comments will have been read and taken into account. However, I am worried that only the numbers, for or against, will have been noted, rather than where they have come from.

There are many people, who actually do live in the area, that would like to see no further erosion of the outstanding countryside around Preston. It would benefit not only local people but also visitors . . . it's the reason they come to our lovely coastal town. Why allow further encroachment?

You can make a difference and stop it now, for the sake of us and future generations.

2 Residents of Bowleaze Coveway (21 properties)

The undersigned residents of Bowleaze Coveway (BC) object in the **strongest terms** to the planning application WP/20/00756/FUL.

- **Environmental & Visual Impact**

- The new development would further erode the beauty of the natural and historical landscape. It's our responsibility to protect this for future generations
- Furzy Cliffs were a "gift" to the community not as a gift for economic gain
- The area is already densely populated with seasonal accommodation (caravans, camping etc.) and more will materially impinge the landscape, further reducing the open land significantly - especially as the Lodges are permanent buildings
- The Lodges won't be "hidden" by vegetation particularly in winter
- Just labelling it "eco-style" lodges doesn't off-set the overall negative environmental impact.

- **Traffic / Human Safety**

Despite Highway Authority not raising objections, as residents we have first-hand experience of real traffic issues along BC

- BC is single route, with significant congestion all year, heightened in the Summer. Traffic is already heavy from the 541 caravans (approx 500 – 1000 vehicles) and commercial service vehicles and buses
- Many incidents go unreported, and there are several collisions every year, with drivers using the pavements to avoid on-coming traffic endangering pedestrians & cyclists
- The Highway report suggests using yellow lines, this is unrealistic, as people already park on the grass which police are under resourced to monitor and control
- The construction & servicing of the Lodges will create significant traffic from larger vehicles, and generate an additional approx 60 vehicles daily.

- **Water Pressure**

- Due to significant increase in use by Waterside in the summer- the water pressure drops for residents, and at weekends there is often no water for several hours. This will only be made worse

- **Disturbance / Noise Level**

- The additional weekly seasonal residents (up to 4000 p/wk) already have a significant impact on noise, more will exacerbate this
- Littering has increased significantly, along with vermin in the area which are now in gardens and houses along BC
- Even more services will be required and there are already too many large vehicles. More Lodges will only increase the noise and disruption

- **Economic Benefit**

- The creation of 6 jobs is negligible
- It's proven that Waterside residents bring no economic benefit to the town, the Weymouth Town Council rejected the application, in part, on this basis.

31 Lodges we fear are just the start, and as with the caravans, every few years more and more Lodges will be requested. Our concern is that Waterside will continue to expand without control.

It is time for the Authorities and Residents to lead by example, make a stand for the environment, safety and wellbeing of the local community and say "no" to further development, and encourage investment in what we already have

3 Colin Mannings

With regards to Waterside's planning application we are field neighbours and would like to express our support for their application for the following reasons;

31 landscaped units of high quality is better than 200 white caravans

Sympathetic and active actions being made extensively for ecology and wildlife.

4 Nigel West Coyne

With regard to this application, I have Waterside on two sides of my property, but they have always been excellent neighbours.

They have 7.23 hectares which could have been developed and are only going to use 2.35 hectares (32.5%). Their environmental and biodiversity plans have been approved by Dorset Council. Visibility from the northern side will be minimal as shown by the photomontages and will further decrease with tree and shrub planting let alone greening of the roofs with either lawn or colour and this will also lessen the impact from the southern side.

I would also like to correct councillor Ferrari's comment that this scheme closes off the last corridor to the fields and foreshore to the east.

Eweleaze Farm is, as its name implies a farm, (it only has a permit for 28 days camping a year), wildlife transits all the fields including Waterside, Weymouth Bay, mine and my neighbours next door. Deer, hare, buzzards, hawks, woodpeckers, foxes, voles, weasels, stoats, slow worms and adders are seen dependent on the time of year, even with tourists around.

This is an upmarket development with only 31 Lodges, the rest of the land left to nature, the like of which is not in the Weymouth and Portland district.

I am fully in support of this application.

5 Debbie and Chris Tinklin

I note that the planning application WP/20/00756/FUL is now being brought forward to committee for consideration. I am writing as an occupier of the field next to door to this proposed development. My father has owned these fields and we have enjoyed many years using this space with our families across 4 generations, as my grandchildren now benefit from the use.

Having been a neighbour of Waterside Holiday Park for a considerable amount of time, I have to say they have always been polite, neighbourly and played a responsible role in how they operate, which is of great benefit to the local community.

As a family, we reviewed the plans in December 2020 in order to understand what was being proposed and we feel that there is fantastic biodiversity improvement being made to the area, which will add value to the wildlife in this area. I am also glad to see a solution being brought forward, regarding flooding in this area, which impacts access to our land and also the public right of way onto the coastal path; if approved the investment from Waterside Holiday Park will ensure we can get access all year round, even after heavy storms, which I am grateful for.

We are assured that access to our land will always remain open and unrestricted along the lane from Church Lane.

Given the size of the proposed site, I am pleased that only 31 holiday lodges are being proposed, as I understand the land size could have housed many more units should they have wished to apply for more. The wildlife corridor and gap being maintained between the holiday lodges and the Eweleaze farm is also a welcomed consideration for the development.

6 Cllr Tony Ferrari – Dorset Council (Littlemoor and Preston)

I am the ward Councillor for this site and I object to the application.

The current size of the site is already more than the infrastructure of the area can appropriately manage. The problem is that the access is via Bowleaze Coveaway. During the Summer this is effectively a very narrow two lane road as one side is always parked, the road is not wide enough for a commercial vehicle and a car to pass. With current traffic volumes this can be very congested. This significant increase in users of the site will increase both the number of holiday maker journeys and also the number of service vehicle trips. The road cannot cope with the implicit increase in traffic.

At the same time it is likely to make the already bad parking situation worse along Bowleaze. These new plots are at the far end of the site and there is parking, in the scheme, close to the plots. It is likely that some visitors will drive to the beach at Bowleaze. It is already the case that park visitors park along the Coveaway, you can see from the park permits displayed in their cars. There will be more people trying when the spaces are already full. This will displace parking further into the distance. We have recently had to introduce yellow lines on Overcombe Drive to prevent this overflow causing accidents. This situation will get worse.

This scheme will have a very detrimental impact on wildlife and the environment. It closes the gap between the end of the park and Ewleaze Farm campsite to the East. Wildlife policy emphasises the value of corridors to allow movement between separate undeveloped areas. This scheme closes off the last corridor to the fields and the foreshore to the East of the Riviera hotel. In the Summer particularly this will now be an isolated wildlife island.

The landscaping of the additional fields to the south of the current park seems a totally unnecessary destruction of wildlife habitat for little economic gain. Damaging still further that wildlife island.

This scheme has detrimental impact on both traffic and parking. It also adversely affects the wildlife in the area, I would recommend to the committee that it is rejected.

7 Joney Ramirez (Agent)

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Planning Committee for this application. As you have heard from your planning officer, the proposal is recommended for approval subject to conditions, and a thorough assessment has been carried out to demonstrate that, on the planning balance, any minimal harm resulting to the local landscape will be significantly outweighed by the economic and environmental benefits proposed.

Waterside Holiday Group is a family business that has been operating for 60 years, providing much needed support to the local economy by bringing tourists into the area and generating local jobs. The business has taken the decision to pay above the national living wage, demonstrating its commitment to the local economy and community, and this proposal would result in circa 6 FTE plus seasonal jobs which will greatly benefit the local community. Water tank storage was also put in place in March 2021 to assist with water pressure issues in the area.

The proposal has been amended to include larger ecological areas in the most visually prominent sectors of the site and reduced by 46% the amount of holiday units proposed, from 56 to 31. The units have been designed with sustainability, ecology, landscape and appearance in mind, to create a pleasing and biodiverse holiday development that would use the latest techniques to be as Carbon Neutral as possible, including the provision of EV charging points to each unit, green roofs and Net Zero lodge bases.

Landscape improvements to the existing park and a significant 18.6% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) will further benefit the area and mitigate the minimal impact to the landscape.

Contrary to what objectors might interpret from the proposal, detailed evidence and studies have been provided to demonstrate that individually or cumulatively, the proposal would not have a significant impact on landscape, heritage, built environment, ecology, highways or parking. In fact, both the Council's ecologist and Local Highway Authority recognise there would be no detrimental impact arising from the proposal.

By providing a broad range of alternatives other than the private car, adequate car parking to each of the lodges and aiming the development to a segment of the population that has minimal comings and goings, the proposal seeks to minimise traffic, noise disturbance and local parking pressures. The existence of a bus route serving the holiday park along with its location less than 0.5 miles from services, the proposed landscape strategy, improvements to the existing park and the significant provision of BNG would result in a development which is as sustainable as possible.

For the above reasons, and as supported by the professional assessment of your own Planning Officer, we would kindly request this application to be approved

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Planning Committee – Update Sheet

Planning Applications

Application Ref.	Address	Agenda ref.	Page no.
WP/20/00756/FUL	Waterside Holiday Park, Bowleaze Coveyway, Weymouth DT3 6PP	4a	7-42
<p>Consultation response received from the Economic Development team:</p> <p>The proposal itself clearly outlines the local economic benefits of tourism in general and more specifically for the holiday park expansion and improvements proposed, referencing national and local planning policy and economic studies. These comments are about the proposal in general from an economic development perspective, rather than any specific features of it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism is key to Weymouth’s economy, accounting for approximately one quarter of all jobs. • It is reasonable to assume that without investment in the park, visitor numbers and spend will decline and at some point the park will become uneconomic. • It is reasonable to assume better accommodation will lead to increased prices and higher spend both on and off site, benefitting the economy of Weymouth and surrounding areas. • The leisure facilities can contribute to wider efforts to expand shoulder and off-season tourism in Weymouth. They can also be a community asset, particularly out of season. • Dorset in general has a longstanding housing affordability issue and Weymouth is no exception, driven in part by homes being used as second homes and holiday accommodation. Expanding the tourist accommodation offer through additional static caravans/lodges/pods avoids putting pressure on housing stock. • A very great proportion of Dorset is covered with landscape and ecological designations. High quality landscape, Green and Blue infrastructure are some of Dorset’s greatest assets, however unless we wish to simply preserve Dorset in aspic, development has to go <i>somewhere</i>. This site is close to but not in any of the designated areas, and the size and scale of the development seems designed to minimise environmental impact. It is also served by one of the most frequent bus services in Dorset. • Dorset Council’s vision is for Dorset to be a great place to live, work, and visit, and this proposal offers opportunities for both work and visits. <p>Based on the above, improvement of the site to suit current and future market demand would be good for the economy of Weymouth.</p> <p>Looking at Local Plan points: 4.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.4, 4.1.7, 4.1.8, 4.2.1, 4.5.1, 4.5.7, Econ 5, 4.5.13, Econ 6, 4.8.18, 4.5.21 and 4.5.22, two features stand out:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If we are to have more accommodation and facilities of this type, then the expansion of existing sites with accessible labour, services, and infrastructure - such as this one - is likely to best fit with the Local Plan. 			

2. However, there is a need to strike a balance with landscape considerations (which I am not qualified to assess).

Additional 3rd party comment received:

I stand by my previous comments when this development was first brought to our notice; this is not the place for further unsightly development directly beneath the Coast Path and World Heritage Site, nor would anyone wish to see additional car parking, play areas etc.

Appendix – Decision List

APPLICATION NUMBER: WP/20/00756/FUL

APPLICATION SITE: Waterside Holiday Park, Bowleaze Coveaway, Weymouth, DT3 6PP

PROPOSAL: Extension and improvements to Waterside Holiday Park, comprising use of land for the siting of timber lodges for holiday use, outdoor recreation and play areas, associated access and parking, landscaping planting and infrastructure.

DECISION: Grant permission subject to the following conditions:-

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Site Location - drawing number 590/SL01 P4

Site Layout Plan – drawing number 590/01 P5

Site Layout - Area A Holiday Park - drawing number 590/02 P7

Site Layout - Area B Recreation Ground - drawing number 590/03 P6

Planting and Mitigation Proposals - drawing number 590/04 P9

Existing Site Enhancement Strategy - 590/05 P6

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

2. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: This condition is required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

3. (i) The lodges/caravans shall be occupied for holiday purposes only and

(ii) The lodges/caravans shall not be occupied as a person's sole, or main place of residence;

(iii) the owners/operators must maintain an up-to-date register of the names of all owners/occupiers of the lodges/caravans on the site, and of their main home addresses, and must make this information available at all reasonable hours at the request of a duly authorised officer of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that approved holiday accommodation is not used for unauthorised permanent residential occupation.

4. No external lighting shall be erected on the units hereby approved or within the application site without a lighting scheme having first been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development must be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and biodiversity mitigation.

Appendix – Decision List

5. No more than 31 lodges/caravans shall be positioned on the site as shown on the Site Layout Plan, drawing number 590/01 P5.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure adequate spacing between units.

6. No caravans/lodges or tents shall be sited in the field labelled Nature/Wildlife Area as shown on the Site Layout Plan, drawing number 590/01 P5.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

7. No caravans/lodges shall be stationed on the site until details of external materials for the caravans/lodges, including the colour of the materials have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the caravans/lodges shall be maintained in accordance with the agreed details in perpetuity.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

8. The landscaping shall be implemented in accordance with the details provided in the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan, dated March 2021 and the plans 590/04 P9, 590/03 P6 and 590/02 P7 in the first planting season November-March following the occupation of the caravans/lodges or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner. Maintenance and replacement of trees and shrubs shall be carried out as necessary for a period of not less than 5 years from the completion of the landscaping scheme and any trees or plants which die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased within that 5 years shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory landscaping of the site and enhance the biodiversity, visual amenity and character of the area.

9. No individual caravan/lodge shall be occupied until a landscaping and tree planting scheme for the existing site in accordance with the plan titled Existing Site Enhancement Strategy, drawing number 590/05 P6 shall have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full during the planting season November-March following first occupation of the caravan/lodges. The scheme shall include provision for the maintenance and replacement as necessary of the trees and shrubs for a period of not less than 5 years.

Reason: To ensure a landscaping enhancement of the wider site.

10. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no fences, walls or gates or other means of enclosure permitted by Class A of Schedule 2, Part 2 of the 2015 Order shall be erected anywhere on the site or its boundaries.

Appendix – Decision List

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

11. No individual caravan/lodge shall be occupied until that caravan/lodge has been provided with one charger for plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in a safe, accessible and convenient location.

Reason: To ensure that adequate provision is made to enable visitors to the development to be able to charge their plug-in and ultra-low emission vehicles.

12. No development shall take place until a detailed surface water management scheme for the site, based upon the hydrological and hydrogeological context of the development, and including clarification of how surface water is to be managed during construction, has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The surface water scheme shall be fully implemented in accordance with the submitted details before the development is completed.

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding, to improve and protect water quality, and to improve habitat and amenity.

13. No development shall take place until details of maintenance & management of both the surface water sustainable drainage scheme and any receiving system have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details. These should include a plan for the lifetime of the development, the arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the surface water drainage scheme throughout its lifetime.

Reason: To ensure future maintenance of the surface water drainage system, and to prevent the increased risk of flooding.

14. The development shall be carried out and maintained in accordance with the measures of the Biodiversity Plan, signed by Katy Thomas and dated 29/03/2021 and agreed by the Natural Environment Team on 20/07/2021, unless a subsequent variation is agreed in writing with the Council.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity mitigation and enhancement.

15. The development shall be carried out and maintained in accordance with the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan, dated March 2021, unless a subsequent variation is agreed in writing with the Council.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity mitigation and enhancement

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