

COMMITTEE REPORT

APPLICATION DETAILS

Application No:	DM/21/00749/FPA
Full Application Description:	Change of use of land to facilitate the siting of 18no. static caravans for holiday use, camping and a 16. touring caravan site; formation of permeable hardstanding and access tracks; siting of amenities block; installation of foul drainage facilities; associated landscaping and planting; and manager's accommodation (part retrospective)
Name of Applicant:	Mr Will Price
Address:	Meadow Farm Caravan Park Ramshaw Lane Ramshaw Bishop Auckland DL14 0NB
Electoral Division:	Evenwood
Case Officer:	Steven Pilkington (Principal Planning Officer) Tel: 03000 263 964 Email: steven.pilkington@durham.gov.uk

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND PROPOSAL

The Site

1. The application site comprises a rectangular shaped parcel of land measuring approximately 1.55ha in area, located to the northeast of the village of Ramshaw, to the west of the County. The site has planning permission to operate as a camping and touring caravan site.
2. The site directly borders Ramshaw Lane to the West, beyond which open agricultural fields and the open countryside are located. To the north of the site lies an access track leading to Sandbed Farm, beyond which Norton Fine Beck and associated vegetation are located. To the east of the site lies agricultural style buildings and agricultural fields associated with Sandbed Farm. To the south of the site lies open countryside and agricultural fields.

3. A close boarded boundary fence forms the northern and eastern site boundaries, while to the south and west hedgerows enclose the site. There is a level change across the site with the land generally falling in a north easterly direction towards Norton Fine Beck and Sandbed Farm. Access to the site is provided from the highway Ramshaw Lane through an established vehicular access, leading to an established area of hardstanding on the site.

The Proposal

4. Planning permission is sought for the formation of a 18no. pitch static caravan site, a 16no. pitch touring caravan site and a camping site to be used for holiday purposes. Associated infrastructure, including hardstanding's, foul and surface drainage are proposed, along with amenity and reception cabins/structures. Planning permission is also sought for the use as part of the site as a manager's accommodation through the siting of a specific caravan.
5. The application is considered on a part retrospective basis, with 6 static caravans already sited on areas of hardstanding (beyond that permitted by a previous approval). A reception unit and amenities cabins have also been sited towards the northern portion of the site. A caravan used as manager's accommodation has also been positioned towards the southern portion of the site where the applicant currently resides.
6. The submitted plans set out that the static caravans would be sited on individual plots, positioned to the northern portion of the site with access tracks leading to these individual plots. The touring caravan plots would be positioned to the midpoint of the site, adjacent to the western site boundary, with an overspill area proposed to the north-eastern corner of the site. Along the northern site boundary, it is proposed that a reception and amenities cabin, along with a second amenity cabin would be retained. The submitted plans indicate the retention of the manager's accommodation unit and an associated compound. A camping area is proposed towards the southern boundary of the site.
7. It is proposed that foul drainage from the site would be treated by an underground package treatment plant, located towards to the northern site boundary. This would then be pumped, in combination with surface water discharge, into an adjacent highway gully. Before being discharged, the surface water would be attenuated in a drainage swale again located to the northern boundary of the site.
8. The current appearance of the static caravans on site varies, some with a painted aluminium finish, others are clad in dark stained waney edge timber cladding. This cladding has also been applied to the reception and amenity units. Parking spaces would be provided adjacent to each static and touring caravan plot. A landscaping plan indicates that areas of native tree, scrub and hedge planting would be planted across the site.
9. The application is being reported to planning committee as it constitutes a major development exceeding 1ha in area.

PLANNING HISTORY

10. Planning permission was granted in November 2015 for the change of use of land to form a camping and touring caravan site, erection of amenity building and formation of hardstanding. This permission has been implemented and the site operates as a camping and touring caravan site. The amenity block sited in the north-eastern corner as part of this permission has not been constructed.
11. Unauthorised development beyond what was permitted in this planning approval has been undertaken. As above this includes the siting of 6no. static caravans for holiday purposes, a reception and amenities unit. The formation of additional hardstanding and level changes on site namely around the north eastern corner. The use of the siting of the manager's accommodation for residential purposes by the applicant fails to comply with conditions on the original planning approval. This application in part seeks to regularise these breaches of planning control.

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy

12. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2018 (with updates since). The overriding message continues to be that new development that is sustainable should go ahead without delay. It defines the role of planning in achieving sustainable development under three overarching objectives – economic, social and environmental, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.
13. *NPPF Part 2 Achieving Sustainable Development* - The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and therefore at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It defines the role of planning in achieving sustainable development under three overarching objectives - economic, social and environmental, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. The application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development for plan-making and decision-taking is outlined.
14. *NPPF Part 4 Decision-making* - Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
15. *NPPF Part 5 Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes* - To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.
16. *NPPF Part 6 Building a Strong, Competitive Economy* - The Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity,

building on the country's inherent strengths, and to meeting the twin challenges of global competition and a low carbon future.

17. *NPPF Part 8 Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities* - The planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. Developments should be safe and accessible; Local Planning Authorities should plan positively for the provision and use of shared space and community facilities. An integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and services should be adopted.
18. *NPPF Part 9 Promoting Sustainable Transport* - Encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. Developments that generate significant movement should be located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes maximised.
19. *NPPF Part 12 Achieving Well-Designed Places* - The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, with good design a key aspect of sustainable development, indivisible from good planning.
20. *NPPF Part 14 Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change* - The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.
21. *NPPF Part 15 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment* - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment. The Planning System should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests, recognising the wider benefits of ecosystems, minimising the impacts on biodiversity, preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from Page 73 pollution and land stability and remediating contaminated or other degraded land where appropriate.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>

National Planning Practice Guidance:

22. The Government has consolidated a number of planning practice guidance notes, circulars and other guidance documents into a single Planning Practice Guidance Suite. This document provides planning guidance on a wide range of matters. Of particular relevance to this application is the practice guidance with regards to; design process and tools; determining a planning application; flood risk; healthy and safe communities; land affected by contamination; natural environment; noise; use of planning conditions; and; water supply, wastewater and water quality.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

Local Plan Policy:

The County Durham Plan (CDP)

23. *Policy 8 (Visitor Accommodation)* sets out that new visitor accommodation or extensions to existing visitor accommodation will be supported where it is appropriate for the scale and character of the area and is not used for permanent residential accommodation. The policy sets out that proposals will be supported where they meet identified visitor need, is an extension to existing visitor accommodation and helps support the future business, it respects the character of the countryside and it demonstrates clear opportunities to make it location more sustainable. Proposals for new or extensions to existing chalet, camping and caravan site will be supported where they are not unduly prominent in the landscape.
24. *Policy 10 (Development in the Countryside)* states that development will not be permitted unless allowed for by specific policies in the Plan or Neighbourhood Plan or unless it relates to exceptions for development necessary to support economic development, infrastructure development or development of existing buildings. The policy further sets out 9 General Design Principles for all development in the Countryside.
25. *Policy 12 (Permanent Rural Workers Dwellings)* sets out that proposals for new rural workers dwellings will be permitted provided it can be demonstrated that, there is an existing functional need for a permanent full time worker to live at or very close to the site in order for the enterprise to function effectively, the rural business has been established for at least three years and is financially sound. The functional need could not be fulfilled by another dwelling on the unit or other accommodation in the area which is suitable and available for occupation by the workers concerned.
26. *Policy 21 (Delivering Sustainable Transport)* requires all development to deliver sustainable transport by: delivering, accommodating and facilitating investment in sustainable modes of transport; providing appropriate, well designed, permeable and direct routes for all modes of transport; ensuring that any vehicular traffic generated by new development can be safely accommodated; creating new or improvements to existing routes and assessing potential increase in risk resulting from new development in vicinity of level crossings. Development should have regard to Parking and Accessibility Supplementary Planning Document.
27. *Policy 29 (Sustainable Design)* requires all development proposals to achieve well designed buildings and places having regard to SPD advice and sets out 18 elements for development to be considered acceptable, including: making positive contribution to areas character, identity etc.; adaptable buildings; minimising greenhouse gas emissions and use of non-renewable resources; providing high standards of amenity and privacy; contributing to healthy neighbourhoods; and suitable landscape proposals. Provision for all new residential development to comply with Nationally Described Space Standards, subject to transition period.

28. *Policy 31 (Amenity and Pollution)* sets out that development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no unacceptable impact, either individually or cumulatively, on health, living or working conditions or the natural environment and that they can be integrated effectively with any existing business and community facilities. Development will not be permitted where inappropriate odours, noise, vibration and other sources of pollution cannot be suitably mitigated against, as well as where light pollution is not suitably minimised. Permission will not be granted for sensitive land uses near to potentially polluting development. Similarly, potentially polluting development will not be permitted near sensitive uses unless the effects can be mitigated.
29. *Policy 32 (Despoiled, Degraded, Derelict, Contaminated and Unstable Land)* requires that where development involves such land, any necessary mitigation measures to make the site safe for local communities and the environment are undertaken prior to the construction or occupation of the proposed development and that all necessary assessments are undertaken by a suitably qualified person.
30. *Policy 35 (Water Management)* requires all development proposals to consider the effect of the proposed development on flood risk, both on-site and off-site, commensurate with the scale and impact of the development and taking into account the predicted impacts of climate change for the lifetime of the proposal. All new development must ensure there is no net increase in surface water runoff for the lifetime of the development. Amongst its advice, the policy advocates the use of SuDS and aims to protect the quality of water.
31. *Policy 36 (Water Infrastructure)* advocates a hierarchy of drainage options for the disposal of foul water. Applications involving the use of non-mains methods of drainage will not be permitted in areas where public sewerage exists. New sewage and wastewater infrastructure will be approved unless the adverse impacts outweigh the benefits of the infrastructure. Proposals seeking to mitigate flooding in appropriate locations will be permitted though flood defence infrastructure will only be permitted where it is demonstrated as being the most sustainable response to the flood threat.
32. *Policy 39 (Landscape)* states that proposals for new development will only be permitted where they would not cause unacceptable harm to the character, quality or distinctiveness of the landscape, or to important features or views. Proposals are expected to incorporate appropriate mitigation measures where adverse impacts occur. Development affecting Areas of Higher landscape Value will only be permitted where it conserves and enhances the special qualities, unless the benefits of the development clearly outweigh its impacts
33. *Policy 40 (Trees, Woodlands and Hedges)* states that proposals for new development will not be permitted that would result in the loss of, or damage to, trees, hedges or woodland of high landscape, amenity or biodiversity value unless the benefits of the scheme clearly outweigh the harm. Proposals for new development will be expected to retain existing trees and hedges or provide suitable replacement planting. The loss or deterioration of ancient woodland will require wholly exceptional reasons and appropriate compensation.
34. *Policy 41 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity)* states that proposal for new development will not be permitted if significant harm to biodiversity or

geodiversity resulting from the development cannot be avoided, or appropriately mitigated, or as a last resort, compensated for.

35. *Policy 43 (Protected Species and Nationally and Locally Protected Sites)* development proposals that would adversely impact upon nationally protected sites will only be permitted where the benefits clearly outweigh the impacts whilst adverse impacts upon locally designated sites will only be permitted where the benefits outweigh the adverse impacts. Appropriate mitigation or, as a last resort, compensation must be provided where adverse impacts are expected. In relation to protected species and their habitats, all development likely to have an adverse impact on the species' abilities to survive and maintain their distribution will not be permitted unless appropriate mitigation is provided or the proposal meets licensing criteria in relation to European protected species.
36. *Policy 56 – Safeguarding Mineral Resources* – states that planning permission will not be granted for non-mineral development that would lead to the sterilisation of mineral resources within a Mineral Safeguarding Area. This is unless it can be demonstrated that the mineral in the location concerned is no longer of any current or potential value, provision can be made for the mineral to be extracted satisfactorily prior to the nonminerals development taking place without unacceptable adverse impact, the nonminerals development is of a temporary nature that does not inhibit extraction or there is an overriding need for the non-minerals development which outweighs the need to safeguard the mineral or it constitutes exempt development as set out in the Plan. Unless the proposal is exempt development or temporary in nature, all planning applications for non-mineral development within a Mineral Safeguarding Area must be accompanied by a Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to the site of the proposed development.

<https://www.durham.gov.uk/cdp>

Neighbourhood Plan:

37. The application site is not located within an area where there is a Neighbourhood Plan to which regard is to be had.

CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY RESPONSES

Statutory Consultee Responses:

38. *Evenwood and Barony Parish Council* – Concerns are raised regarding the number of vehicles that will require parking in the 18 bays to serve the chalets and caravan park. There is strong potential for cars to spill out onto the highway.
39. *Highways Authority* – Raise no objections, but highlight that Conditions 8 (implementation of visibility splays) and 9 (upgrading of site access) from the DM/15/01938 consent will have to be addressed by this application.
40. *Drainage and Coastal Protection* – Advise that whilst the principle of the proposed surface water drainage is acceptable, construction details of all the SuDS features together with an engineering layout plan identifying levels of the

drainage infrastructure should be submitted. This could be secured by condition.

41. *Environment Agency* – Offer no objections to the application following submission of additional information clarifying that a non mains drainage package treatment would be installed. It is however advised that an Environmental Permit would need to be secured and that the maximum capacity of the site should be limited to that detailed in the non mains drainage assessment.
42. *Coal Authority* – Advise that the site falls within a high risk area associated with former coal mining activity and therefore in line with the recommendations of the submitted Coal Mining Risk Assessment, instructive site investigation works should be undertaken to inform whether remedial measures are required. Given the part retrospective nature of the application, it is recommended no further units are sited unless the required investigations have been carried out.

Non-Statutory Responses:

43. *Landscape Section* – Advise that the site does not benefit from year-round screening by existing topography, or vegetation as a consequence the proposals would cause harm to the character, quality and distinctiveness of the local landscape. It is however recognised that improvements have been made to the landscape planting plan will help reduce the visual prominence and provide better long-term visual enclosure of some areas of the scheme, however until this becomes established (the length of time depending on the design, quality and performance of the planting), given the current open character of the site, the proposal will still be a notable feature. Notwithstanding this, given the topography of the site and its immediate environs, the southern sections of the static caravans would not be well screened and therefore there will still be residual landscape harm to the character, quality and distinctiveness of the landscape from this part of the site due to the current layout.
44. *Ecology* – The submitted information has been reviewed and the marginal net gain is achievable on site.
45. *Environmental Health Nuisance Protection* - Advise that there is no history of complaints relating to impact upon the site users from noise, odour or light. However there have been complaints in relation to the escape of sewage from the site which can lead to statutory nuisance under section 79(h) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It is however advised that the detail provided within the application demonstrates that sewage generated on the site will be removed by tanker prior to the installation of a comprehensive system, provided that this is undertaken by a licensed contractor at regular intervals, it is advised there should be no impact on neighbouring amenity.
46. *Environmental Health Licencing* – Advise that it is a requirement of the Caravan Site Licence that there shall be satisfactory provision for foul and waste water drainage. Concerns are raised regarding the management of foul water from the site prior to the installation of a comprehensive sewerage system.
47. *Visit County Durham* – No comments received

Public Responses:

48. The application has been advertised by individual notification letters, press and site notice. 9 letters of objection and 19 letters of support have been received.
49. The 9 letters of objection are summarised below:-
- The retrospective nature of the application is highlighted, including relating to the layout of the site which does not accord with the original approval
 - The site generates noise which disturbs local residents, particularly in summer months
 - The site is considered an eyesore to the local countryside while the appearance of the caravans are of a poor appearance. A large unsightly vehicle body is visible from Ramshaw Road, while the current surfacing of the entrance has a poor appearance.
 - To prevent the site being used for permanent residential occupancy it should only be open for 10 months a year.
 - It is highlighted that there are other static caravan sites within the immediate area
 - Concerns are raised regarding the cleanliness and safety of the site and smells generated from the drainage network.
 - Concerns are raised regarding the adequacy of the proposed package treatment plant to treat wastewater from the site before being discharged into the water course, particularly in times of high demand. The current cess pit is of an inadequate size to manage the foul water from the site, this has resulted in the capacity being exceeded and foul water passing over the site boundaries.
 - It is unclear whether approval has been reached to discharge into the water course in the highway verge. It is noted that this is dry for much of its length.
 - Concerns are raised regarding the attenuation of the surface water on the site, detailed specification of the proposed system should be submitted for consideration. The current layout and management of surface water results in the surface water passing across the site boundaries.
 - Concerns are raised regarding the delivery of the proposed landscaping and cladding scheme given the tight margins and proximity of units to the boundary of the site.
 - The site levels have been altered in proximity of the site boundaries, this has altered the flow of surface water across the site and has resulted in concerns in relation to amenity of adjacent sites.
50. The 19 letters of support are summarised below:-

- The site is an attractive destination and the site owners are welcoming to their visitors and the site is popular.
 - The site is well run and provides a safe environment for children and wildlife is encouraged and nurtured by the site owners
 - The options for static caravans would increase the appeal of the site and increase trade for local businesses through increased visitors and use of the site in winter months.
 - The site is an ideal location for static caravans and would increase tourism options for the area, there is a limited provision for such developments in the area
 - The site provides value for money when a lot of camping sites are overpriced.
 - Permanent accommodation is required to effectively run the site
51. CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) – Note that there is an existing caravan site and that accept that the access to this site is suitable. It is also noted that the refers to colour schemes for the static homes and has a planting scheme that appears acceptable. The proposed manager’s accommodation is timber clad and single storey, it would appear that this would fit in with the landscape. However, concerns are raised whether the requirements of Policy 12 of the County Durham Plan are met in terms of the managers accommodation. Provided policy criteria is satisfied, no objection is raised, however conditions are recommended to ensure that a colour scheme of the caravans are secured, that an adequate planning scheme is provided and conditions to ensure that there is no permanent residency of the site.

Applicants Statement:

52. Meadow Farm Park first received planning permission in November 2015 as a site for camping and touring caravans. It quickly gained support as a recognised staging post for those passing through the area, heading north or south on the A68, as well as gaining popularity with caravanners from within the region enjoying the rural west of the county. However, it also became evident early in its existence that there was an increasing demand by those wishing to stay for longer periods to enjoy not only the rural side of the county, but also the increasingly strong tourism offer available through such as the developments associated with Auckland Castle and Kynren, as well as the more established attractions of such as Beamish Museum; Bowes Museum; and the city of Durham itself.
53. This recognition of the tourism demand is the basis on which this application before you is predicated, and it is an application which is founded on the ambition of the owners to invest in and grow a business notwithstanding challenges which have come their way through difficult relationships with neighbouring landowners and the obvious hurdle which the pandemic proved to be for many enterprises. The aspiration is to have a modestly-scaled site offering stays in static caravans, whilst still retaining the offer of camping and pitches for touring caravans for those staying for shorter periods or breaking longer journeys with a short stay in the area.

54. It is a proposed development invested in through personal capital and with personal, hands-on involvement and endeavour, and the applicant believes it is this personal involvement which will enable Meadow Farm Park to flourish. The application is one which will improve on the overall planning requirements and status of the site founded on the 2015 permission, and the grant of permission for this current application would put in place a structure within which Meadow Farm Park can be taken forward to provide an enhanced tourism-related offer in the area

PLANNING CONSIDERATION AND ASSESSMENT

55. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out that if regard is to be had to the development plan, decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In accordance with advice within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the policies contained therein are material considerations that should be taken into account in decision making. Other material considerations include representations received. In this context, it is considered that the main planning issues in this instance relate to the principle of development, landscaping and visual impact, surface and foul water drainage, ecology, highway safety, residential amenity, ground conditions and other matters

Principle of Development

56. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material planning consideration. The County Durham Plan (CDP) is the statutory development plan and the starting point for determining applications as set out in the Planning Act and reinforced at Paragraph 12 of the NPPF. The CDP was adopted in October 2020 and provides the policy framework for the County up until 2035 and is therefore considered up to date.
57. NPPF Paragraph 11c requires applications for development proposals that accord with an up to date development plan to be approved without delay. NPPF Paragraph 12 states that where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.
58. CDP Policy 10 is considered the starting point for the consideration of development in the countryside. The policy sets out a restrictive approach, stating that development in such locations will not be permitted unless allowed for by specific policies in the Plan, relevant policies within an adopted neighbourhood plan relating to the application site or where the proposal relates to stated exceptions.
59. Relevant to this application is CDP Policy 8, which provides general support for visitor accommodation in the countryside where development is appropriate to

the scale and character of the area and are not used for permanent residential accommodation. In addition, the policy sets out that proposals will also only be supported where they are necessary to meet identified visitor needs; or is an extension to existing visitor accommodation and helps to support future business viability and it demonstrates clear opportunity to make its location more sustainable.

60. The approach contained within CDP Policy 8 aligns with NPPF Paragraph 84 which advises that decisions should enable; the sustainable growth and expansion of business in rural areas, the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural business; and sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside.
61. In this respect, planning permission was granted in 2015 for the use of the site as a camping and touring caravan site and the erection of associated an amenity building and hardstanding's. While the amenity building has not been constructed, the use of the site for camping and the siting of touring caravans for holiday purposes has been implemented and this permission has commenced, the site has been actively used for tourism purposes. This application seeks planning permission for the further development of the site to facilitate the siting of 18 static caravans for holiday use, whilst retaining the established touring caravan and camping elements of the use, albeit at a reduced scale.
62. Visit County Durham advise as a destination, the County needs to increase its visitor accommodation capacity to achieve higher spending levels that would, in turn, allow the County to sustain more visitor economy businesses and direct and indirect employment. The current Durham Tourism Management Plan notes that it is important that the County grows its visitor accommodation stock quickly in order to exploit Durham's greater UK profile and capitalise on the growth in UK based holidays following COVID-19. It is considered that the proposed development would meet this aim and would assist in increasing visitor levels into overnight visitors, higher spend and visitor economy development. It is therefore considered, that there remains an identified need for such proposals in accordance with Policy 8. It is also recognised that the proposals would represent an extension to the existing visitor accommodation offer and will likely help support the business viability by appealing to a wider customer base on a year-round basis.
63. Policy 8 also sets out that tourism proposals within the countryside will be supported where they demonstrate clear opportunities to make their location more sustainable. It is recognised that the application site is not considered to be a wholly sustainable location as it is located within open countryside, in an area with limited services and is not well served by public transport. However, given the established use of the site, it is considered that the proposed development would represent an evolution of the site and would therefore not introduce a new use that would significantly increase trips to and from the site. The applicant has introduced bike stores and operates a bike hire from the site. On balance, in this instance, it is considered that given the established use, the location of the development would not give rise to a level of harm that would represent conflict with CDP Policy 8, but the harm should be recognised in the planning balance.

64. Policy 8 requires proposals to respect the character of the countryside and this is considered in more detail later within this report.
65. Overall, recognising the established use of the site, the benefits of the proposal in terms of meeting identified visitor needs, and supporting the local economy, should be weighed against any landscape and visual impact and the unsustainable location of the development, in the planning balance. In the event of any approval, conditions are recommended to ensure that the accommodation is used for commercial holiday lettings only and to prevent a residential use in order to ensure the anticipated benefits.

Manager's accommodation

66. The proposed scheme also seeks retrospective planning permission for the siting of a caravan unit to be used as permanent manager's accommodation on the site. The applicant currently resides in this unit. CDP Policy 12 is relevant to this element of the proposals which sets out that new rural workers dwellings will only be permitted where:-
 - The nature and demands of work involved means that there is an essential existing functional need for permanent full-time worker to live at the site in order for the enterprise to function effectively.
 - The rural business has been established for three years and is currently financially sound.
 - The scale of the dwelling is commensurate with the established functional requirements of the enterprise.
 - The functional need could not be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the unit or in the area.
67. This policy replicates the requirements of Paragraph 80 of the NPPF which sets out that planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless there is an essential need for a rural worker, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside.
68. The supporting information sets out that the manager accommodation is required to provide a continuous management presence on site to deal with customer's needs which can arise 24 hours a day.
69. In assessing this element of the development, it is considered that whilst it may be desirable for the applicant to live on site, there is not an absolute need in order for the business to function. Commonly camping and caravan sites would have specific check in and check out times and more often than not bookings are made remotely. It is also noted that such uses have concentrated peak seasons, where in winter and colder months site activities would be expected to be limited.
70. In relation to whether any functional need could be undertaken from other dwellings in the vicinity, it is highlighted that the settlement of High Etherley is located 1.1 miles away, with a range of housing stock available. The edge of West Auckland is also located 1.4 miles away where there is again a range of housing available. Given the travel time to these settlements and others in the vicinity of the site, it is considered that without significant capital outlay, the remote monitoring facilities could easily be adopted to provide surveillance of

the site from these surrounding settlements and the applicant could rapidly respond to matters. Furthermore, no information has been provided to demonstrate that any functional need would relate to a full-time worker on the site.

71. In addition to this, whilst accepting that the operation has been established and operational for more than three years, no financial information has been submitted to demonstrate that the business is financially sound and is expected to remain so. The proposal would fall foul of CDP Policy 12 in this respect.
72. Overall, given the established lawful use of the site, it is considered that the expansion of the use to include static caravans is acceptable in principle, subject to a detailed analysis of the impacts of the development as set out below. Conditions are recommended to define the use of the site and ensure that the caravans are used for commercial lettings only. The formation of a permanent manager's accommodation would not meet the functional and financial tests of the County Durham Plan and the NPPF to permit an isolated dwelling within the countryside.
73. It is however recognised that the applicants are currently living on the site and that the majority of the construction work has been undertaken by them. On this basis, to facilitate the continued development of the site and to allow time to find alternative accommodation, a period of 12 months temporary provision is considered appropriate and is to be secured by condition. The applicant would be subject to enforcement action in the event this temporary period is breached.

Landscaping and Visual Impact

74. The application site lies within the Countryside but outside any designated or protected landscape area. CDP Policy 39 sets out that proposals for new development in such locations will be permitted where it would not cause unacceptable harm to the character, quality or distinctiveness of the landscape.
75. CDP Policy 8 h) states that proposals for new, and extensions to existing, sites for static caravans, along with associated storage and infrastructure, will be supported where they are not unduly prominent in the landscape from either long or short range views by ensuring:
 - (i) adequate year-round screening through existing topography, vegetation or other features which are compatible with the landscape. Where new or additional screening is required this must be suitably established before development can take place;
 - (ii) the layout would not adversely affect the character of the area; and
 - (iii) the materials and colour of chalets or static caravans, site services and infrastructure are designed to blend with the surroundings of the site and are limited in scale to the needs of the site occupants only.
76. CDP Policy 10 l) states that new development in the countryside must not, by virtue of their siting, scale, design and operation, give rise to unacceptable harm to the intrinsic character, beauty or tranquillity of the countryside which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated for. In addition, CDP Policy 29 outlines

that development proposals should contribute positively to an area's character, identity, heritage significance, townscape and landscape features, helping to create and reinforce locally distinctive and sustainable communities.

77. NPPF Paragraph 130 advises that planning decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area for the lifetime of the development; are visually attractive; and are sympathetic to local character including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting. NPPF Paragraph 174 advises that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
78. At present there is a large amount of hardstanding that has been formed, concentrated in the northern portion of the site. A portion of this hardstanding was laid lawfully, under the original permission for the site and has an established visual impact. As a result, along with other structures and boundary treatments, the site in close range view has an urban appearance. The site owner more recently has attempted to soften the appearance of site through the planting of vegetation separating caravan pitches, this has yet to fully mature. A mature hedgerow has also been allowed to grow in height down the southern and western boundary of the site, to help screen the site from the adjacent highway of Ramshaw Lane. The vegetation of Norton Fine Gill also provides a visual buffer and screens the site from direct views from the north from Hart Brigg Lane. It is however recognised that in Winter months, filtered views of the site are achievable. In wider range views, particularly from higher land of Toft Hill the site is not considered particularly prominent and is largely read as part of the wider countryside with pockets of sporadic development. There is however a level change across the site, with the land generally falling from a high point from the southern site boundary to the northern boundary of the site. This means that development in the southern portion of the site is more prominent and has a higher risk of landscape harm.
79. The proposed site layout has attempted to address this level change, by concentrating caravan plots in the northern portion of the site and leaving the higher southern portion free of development. This is with the exception of the manager's accommodation, play areas and the camping area. In assessing the landscape impact of the proposals, the Council's Landscape Officer recognising that the site does not strictly benefit from year-round screening advises that the proposals would cause some harm to the character, quality and distinctiveness of the local landscape. It is however noted that improvements have been made to the landscape planting plan that would help reduce the visual prominence and provide better long-term visual enclosure of some areas of the scheme. It is however advised until this becomes established, and depending on the quality and performance of the planting, this harm will not be fully mitigated in the short term. It is also advised that there would still be residual landscape harm in relation to the siting of the caravans on the higher southern portion of the site which would not be fully screened, even once the landscaping is matured.
80. Amendments have been sought from the application in this respect, however it is advised that this would impact on the quantum of development achievable, adversely impacting on the viability of the scheme, given associated costs of

required site improvements. It is however noted that the proposed manager's accommodation, as set out above would need to be removed after a 12-month period. This would also assist in reducing the visual impact of the development, being the most southern unit of accommodation.

81. The site layout also proposes the removal of a significant amount of hardstanding which adds to the urbanised feel of the site. This is considered to represent an improvement over the existing situation. As highlighted above, the appearance of the static caravans on site varies, some with painted aluminium, others have been clad in a dark stained waney edge timber cladding. This cladding has also been applied to the amenity blocks. Unfortunately, the cladding of these elements of has led to a jarring visual appearance which is not considered particularly sympathetic to the rural character of the area.
82. Overall, on balance the development would result in some residual landscape harm. However, it is considered that this level of harm would not result in a conflict with policy but would need to be weighed in the planning balance. Conditions are recommended to be attached to ensure that the landscaping scheme is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. Furthermore, conditions are recommended to ensure that any sited caravans are of an appropriate design/colour and that any hardstanding which does not align with the approved layout is removed.

Surface and foul water drainage

83. CDP Policies 35 and 36 relate to flood water management and infrastructure. Policy 35 requires development proposals to consider the effects of the scheme on flood risk and ensure that it incorporates a Sustainable Drainage System (SUDs) to manage surface water drainage. Development should not have an adverse impact on water quality. Policy 36 seeks to ensure that suitable arrangements are made for the disposal of foul water.
84. Part c) of Policy 35 states that all development proposals will be required to consider the effect of the proposed development on flood risk, both on-site and off-site, commensurate with the scale and impact of the development and taking into account the predicted impacts of climate change for the lifetime of the proposal. Development will not be permitted unless it can be proven through a Flood Risk Assessment that the development, including the access, will be safe, without increasing or exacerbating flood risk elsewhere, any residual risk can be safely managed and where possible will reduce flood risk overall.
85. Part 14 of the NPPF seeks to resist inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Paragraph 167 advises that when determining planning applications, Local Planning Authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere and that, where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment. Paragraph 169 goes on to advise that major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate.

86. Concerns have been raised by the adjoining site owner regarding surface water flooding, given the topography of the site it is advised that in high rain events surface water flows over the site boundaries. Due to the hardstanding's created on site, the topography of the land and surrounding land levels, this is considered a likely occurrence. It is however considered that to a lesser degree this would have happened naturally even if the site was in an agricultural use due to land levels and topography.
87. In consideration of this issue, the application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and a Drainage Strategy. The submitted information sets out that the site is within Flood Zone 1, with the lowest risk of flooding. The drainage strategy proposes that the runoff of surface water within the site would be conveyed by a series of filter drains to a detention basin, where its flow would be attenuated, before being discharged to a highway's gully on Ramshaw Lane by a pump.
88. The Council's Drainage and Coastal Protection Team advise that whilst the principle of the proposed surface water strategy is acceptable, construction details of all the SuDS features together with an engineering layout plan identifying levels of the drainage infrastructure and specification should be submitted. It is advised that the detention basin should be no steeper than 1 in 5. It is advised that this detail could be secured condition, including setting out a timeframe for completion. Given the retrospective nature of the application, it is considered that a period of 12 months would be appropriate to detail this information and any unauthorised hardstanding's that do not align with the approved layout would also need to be removed within this period.
89. In terms of foul water, at present, the development is served by a cess pit which is emptied under contract with a local operator. Although not the preferred solution for developments of this nature, this arrangement has been installed under the general binding rules of the Environment Agency without the need for further permission. Complaints have been received regarding instances where the capacity of this system has been exceeded. The Environment Agency and the Council's Environmental Health Team have specific powers for such matters and can undertake investigations in relation to this.
90. In order to address this matter, the development as proposed intends to upgrade this to a package treatment plant which would treat wastewater before discharging into a gully in the highway. The supporting information calculates the estimated daily flows generated by the development, on the assumption of full occupancy, indicating the size of the package treatment plant required to be installed.
91. In consideration of the proposals the Environment Agency offer no objection to this approach, it is however advised that an Environmental Permit would need to be secured (under separate legislation). Overall, in principle, the foul drainage strategy for the site is considered acceptable, however a condition is recommended to secure further details of the proposed scheme in order to ensure that it conforms with the technical requirements of the Environment Agency and adequately treats wastewater to prevent pollution of the environment.

92. However, as set out above, the application is in part retrospective, with 6 caravans already sited and brought into use. Until the proposed package treatment solution is installed and brought into use, an interim solution is required. A condition is therefore recommended to ensure that the levels of the current cess pit are routinely monitored, and the tank is emptied on a frequent basis. While recognising that both the Environment Agency and the Council's Environmental Health Service have specific powers in relation to potential pollution instances of this nature, this would allow the Local Planning Authority to control and reduce the risk of pollution to the environment in line with relevant policy.
93. Overall, subject to conditions requiring the submission of further details and subsequent completion of the surface and foul water drainage strategy for the site and the implementation of an interim management regime, the development is considered to accord with CDP Policies 35 and 36 and Part 14 of the NPPF.

Ecology

94. NPPF Paragraph 179 b) seeks to promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity. Paragraph 180 d) goes on to advise that opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.
95. In line with this, CDP Policy 41 seeks to secure net gains for biodiversity and coherent ecological networks. The application is supported by an Ecological Impact Assessment, Breeding Bird Survey, Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, Outline Landscape Management and Monitoring Principles document, and Defra Biodiversity Net Gain Metric in excel format.
96. The submitted Ecological Impact Assessment concludes that the development would not result in adverse impacts in relation to protected species and their habitats. The reports and subsequent biodiversity metrics calculation demonstrate that a net biodiversity gain would be achieved subject to the delivery of the submitted landscaping plan.
97. The Council's Ecology officer advises that the methodologies and conclusions within the report are sound, and that the development would achieve a marginal net biodiversity gain.
98. Overall, subject to a condition requiring the completion of the proposed landscaping scheme the development is considered to accord with CDP Policy 43 and Part 15 of the NPPF.

Highway Safety

99. The NPPF sets out at Paragraph 110 that safe and suitable access should be achieved for all users. In addition, Paragraph 111 of the NPPF states that

development should only be refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts on development are severe.

100. CDP Policy 21 outlines that development should not be prejudicial to highway safety or have a severe cumulative impact on network capacity, expecting developments to deliver well designed pedestrian routes and sufficient cycle and car parking provision. Similarly, Policy 29 advocates that convenient access is made for all users of the development together with connections to existing cycle and pedestrian routes. Criterion q) of Policy 10 does not permit development in the countryside where it would be prejudicial to highway safety.
101. The parish council raise concerns over the level of parking on site, highlighting the potential for parking to spill out onto the highway.
102. The proposed development would utilise the existing site entrance off Ramshaw Lane, leading to an internal site layout. Each caravan unit would have its own parking space whilst there would be parking available, if required, on grassed areas on the site.
103. Highways Authority raise no objections to the continued use of the site access or the development as a whole. It is however highlighted that conditions, ensuring site visibility splays are maintained, and the surfacing of the entrance adjoining the highway, would be required. Conditions to this effect are recommended, including a compliance period of 12 months for the surfacing works.
104. Whilst recognising the concerns of the Parish Council, sufficient car parking is considered to remain within the site and the proposals are not considered to adversely affect highway or pedestrian safety, subject to the attached conditions. The development is therefore considered to accord with CDP Policies 10 and 21 and Part 9 of the NPPF in this respect.

Residential Amenity

105. Parts 12 and 15 of the NPPF require that a good standard of amenity for existing and future users be ensured, whilst seeking to prevent both new and existing development from contributing to, or being put at unacceptable risk from, unacceptable levels of pollution.
106. CDP Policy 31 states that all new development that has the potential to lead to, or be affected by, unacceptable levels of air quality, inappropriate odours and vibration or other sources of pollution, either individually or cumulatively, will not be permitted including where any identified mitigation cannot reduce the impact on the environment, amenity of people or human health to an acceptable level.
107. Criterion r) of Policy 10 does not permit development in the countryside that would impact adversely upon residential or general amenity.
108. In general, the site lies within the open countryside, however a rural agricultural type enterprise known as Sandbed Farm is located directly to the north east of the site. A number of buildings containing animals and equipment are sited in proximity of the site boundary, and an access road also runs along the northern boundary to the site. Currently Sandbed Farm has a temporary permission for

a residential caravan to be sited, while an appeal is currently being held for the construction of a rural workers dwelling. These elements would be sited approximately a minimum of 50m from the site boundaries.

109. Concerns have been raised from the adjacent site regarding a loss of amenity, specifically in relation to the siting of caravans in the northeast corner of the site. It has been advised that the site levels in this area have been altered through the importation of materials, creating a large hardstanding area. Further objections have also been raised by other properties in relation to noise and disturbance levels from the site.
110. The Council's Environmental Health and Consumer Protection Team (EHO) advise that there is no history of complaints relating noise, odour or light. It is also recognised that the site has an established use as a touring caravan and camping site, it is considered that the introduction of static caravans to this use would not significantly intensify or change the nature of any established impact. Whilst views would be achievable across the adjacent site, this in itself is not considered to represent a significant loss of amenity, particularly over the existing established uses. It is also noted that the current and potential residential elements associated from the adjacent site are removed from the site boundaries with intervening developments.
111. In relation to the specific concerns regarding the change in site levels in the north-eastern proportion of the site, officers observations are that these alterations are relatively limited and do not significantly alter the relationships between the two sites. Notwithstanding this, the submitted plans detail that this area would only be used as an overspill area for touring caravans while conditions detailed above require the removal of hardstanding's on the site to align with the approved site layout. This would have the effect of requiring the removal of the imported material. The approved landscaping plan also details native shrub and tree planting in this area to soften the appearance of this element of the site, this would also have the effect of screening views once mature.
112. Overall, subject to conditions requiring the installation of the landscaping and removal of hardstanding's the proposals are considered to maintain the amenity of surrounding users in accordance with CDP Policies 10 and 31, as well as Parts 12 and 15 of the NPPF.

Ground Conditions

113. CDP Policy 32 requires sites to be suitable for use taking into account contamination and unstable land issues. Paragraph 183 of the NPPF requires sites to be suitable for their proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination.
114. The application is supported by a Coal Mining Risk Assessment which considers the risk of previous shallow coal mining activity on the site. It is identified that there is a mine shaft located centrally towards the southern boundary of the site, and a second shaft just outside the southern boundary of the site. In line with mitigation detailed within the original planning approval for the site, exclusion zones have been established around these shaft locations.

This is proposed to be replicated in this scheme, with the caravan pitches and hardstanding areas all located out with of the detailed protection zone.

115. In the original application The Coal Authority raised no objection to the use of the wider site as a camping and touring caravan site subject to ensuring that no activities were undertaken within the mineshaft portion zones. This is because of the transient nature of the use and that limited ground works are proposed. However, the Coal Authority's advise has subsequently changed, and it is now advised that units of accommodation, where there is likely a high degree of occupancy, such as static caravans, are required to consider whether remedial measures in terms of site stability are required. This is referenced in the submitted coal mining risk assessment which recommended that further site investigations are required to inform this.
116. Given the part retrospective nature of the application, The Coal Authority advise that no further static caravans are sited unless the required investigations have been carried out. This recognises the established use of the site and that the siting of a caravan in itself does not require engineering works or the alteration of site levels.
117. Subject to a condition requiring the undertaking of additional site investigation and carrying out of mitigation measure as required, the development is considered to comply with CDP Policy 32 and para. 183 of the NPPF.

Other Matters

Mineral resources

118. CDP Policy 56 states that planning permission will not be granted for non-mineral development that would lead to the sterilisation of mineral resources within a Mineral Safeguarding Area. This is unless it can be demonstrated that the mineral in the location concerned is no longer of any current or potential value, provision can be made for the mineral to be extracted satisfactorily prior to the non-minerals development taking place without unacceptable adverse impact, the non-minerals development is of a temporary nature that does not inhibit extraction or there is an overriding need for the non-minerals development which outweighs the need to safeguard the mineral or it constitutes exempt development as set out in the Plan.
119. The site is form part of a wider area identified a Coal Resource Area, the provisions of CDP Policy 56 (Safeguarding Mineral Resources) are therefore applicable. Given that the proposed development is neither 'exempt' as set out in appendix C C2 of the CDP (criterion e) or 'temporary in nature' (criterion c) CDP Policy 56 would normally require that a Mineral Assessment be prepared. However, given the established uses on the site, which in large are not considered development (a caravan is considered a chattel facilitating a use) it is not considered that pursuing a Mineral Assessment upon this application is appropriate or worthwhile. While it has not been demonstrated, it is considered that the sterilisation would likely be minimal. On this basis, it is considered that there would be no conflict with CDP Policy 56

Renewable energy

120. CDP Policy 29 sets out that development proposals should minimise gas emissions by seeking to achieve zero carbon buildings and provide renewable and low carbon energy generation. Where connection to the gas network is not viable, development should utilise renewable and low carbon technologies as the main heating source.
121. In this respect a caravan is not considered a building, but a chattel (a movable item) facilitating a use, it is therefore considered that the requirements of Policy 29 would not strictly apply. It is however recognised that the site is not connected to the main gas supply, but that as is usual, a caravan would utilise a portable LPG gas bottle. Options would however be available to the site owner to utilise electric heating and cooking facilities rather than gas, which could be sourced from centralised renewable energy generation. Solar panel and off grid battery storage solutions are available but would likely to prove cost prohibitive, particularly in considering the levels of investment required to address other matters on the site. Overall, in this instance no conflict with Policy 29 is identified.

CONCLUSION

122. The development seeks permission to for the formation of a 18no. pitch static caravan site, a 16no. pitch touring caravan site, and a camping site to be used for holiday purposes. Planning permission is also sought for the use as part of the site as a manages accommodation through the siting of as specific caravan.
123. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. NPPF Paragraph 12 states that where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.
124. Given the established use of the site, in this instance the principle of the introduction of static caravans is on balance considered acceptable, while acknowledging the harm arising from the unsustainable location of the development. The use of the site to provide residential accommodation for a site manager is however not considered to meet strict tests for residential accommodation in the countryside due the lack of functional need and the lack of the proven financial viability of the business. A temporary period of 12 months for this use is however considered appropriate.
125. Although additional landscaping is proposed and the site would be reconfigured to create a more attractive development, a residual landscape harm would still arise. This is not however considered sufficient to amount to a policy conflict.
126. Proposed conditions would ensure that the development would not have an adverse impact on flooding, pollution in the environment, residential amenity, highway safety, safeguard ecological interests and ensure that the site is stable for the intended use.

127. The development as proposed is considered to comply with Policies 8, 10, 21, 29, 31, 35, 36, 39 and 41 of the County Durham Plan and Parts 6, 9, 14 and 15 of the NPPF. The proposed conditions would address the acknowledged retrospective elements of development and would provide a robust framework to enforce in the event of noncompliance with relevant conditions. There are no material considerations which indicate otherwise and therefore the application is recommended for approval.

Public Sector Equality Duty

128. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities when exercising their functions to have due regard to the need to i) the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct, ii) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and iii) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share that characteristic. In this instance, officers have assessed all relevant factors and do not consider that there are any equality impacts identified.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be **Approved** subject to the following conditions:-

Plans

1. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved plans listed in Part 3 - Approved Plans.

Planting Plan, Drawing Number 2109.01E
Proposed Site Plan, Ref 21001-002 Rev D
Reception & Amenities Block, Ref 21001 – 003 A

Reason: To define the consent and ensure that a satisfactory form of development is obtained in accordance with Policies 8, 10, 12, 21, 29, 34, 35, 39 and 41 of the County Durham Plan and Parts 5, 6, 9, 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Holiday Restriction

2. The development hereby approved shall be occupied for commercial holiday purposes only and shall not be occupied as a person's sole or main place of residence. The caravans facilitating the use shall be made available for commercial holiday lets only and no single let shall exceed 31 days and shall be repeated again in a 2 month. The owners/operator shall maintain an up-to-date register of the names of all occupiers of the holiday accommodation and of their main home addresses and telephone numbers, along with details of the advertisement of the site for of holiday lets. This information shall be made available at all reasonable times to the Local Planning Authority. There shall be no residential use of the site at any time.

Reason: To ensure that the development is occupied as holiday accommodation only, in order to comply with Policies 8, 10 and 12 of the County Durham Plan and Parts 5 and 6 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Temporary manager's accommodation

3. Notwithstanding the requirements of condition 2, for a temporary period of 12 months only, provision can be made for the use of a single caravan unit as a residential use for manager's accommodation (and their family) in the location depicted for manager's accommodation on the approved plans. The manager shall be directly employed by the site. After the temporary 12 month period has elapsed the residential use shall cease and the caravan unit, hardstanding's and means of enclosure facilitating the use shall be removed. Thereafter native shrub planting in the location of the manager accommodation shall be planted in accordance with the planting notes and plant schedule set out on the approved planting plan, Drwg no. 2109.01E. The planting shall thereafter be retained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: In order to prevent the formation of an isolated rural residential use and in the interests of the visual amenity of the area in accordance with Policies 10, 12, 29 and 39 of the County Durham Plan and Parts 5, 6 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Maximum Number of Statics

4. The maximum number of static caravans facilitating the use hereby approved shall not exceed 18 in number at any one time. The static caravans shall only be sited in the locations depicted in the approved plans, any static caravan which deviates from the approved siting within a period of 12 months from the date of this decision shall be removed from the site.

Reason:- To define the permission and in the interest of the visual and residential amenity of the surrounding area, in accordance with Policies 8, 10, 29, 31 and 39 of the County Durham Plan and Parts 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Maximum Number of Tourers

5. The maximum number of touring caravans facilitating the use hereby approved shall not exceed 16 in number at any one time. The touring caravans shall only be sited in the locations depicted in the approved plans. No caravan shall be sited in the overspill area when capacity remains in an approved location elsewhere on the site. Any touring caravan which is sited in a location which deviates from the approved siting within a period of 12 months from the date of this decision shall be removed from the site.

Reason:- To define the permission and in the interest of the visual and residential amenity of the surrounding area, in accordance with Policies 8, 10, 29, 31 and 39 of the County Durham Plan and Parts 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Maximum Campers

6. The maximum number of campers shall not exceed 30 individuals at any one time, Camping shall only be undertaken in the area depicted 'camping area' on the approved plans and no other part of the site, including landscaping, shrub/tress or wildflower planting areas. The owners/operator shall maintain an up-to-date register of the number of campers on site at any time, this

information shall make this information available at all reasonable times to the Local Planning Authority

Reason:- To define the permission and in the interest of the visual and residential amenity of the surrounding area, in accordance with Policies 8, 10, 29, 31 and 39 of the County Durham Plan and Parts 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Landscaping

7. The landscaping scheme depicted on the approved Planting Plan, Drwg no. 2109.01E shall be completed within 18 months from the approval of the application. All plant, vegetation and habitat creation shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained for the lifetime of the development. Any vegetation which fails to flourish, dies or becomes damaged within a 5 year period from planting shall be replaced in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:- In order to mitigate the landscape impacts of the development and in order to ensure a net biodiversity gain. In accordance with Policies 8, 10, 29, 39 and 41 of the County Durham Plan and Parts 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Alignment of hardstanding's

8. Within a period of 12 months from the date of this decision, any hardstanding (including any subbase) which deviates from that depicted on the approved site plan shall be removed from the site. The resultant levels of the site shall align with that depicted on the approved site layout. There shall be no storage of any material resulting from the removed hardstanding on the site at any time.

Reason:- In order to mitigate the landscape impacts of the development and in order to ensure a net biodiversity gain. In accordance with Policies 8, 10, 29, 39 and 41 of the County Durham Plan and Parts 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Maintenance of hedgerow

9. Notwithstanding the submitted information, the hedgerow along the western and southern boundary of the site shall be maintained at a minimum height of 2.4m from the ground level of the base of the hedge. The hedgerow along the western and southern boundary shall not be removed from the site.

Reason:- In order to mitigate the landscape impacts of the development and in order to ensure a net biodiversity gain. In accordance with Policies 8, 10, 29, 39 and 41 of the County Durham Plan and Parts 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Design of caravans

10. Within 6 months of the date of the permission hereby approved, a scheme to define the design, specification and colour finishes of any static caravan sited to facilitate the use and the amenities/reception units shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter within 12 months of approval of this application the appearance all static caravans and

the amenity units on the site shall comply with the parameters of the approved scheme or shall be permanently removed from the site until compliance.

Reason:- In order to control the design of the landscape and minimise the associate impacts on the surrounding landscape and character and appearance of the area. In accordance with Policies 8, 10, 29 and 39 of the County Durham Plan and Parts 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

PD Removal

11. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 2015, no structures or temporary buildings shall be sited, no means of enclosure shall be erected or additional hardstanding installed without the further grant of planning permission. Any structures, vehicle bodies or temporary buildings not depicted on the approved plans shall be permanently removed from the site within 6 months of this permission.

Reason: To ensure the development relates acceptably to the character and appearance of the surround area and landscape, in accordance with policies 8, 10, 29 and 39 of the County Durham Plan and Parts 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework

Foul water system

12. No more than 6 static caravans to facilitate the use hereby approved shall be sited at any one time, unless an upgraded foul water drainage system has been installed and brought into full operation in accordance with details to be first submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall be based on the principles established in the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Report revised May 2022, Ref P256 and shall include details on the capacity of the system to treat the maximum theoretical occupancy of the site, level of treatment, agreed point of discharge and a maintenance regime. The approved foul drainage system shall remain operational within the approved parameters for the lifetime of the development.

Reason:- in order to ensure that the site is served by a suitable means of foul drainage, in accordance with Policies 35 and 36 of the County Durham Plan and Part 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Foul water Cess Pit management

13. In the interim period between the granting of the planning permission hereby approved and the installation of the upgraded foul water drainage system approved by condition no. 12, the sewage/water level of the cess pit serving the development shall be monitored on a weekly basis and regularly emptied to ensure that its level does not exceed 85% of the total capacity of the tank. The owners/operator shall maintain a detailed record of monitoring levels of the cess pit relative to its total capacity. A record of associated waste transfer notes shall also be kept. This information shall make this information available at all reasonable times to the Local Planning Authority to demonstrate adherence with this condition.

Reason:- in order to ensure that the site is served by a suitable means of foul drainage, in accordance with Policies 35 and 36 of the County Durham Plan and Part 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Surface water

14. No more than 6no. static caravans shall be sited or any additional hardstanding (including access tracks and caravan/parking plots) created on the site until a detailed surface water drainage scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority based in the principles set out in Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Report revised May 2022, Ref P256. The submitted details shall include a timetable for completion and a maintenance regime. The approved drainage system shall remain operational at all times within the approved parameters for the lifetime of the development.

Reason:- in order to ensure that the site is served by a suitable means of drainage, in accordance with Policies 35 and 36 of the County Durham Plan and Part 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highways

15. Within a period of 12 months from the date of this permission the vehicular access hereby approved shall be surfaced in tarmac or concrete for its entire width and extending back 3.85m from the edge of the adopted road surface.

Reason: In order to achieve a satisfactory means of access to the site, in accordance with Policies 8, 10 and 21 of the County Durham Plan and Part 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Site Visibility

16. Site visibility lines drawn between a point 2.4m back from the carriageway edge along the centreline of the access, to points on the carriageway edge 65m from the centreline of the access (at both sides) shall be maintained free of obstruction at all times.

Reason: In order to achieve a satisfactory means of access to the site, in accordance with Policies 8, 10 and 21 of the County Durham Plan and Part 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Land stability

17. No more than 6no. static caravans shall be sited or any additional hardstanding (including access tracks and caravan/parking plots) created on the site, until a scheme of intrusive investigations has been carried out on site to establish the risks posed to the development by past shallow coal mining activity and detailing of any required remediation works and/or mitigation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter any required remedial works shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to address land stability concerns in connection with previous coal mining activity on the site in accordance with Policy 32 of the County Durham Plan and Paragraph 183 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Mineshaft protection zone

18. There shall be no public access, including for leisure pursuits, siting of caravans, tents or parking of motor vehicles within the mineshaft protection zones as depicted on the approved plans. Such areas shall be fenced off to restrict public access.

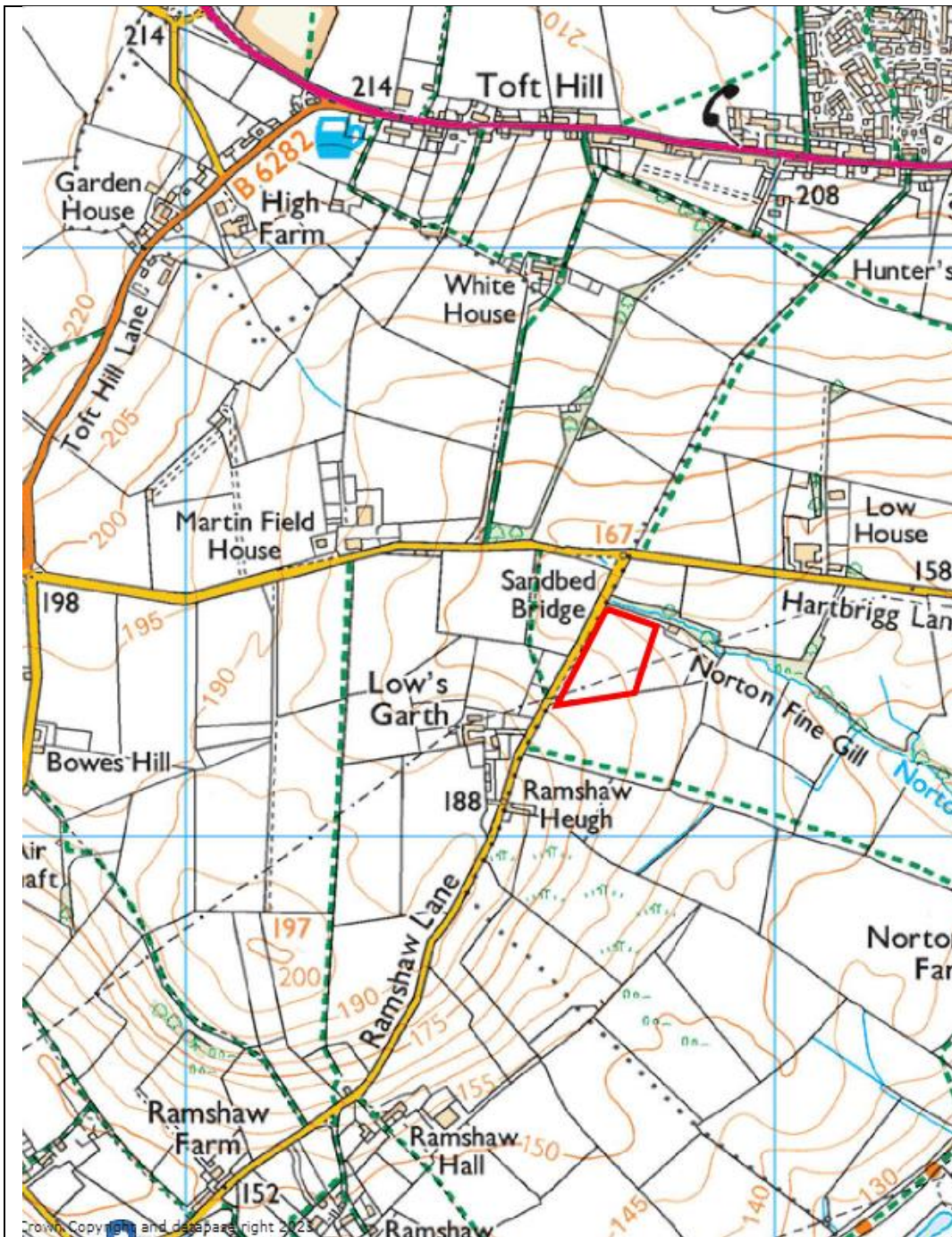
Reason: In order to address land stability concerns in connection with previous coal mining activity on the site in accordance with Policy 32 of the County Durham Plan and Paragraph 183 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

STATEMENT OF PROACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with Article 35(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, the Local Planning Authority has, without prejudice to a fair and objective assessment of the proposals, issues raised and representations received, sought to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner with the objective of delivering high quality sustainable development to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area in accordance with the NPPF.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Submitted Application Forms, Plans and supporting documents
National Planning Policy Framework
The County Durham Plan (CDP)
Residential Amenity Standards Supplementary Planning Document 2020
Statutory consultation responses
Internal consultation responses
External consultation responses



<p>Planning Services</p>	<p>Meadow Farm Caravan Park Ramshaw Lane Ramshaw Bishop Auckland DL14 0NB</p>	
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