

**11. FULL APPLICATION - ERECTION OF A REPLACEMENT BUILDING FOR USES ANCILLARY TO UPPER HURST FARM CAMPING & CARAVAN SITE, TINMAN LANE, HULME END (NP/SM/1024/1046) SC**

**APPLICANT: MRS SUE GREEN**

**Summary**

1. The application seeks permission to replace an existing fire damaged building with a replacement of a similar size and design for uses ancillary to Upper Hurst Farm's camping and caravan site business.
2. The proposed development is considered acceptable in principle and would raise no amenity concerns with regard to any neighbouring properties or highway safety. Moreover, there would be no adverse impact on the wider locality than previously existed, due to the siting of the building on an existing concrete base and adjacent to other agricultural buildings.
3. The scheme is considered acceptable in accordance with national and local policies, therefore recommended to members for approval, subject to appropriate conditions.

**Site and Surroundings**

4. Upper Hurst Farm is located in open countryside approximately one kilometre to the south east of Hulme End. The original farm and associated stone-built outbuildings lie adjacent to Beresford Lane, about 500 metres south east of its junction with the B5054 Hartington to Warslow Road.
5. The property is no longer a working farm. It is operated as a touring caravan and camping site, with caravans and tents located in a parcel of field to the south east of the main building group. The nearest Public Right of Way lies around 190m to the south east of the site.
6. The remains of the building in connection with this application, are located on the northern edge of the site. A holiday cottage in the same ownership lies adjacent to the west side of what remains of the building, with other agricultural buildings abutting the rear and eastern sides (these buildings and land are in separate ownership). Access to the site is directly from the highway (Beresford Lane).

**Proposal**

7. The application seeks permission to replace an existing fire damaged building with a replacement of a similar size and design for uses ancillary to Upper Hurst Farm's camping and caravan site business.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:**

1. **3-year statutory time limit.**
2. **Submitted plans and details.**
3. **Design & materials.**

- 4. Use of building restricted to campsite activity centre only and for no other purpose and ancillary to the existing campsite.**
- 5. Details of climate change mitigation measures to be submitted, approved and implemented.**

### **Key Issues**

- Whether the development is acceptable in principle.
- Potential impact on the appearance of the site and the wider landscape.
- Residential amenity.
- Highway safety.

### **Planning history**

8. The site has a detailed planning history, in summary:
9. Planning permission (NP/SM/0711/0677) was granted in 2011, for the use of the field parcel in question as a caravan and camping site in exchange for the surrender of an existing caravan and camping area to the north of the building group, which was more prominent in the landscape.
10. In 2012, a section 73 application (NP/SM/0612/0622) was granted which allowed winter use on 6 pitches closest to the buildings.
11. In 2015, a further S73 application (NP/SM/0315/0267) was granted to increase the number of overall pitches and to extend the season by two months. That permission did not allow for any winter pitches.
12. In 2018, another S73 (NP/SM/0618/0479) was granted to re-instate 6 winter pitches and provide one additional tent pitch – Granted.
13. In 2019, permission (NP/SM/1019/1083) was refused for the retrospective siting of a hot-tub, log store, decking and compost wc at the campsite.
14. Also, in 2019, permission (NP/SM/1019/1124) was refused for a meeting room within an agricultural barn and conversion of a lean-to off the Dutch barn into a meeting room extension.
15. In 2021, a full application (NP/SM/0621/0702) was granted to convert the roof space above the existing toilet/shower block to site warden accommodation, including alterations to the attached site information centre, forming a site reception and administration office.

### **Consultations**

16. Highway Authority – No objections.
17. Parish Council – Object, regarding the intensification and over-development of the site.

### **Representations**

18. Five letters of support have been received, in summary these express the following:
  - The barn contained essential equipment necessary for the running of the site including the heating and hot water system.

- Diversification of businesses, particularly rural is important to enable them to succeed.
  - The rebuilding of the barn is essential in enabling the site to continue.
  - The fire has had a significant emotional and financial impact on the business.
  - The loss of this facility, was a catastrophic event for the viability of the business.
  - The proposed replacement barn is consistent with the existing buildings on the site and will have no additional impact on the landscape.
  - The rebuild of the barn is a crucial step in ensuring the farm can continue to operate and support its staff.
19. One letter of objection has been received from the neighbouring property. Objecting on the grounds:
- The proposed use goes beyond the original recognised use of the former building within the context of the caravan park
  - Planning applications have been made and granted on this site for specific and dedicated purposes, only for retrospective applications to subsequently be made.

*Planning Officer comment: Planning applications can only be considered on their own merits; consideration of potential future applications at the site can carry no weight in the determination of this application.*

### **Statutory Framework**

20. National Park designation is the highest level of landscape designation in the UK. The Environment Act 1995 sets out two statutory purposes for national parks in England and Wales:
- a) Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage
  - b) Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public
21. When national parks carry out these purposes they also have the duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the national parks.
22. In the National Park, the development plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy and the new Development Management Policies (DMP). These Development Plan Policies provide a clear starting point consistent with the National Park's statutory purposes for the determination of this application. This application must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

**Core Strategy policies:** GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, DS1, L1, RT3, CC1

**Development Management policies:** DMC3, DMR1, DMT3

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

23. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration. Development plan policies relevant to this application are up-to-date and in accordance with the NPPF and therefore should be given full weight in the determination of this application.
24. Para: 88 states, that planning decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings, and well-designed new buildings. They should also enable sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respects the character of the countryside.

25. Para: 189 states, that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.

### **Core Strategy policies**

26. GSP1, GSP2 – *Securing National Park Purposes and Sustainable development & Enhancing the National Park*. These policies jointly seek to secure national park legal purposes and duties through the conversion and enhancement of the National Park's landscape and its natural and heritage assets.
27. GSP3 – *Development Management Principles*. Requires that particular attention is paid to the impact on the character and setting of buildings and that the design is in accord with the Authority's Design Guide and development is appropriate to the character and appearance of the National Park.
28. DS1 – *Development Strategy*. States, that recreation and tourism development is acceptable in principle in open countryside.
29. RT3 – *Caravans and camping*. States that small touring camping and caravan sites and backpack camping sites will be permitted, particularly in areas where there are few existing sites, provided that they are well screened, have appropriate access to the road network, and do not adversely affect living conditions. The provision of improved facilities on existing caravan and camping sites must be of a scale appropriate to the site itself. Development that would improve the quality of existing site, including improvements to upgrade facilities, access, landscaping, or the appearance of existing static caravans will be encouraged
30. L1 - *Landscape character and valued characteristics*. Seeks to ensure that all development conserves and enhances valued landscape character and sites, features and species of biodiversity importance.
31. CC1 – *Climate change mitigation and adaption*. Sets out that development must make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources

### **Development Management Policies**

32. DMC3 - *Siting, Design, layout and landscaping*. Reiterates, that where developments are acceptable in principle, Policy requires that design is to high standards and where possible enhances the natural beauty, quality and visual amenity of the landscape. The siting, mass, scale, height, design, building materials should all be appropriate to the context. Accessibility of the development should also be a key consideration.
33. DMR1 - *Touring camping and caravan sites*. The relevant parts state that:
34. (A). The development of a new touring camping or touring caravan site, or small extension to an existing site will not be permitted unless its scale, location, access, landscape setting and impact upon neighbouring uses are acceptable, and it does not dominate its surroundings and:
35. (B). Shopping, catering or sport and leisure facilities at camping and caravan sites will be permitted provided that they accord with the requirements of Part A and there is no significant adverse effect on the vitality and viability of existing facilities in surrounding communities

## **Assessment**

### **Relevant background history**

36. The application states that at the end of June 2024 a fire broke out and destroyed an existing former agricultural building at the campsite. The building itself was completely destroyed and due to its close proximity; an adjacent holiday cottage was rendered uninhabitable. The campsite has been since been closed, pending ongoing fire investigations and negotiations with insurers.
37. Upper Hurst Farm has been a campsite business since 2011, and the building had not been in agricultural use for at least 13 years prior to the fire. Instead, it had been used for over ten years for purposes ancillary to the operation of the campsite incorporating hay storage for a hobby farm, a meeting room/office, laundry area with biomass boiler, and general storage of maintenance equipment.
38. In 2019, a part-retrospective application to formalise the use of the building for purposes other than agriculture (NP/SM/1019/1124), was submitted, proposing the retention of a meeting room and the addition of a further meeting room (proposed for broader business and community uses). However, the proposed uses were considered more than ancillary to the campsite business, and the proposal subsequently refused.
39. The current application now seeks permission to replace what remains of the existing fire damaged building, with a replacement building of a similar size and design for uses wholly ancillary to the camping and caravan site business.

### **Principle of the development**

40. The Authority's Development Plan Policies support improvements to campsite facilities, these include:
41. RT3 C which states, that the provision of improved facilities on existing caravan and camping sites, including shops and recreation opportunities must be of a scale appropriate to the site itself. Whilst RT3 D says, development that would improve the quality of an existing site, including improvements to upgrade facilities, access, landscaping, or the appearance of existing static caravans will be encouraged.
42. In addition, DMR1 Part A states that development of a new touring camping or touring caravan site, or small extension to an existing site will not be permitted unless its scale, location, access, landscape setting and impact upon neighbouring uses are acceptable, and it does not dominate its surroundings.
43. Part B says that shopping, catering or sport and leisure facilities at camping and caravan sites will be permitted provided that they accord with the requirements of Part A and there is no significant adverse effect on the vitality and viability of existing facilities in surrounding communities.
44. The development description for the application does not precisely state what uses are proposed. The submitted form and plans show 'activity rooms' with associated kitchen, toilets, store and plant. The building has a floor space of just over 200sqm and there would be concerns if other uses, such as a shop or café, were provided of a scale likely to attract visitors not staying on the site and impact the viability of nearby settlements. Therefore, if permission were granted conditions would be imposed to control the use.
45. Subject to this the building would be commensurate with the scale of the existing site and would provide improved recreational facilities ancillary to the needs of the business. In

addition, there would be no further impact on the landscape setting or neighbour amenity than previously existed. Therefore, supported in principle in accord with policies RT3 & DMR1 respectively.

### **Siting, design, materials & landscape impacts**

46. DMC3 reiterates that where developments are acceptable in principle, policy requires that design is to high standards and where possible enhances the natural beauty, quality and visual amenity of the landscape. The siting, mass, scale, height, design, building materials should all be appropriate to the context. Accessibility of the development should also be a key consideration.
47. L1 seeks to ensure that all development conserves and enhances valued landscape character and sites.
48. The replacement building would be sited on the same footprint as the existing, with an overall height and massing similar to the previous one destroyed by fire. The most obvious difference would be the incorporation of a pitched roof rather than replicating a Dutch barn style.
49. Internally the ground floor space would be divided up to incorporate an activity room, kitchen/laundry, a less abled toilet and a plant room that would incorporate a biomass boiler and washing facilities. Internal stairs would lead up to another activity space, male/female toilets and storage.
50. Externally the building would retain a modern agricultural appearance, typical of this style of non-traditional structure, with a mix of timber boarding and metal sheet cladding erected over a random stone wall plinth.
51. On the north west elevation, there would be some hit and miss timber boarding with glazing set behind and a single door entrance into the building. On the same north west elevation roof, five skylights would be incorporated to fit flush with the roofslope. A double door on the side elevation would allow external access to the activity room on the ground floor.
52. These external elements combined, would help reduce the visual impact of the building, therefore ensuring a limited adverse effect on the site and more importantly on the valued landscape character and appearance of the locality.
53. The proposed uses would take place indoors and so any landscape impacts would be limited to additional parking at the site associated with the proposed uses. Whilst the new building is not constructed in a traditional form and use of materials, it would have a similar appearance (of a modern agricultural building) to that which it proposes to replace. Moreover, due to its comparable scale/massing and siting on the same footprint as the previous building, it could be considered as having a neutral and limited impact on the site and its setting in the wider landscape. With these regards, the proposal would essentially accord with policies L1 and DMC3.

### **Potential amenity issues**

54. Policy DMC3 reiterates, that where developments are acceptable in principle, particular attention will be paid to the amenity, privacy and security of the development and other properties that the development affects.

55. Due to the siting and the intervening distances from the nearest residential properties, it is considered the scheme would have no adverse impacts on the amenity of any properties in the locality, therefore accords with policy DMC3 in these respects.

### **Highway matters**

56. Policy DMT3 states amongst other things, that a safe access should be provided in a way that does not detract from the character and appearance of the locality and where possible enhances it.
57. The Local Highway Authority have raised no objections. Stating that the replacement building would be on same footprint and to similar dimensions as the previous building destroyed by fire. Having uses ancillary to the existing campsite, and with activity use being restricted to those staying on the campsite.
58. With this regard, the proposal is considered acceptable in highway safety terms, in accord with DMT3 respectively.

### **Environmental Management and sustainability**

59. Policy CC1 sets out that development must make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources.
60. According to the submitted planning statement, the building would be constructed of blockwork with internally insulated wall panels and external Yorkshire boarding, providing three layers of insulation. It would be heated by underfloor heating powered by a biomass boiler in the proposed plant room. The biomass fuel would be from accredited, sustainable sources.
61. All lights in corridors and toilets would be motion activated with low energy lighting. Rainwater run-off from the roofslopes would be harvested and used as grey water for the toilets. Foul drainage would be dealt with via the existing package treatment plant that currently serves the campsite.
62. Subject to the above, the proposals would essentially follow the principles of policy CC1 in these respects.

### **Other matters**

63. The submitted information states that the building would be constructed on an existing concrete slab, therefore would be exempt from biodiversity net gain (BNG) as less than 25sqm of habitat would be affected.

### **Conclusion**

64. In conclusion, the development is considered acceptable in principle. The siting, design and ancillary use of the building is also acceptable and there are no issues regarding amenity and highway safety. In addition, there would be no adverse landscape impact as the building would be sited adjacent to other agricultural buildings.
65. Consequently, the scheme is in general accordance with National and Development Plan Policies, therefore recommended for approval, subject to appropriate conditions.

## **Human Rights**

66. Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.
67. List of Background Papers (not previously published)
68. Nil
69. Report Author: Steve Coombes, South Area Planning Team.