

7. FULL APPLICATION – PROPOSED SITING OF 24 STATIC HOLIDAY CARAVANS WITH ADDITIONAL LANDSCAPING IN LIEU OF 28 TOURING CARAVANS AND TWO TENTED CAMPING AREAS AT NEWHAVEN HOLIDAY PARK, NEWHAVEN (NP/DDD/1024/1137) AM

APPLICANT: M PURDOM

1. Background

- 1.1. The application was originally considered at the meeting of the Authority's Planning Committee on the 14th March 2025 (to be referred to here as "the first report"). The application was recommended for approval and members of the Planning Committee were minded to approve.
- 1.2. Approval of this scheme is a departure from Policy RT3B of the Core Strategy.
- 1.3. The Authority's Standing Orders (Section 1.48) state that where a Committee is proposing to make a decision which would be a departure from policy, final determination shall be deferred until the next meeting so that a further report on the provisional views can be prepared.
- 1.4. The Head of Planning authorised such a deferral.
- 1.5. Standing Orders state that a deferral report should consider:
 - i. the policy implications e.g. whether the decision is a major departure from the development plan or other key policy
 - ii. the budget implications
 - iii. a risk assessment
 - iv. an assessment of the robustness of the provisional reasons, including recommendations on any conditions.

2. Assessment

- 2.1 This assessment relates to Standing Order deferral reports points (i), (iii) and (iv) above. There are no budget implications (point ii).
- 2.2 The policy presumption against static caravans is longstanding. The 1994 Structure Plan and the Current Core Strategy at Policy RT3B set out that static caravans (alongwith other permanent structures) will not be permitted. The recent local plan review *Issues and Options* statutory consultation set out that 'new policy will retain a restrictive approach to all types of permanent structures used as holiday accommodation'.
- 2.3 The reason for this long-standing restrictive approach is because it is necessary to deliver the National Park's first purpose. Unlike touring caravans and campsites, where the impact is temporary and seasonal, static caravans are permanent. Even if the structures are moveable, planning permission is a permanent change to the use of the land. Their impact can be highly detrimental to valued landscape and special qualities, especially when accompanied by infrastructure such as access tracks, parking spaces and garden areas.
- 2.4 Reasoned justification to the Core Strategy, while acknowledging that there may be exceptions to the development plan, does also warn against the type of all-inclusive 'holiday park' where visitors have all the facilities and entertainment they need and do not venture out to enjoy the area is not in line with the second national park purpose.

2.5 As such the first report sets out that there are exceptional reasons for approval in this case:

- the site is well screened from wider views by mature planting
- the site is already in use for the siting of touring caravans and tents
- additional planting and landscaping, and securing of existing screening provide an opportunity to materially reduce the whole site landscape impact.

2.6 For the reasons set out in the first report, and at para 2.4 above, the application is not considered to be a major departure from the development plan.

2.7 There is a risk that, despite the exceptional circumstances in this case, long-standing policy that seeks to prevent static caravans, because of their potential to cause harm to landscape and special qualities, is undermined.

2.8 However it is considered that this risk is low, taking into account the operation of strategic policies that must be read in combination and give greatest weight to the conservation and enhancement of valued landscape character.

Human Rights

Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

None.

Report Author and Job Title

Adele Metcalfe – Policy and Communities Team Manager