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Your ref: 3/2024/0687
Our ref: 3/2024/0687/HDC/KW
Date: 12 November 2024

Location: Bowland Wild Boar Park Wardsley Road Chipping PR3 2HB
Proposal: Regularisation of change of use of woodland to wedding venue, including creation of hard standing, construction of toilet block and construction of large marquee area consisting of joined and separate tipis.
Grid Ref: 365972 445114

Dear Lyndsey Hayes

With regard to your consultation letter dated 9 October 2024, I have the following comments to make based on all the information provided by the applicant to date and after undertaking a site visit.

Summary

The Local Highway Authority advice is that residual cumulative impacts of the development are severe in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and the Local Planning Authority is advised to consider refusal on transport/highway grounds for the reasons outlined in this report.

Advice to Local Planning Authority

Introduction

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) are in receipt of an application for the regularisation of change of use of woodland to wedding venue, including creation of hard standing, construction of toilet block and construction of large marquee area consisting of joined and separate tipis at Bowland Wild Boar Park Wardsley Road Chipping PR3 2HB

Site Access

The site will be accessed via an existing access on to Little Bowland Road which is a C Classified road, the C567, with a speed limit of 60 mph fronting the site access.

The existing access serves Wild Boar Park as well as the holiday lodges, pods and campsite which operates inside the site.

The LHA undertook an assessment of the site access as part of a previous application, planning application 3/2020/0579, which found that the access had a visibility splays of

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2.4m x 40m to the right and 2.4m x 44m to the left of the site access. While, these visibility splays do not comply with the LHAs guidance, which requires an access served off a 60mph road to provide visibility splays of 2.4m x 214m in both directions, the LHA accepted the shortfall because the development would result in a slight intensification of use.

However, the LHA are of the opinion that the proposed development, to create a wedding venue on the site for up to 200 people, will see a higher level of trips being made to and from the site following the development, particularly in the hours of darkness which is not seen currently with the existing site usage. Therefore, there are concerns that the access is not appropriate for the nature of the development.

Another concern of the LHA is the increased traffic along Wardsley Road following the intensification of use. Wardsley Road is a rural road, with no footways or street lighting. Wardsley Road also varies in width, with some sections allowing two-way movement and some sections reduced to single vehicle width. Upon a site visit it became clear that there are several sections of verge damage, not only present on the reduced width sections but also on bends and sections where slow two-way movement could take place, there is a concern that the development will intensify movement along Wardsley Road and contribute to a further decline to the carriageway edge and verges.

Existing Site Operation

The LHA has been unable to locate the original planning permission for Bowland Wild Boar Park and would benefit from information relating to the visitor numbers at the site and any imposed restrictions. The LHA is of the opinion that the site runs as an education centre, rather than a tourist attraction, and therefore attracts visitors for educational reasons, which would be pre-booked and controlled by the applicant.

From the Bowland Wild Boar Park website, it would appear that the park is only open limited times of year, during school holidays and Bank Holidays as well as occasions such as Mother's Day and is open from 10:30am to 4:30pm. The park also appears to be closed during the winter. The opening hours reflect that the majority of the existing vehicle trips for the site will be undertaken mostly within hours of daylight. No information has been provided regarding if the Park will remain open whilst weddings also take place on the site. Although the applicant has suggested that any accommodation on the site not used by wedding guest will be let out separately.

The proposed development has the potential to have a detrimental impact on highway safety and amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site. Due to the increased number of vehicle movements associated with guests to a wedding and the servicing of the wedding venue, compared to that of an education centre.

The proposed change of use will also increase the operation times of the site with greater impact on evening travel movements. The LHA is of the opinion that a wedding venue will also increase the number of vehicles to bring in staff and supplies for the catering side of the wedding functions, than presently required for the education centre.



Parking provisions

The LHA has reviewed drawing number A4011-PL12 titled Site Layout as Proposed and also note the comments made regarding parking provisions within the Transport Statement and Planning Statement. The statements advise that the venue works in partnership with Bowland Escapes and Horseshoe Glamping Executive Event Hire. The on site accommodation can cater for up to 60 guests and as explained within the transport statement each accommodation can support parking provisions. However the statements do advise that numbers from current bookings suggest around 40 guests are booked to stay on site rather than the 60 which can be accommodated. This could increase closer to the time of the event. Therefore whilst no plan has been provided showing this in practice it is expected that 40 vehicles can be accommodated for next to accommodation.

Whilst the existing car parking provisions aimed to be used for the wedding venue side of the site is shown within the plan, no detailed parking layout has been included however the application form suggests a total of 25 parking spaces can be provided. A detailed parking layout plan should include marked-out parking bays, disabled parking bays and electric vehicle charging bays. Given the nature of the site, it would be expected that all vehicles enter and exit the site in a forward gear and turning provisions are provided and shown for the largest vehicle expected to access the site.

Data collected at other venues in Lancashire, albeit in more urban settings, indicates a general ratio of 1 car per 3 guests for wedding venues. As the venue can hold up to 200 guests, this is the number the LHA will use to calculate the required parking provisions. Following this calculation the venue should provide at least 67 parking spaces. When taking into consideration the 40 parking provisions provided alongside accommodation and the 25 spaces suggested within the car parking, there is a shortfall of 2 spaces.

The Wild Boar Park also has a large car parking area which could provide some overflow parking, although this would depend on if the Wild Boar Park was open and its capacity at the time of weddings.

Sustainability

The nearest bus stop to the site is located over 5km from the site on Dunsop Road, which makes the use of public transport to the site unrealistic and presents a safety concern as the pedestrians would be on high speed rural roads without lighting or separate footways. Given the rural nature of the site, there is a reliance on the private car to access the site which is not supported.

Conclusion

At the time of writing, the planning application fails to demonstrate that the development can be fully and appropriately integrated into the local environment without a significant negative impact on the network and that its impacts would be unacceptable in terms of highway safety. This is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Yours sincerely

Kate Walsh



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