



20 May 2019

Our Ref: Bre/096/2673/CS

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Dear Sir

Re: Our clients Ribble Valley Glamping Limited, Moorgate Farm, Moorgate Lane, Dinkley, Blackburn, BB6 8AN. Planning application for 6 additional camping pods at the approved camping pod development at Moorgate Farm.

This letter relates to a full planning application as described above that we have submitted online via the planning portal on behalf of our above-named clients. (PP-07856306)

On 22 June 2017 the Council's Planning and Development Committee granted planning permission, in accordance with the recommendation of their officers, for the change of use of land at Moorgate Farm to a camping facility for eight camping pods and associated car park and landscaping (3/2017/0103). It is therefore evident that the Council's planning officers and members considered this camping facility to be acceptable in this location and compliant with the relevant policies of the adopted Core Strategy.

One of the considerations that was made in respect of that previous planning application related to the effects of the proposed camping facility on the amenities of nearby residents. As the application was approved, the proposal was obviously found to be acceptable in this particular regard.

A second consideration related to the effects of the proposal on the local landscape and visual amenities of the locality. Subject to a condition requiring the implementation and future maintenance of an approved landscaping scheme, the proposal was also deemed to be acceptable in respect of this particular consideration.

The planning permission was implemented, and the camping pods proved to be very popular with holiday makers. Our clients then sought to improve the facility, and the level of enjoyment of their guests, by the introduction of a children's playground (including a climbing frame and swings) for which planning permission was sought in March 2018 under reference number 3/2018/0208. In the Delegated Item File Report for that application, the Council's Case Officer commented as follows:

"Consent has previously been granted for the change of use of land at Moorgate Farm to a camping facility. The 8 no camping pods that were approved by planning permission 32017/0103 have been implemented and the principle of the use of the land for tourism has been established; the development is a small scale tourism facility of the type supported in principle in the open countryside by Core Strategy Policy DMG2. This planning application relates to play equipment that would be used in conjunction with the existing established use



and therefore the sole consideration in the determination of this application is the visual impact of the proposals on the surrounding landscape.”

The case officer concluded that the play equipment would not have a negative visual impact and planning permission was accordingly granted on 11 May 2018.

The facility has continued to be popular with holidaymakers and the success and popularity of the business has been recognised by their recent receipt of the Ribble Valley Tourism Association Award for New Business 2019.

Through this current application our clients are seeking to further expand and improve the facility to a scale that we consider to still be appropriate for the locality and compliant with the applicable planning policies and guidance. Permission is now sought for six additional camping pods, four of which will be the same as the existing units, with the other two being accessible units for use by disabled persons. Detailed plans of both types of pod have been submitted with the application.

As shown on the submitted plans, the proposed new pods will be sited in the field to the east of the existing pods. They will be sited close to, and will obtain vehicular access from, the existing farm track that also serves the existing pods. The front elevations of the pods will face a playing field, including a zip-wire and a football goal, that is to be formed to the north of the proposed new pods. The existing fence on the eastern boundary of the existing site will be removed, but the recently planted trees close to that boundary will be retained, and 5 additional trees will be planted along the edge of the playing field on what will become the new eastern boundary of the site.

As stated above, the previous applications for the establishment of the camping facility (3/2017/0103) and its subsequent improvement through the provision of a children's playground (3/2018/0208) have been considered by the Council to be acceptable in principle and also with respect to detailed planning considerations.

With regards to the principle of the development, the Council considered the original application to constitute a small scale tourism development that is appropriate to a rural area in compliance with Policy DMG2. Whilst there is no definition as to what constitutes “small scale” we are aware of numerous recent planning permissions for developments of static caravans/lodges in the open countryside which are considerably larger in scale (both in terms of the number and size of the units concerned) than the development proposed in this application. We therefore contend that the total of 14 relatively small camping pods that would result from the approval of this application would still represent a small scale tourism development that is permissible in this location under the requirements of Policy DMG2.

Key Statement EC1 (Business and Employment Development) states *“developments that contribute to farm diversification, strengthening of the wider rural and village economies or that promote town centre vitality and viability will be supported in principle”*. The originally approved development has contributed to farm diversification and has strengthened the rural and village economies. The additional camping pods proposed in this application will be of further benefit to the local rural economy.

Key Statement EC3 (Visitor Economy) states that proposals that contribute to and strengthen the visitor economy of Ribble Valley will be encouraged; and that

significant new attractions will be supported in circumstances where they will deliver overall improvements to the environment and benefits to the local communities and employment opportunities. The existing small scale tourism business at the site has been very beneficial to the local economy and the social well-being of the area by providing additional customers for local businesses such as shops, public houses, cafes, restaurants and tourist attractions. The proposed additional camping pods will increase these benefits.

Policy DMB1 (Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy) indicates that the Council will support proposals that are intended to support business growth in the local economy provided such proposals are in conformity with other relevant policies of the local plan. In common with the existing approved development, the proposed development is in full conformity with all of the relevant policies. Policy DMB1 therefore clearly supports the expansion of the existing business as proposed by this application.

Policy DMB3 (Recreation and Tourism Development) states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that extend the range of tourism and visitor facilities in the Borough subject to a number of criteria being met. As far as the criteria are concerned, the proposed development does not conflict with other policies of the plan; it does not undermine the character, quality or visual amenities of the plan area by virtue of its scale, siting, materials or design; and the proposal is well related to the highway network and no adverse traffic problems would be caused by the proposal.

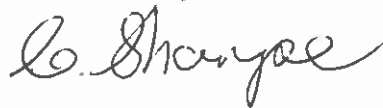
The proposal, therefore, will add six new camping pods (two specifically designed to accommodate disabled users) whilst, in our opinion, having no adverse impacts upon the appearance and character of the locality or the residential amenities of any nearby residents. We confirm that the proposed additional units will be managed and operated in complete accordance with the Site Management Plan (Reference Bre/096/2239/CS dated June 2017) that was approved for use in respect of the existing camping pods. With regards to the effects of the proposal upon the amenities of nearby residents, the Code of Conduct section of the Site Management Plan states that *“noise pollution will be taken very seriously by the site management. Guests will be expected to respect others and to keep noise to a minimum and adhering to a noise curfew between the hours from 10.30pm to 7am”*.

Importantly, however, the proposal also supports the intentions of NPPF and the relevant policies of the Council's Core Strategy to support business growth in the rural economy. On this subject, we would ask the Council's officers to pay regard to the letter of support for the proposal from Marketing Lancashire that has also been submitted with the application. This support letter refers to the benefits to the local economy of all types of tourism, but states that non-serviced accommodation, such as that provided by our clients, generally results in the highest level of spending by the holidaymakers whilst supporting wider businesses within the local supply chain such as retail and food and drink establishments.

Overall, we therefore consider that the proposal will result in substantial benefits to the local economy with no detrimental effects in respect of any other relevant planning considerations. We can therefore see no justifiable reasons why this planning application should not be approved.

We trust that we have submitted everything that you need in order for the application to be validated but, if you need anything further, no doubt you will let us know. We also ask that, if you need anything further, or require any amendments in order for the application to be approved, you give us the opportunity to address the same prior to the determination of the application.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Sharpe', written in a cursive style.

Colin Sharpe
Encl'