



**TO:** Planning Committee South  
**BY:** Development Manager  
**DATE:** 21 March 2017  
**DEVELOPMENT:** Extension of existing Camp Site to provide 50 additional pitches to be used from 1st March - 30th September each year and regularisation of track and washing up sinks  
**SITE:** Blacklands Farm Camping Blacklands Farm Wheatsheaf Road Henfield  
**WARD:** Henfield  
**APPLICATION:** DC/16/2915  
**APPLICANT:** Mr Neil & Grahame Goodridge

**REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA:** At the request of Councillor O'Connell

**RECOMMENDATION:** To permit application subject to conditions

**1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT**

1.1 To consider the planning application.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

1.2 The application seeks full planning permission for the extension of the existing campsite to provide an additional 50 tent / caravan pitches for use during 1st March and 30th September each year. The existing campsite is referred to as 'field 1' with the proposed extension within 'field 2'.

1.2 The application also seeks the retention of the wash facilities located to the north-west corner of the site and the retention of access tracks that run along the western and northern boundaries. The washing facilities measure to a width of 9m and a depth of 2m, incorporating a mono-pitched roof extending to an overall height of 2.1m. The structure is timber clad, provided washing facilities for the existing and proposed campsite. The access tracks run along the boundary edge and are proposed for use in conjunction with the campsite, as well as the agricultural undertaking within the wider site.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

1.3 The application site is positioned to the north of Wheatsheaf Road, outside of any designated built-up area. The buildings subject to the application are positioned to the north-east of the site, with the surroundings characterised by open countryside. The fields are bound by hedging and post and rail fencing, with the site subject to use as a formal campsite and agricultural use.

- 1.4 The site subject of this application, and a number of adjoining fields, are currently used for camping under the 28-day rule, as set out in the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, and this use does not require planning permission.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### STATUTORY BACKGROUND

#### 2.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990

##### RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICY

#### 2.2 National Planning Policy Framework:

NPPF1 - Building a strong, competitive economy

NPPF3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy

NPPF4 - Promoting sustainable transport

NPPF7 - Requiring good design

NPPF11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

NPPF14 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

##### RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICY

#### 2.3 Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF 2015)

HDPF1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development

HDPF2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development

HDPF3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy

HDPF10 - Rural Economic Development

HDPF11 - Tourism and Cultural Facilities

HDPF24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection

HDPF25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character

HDPF32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development

HDPF33 - Development Principles

HDPF40 - Sustainable Transport

HDPF41 - Parking

HDPF42 - Strategic Policy: Inclusive Communities

HDPF43 - Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation

##### RELEVANT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

#### 2.4 Henfield Neighbourhood Development Plan 2015 – 2035

Following a court decision on 13 October 2016, Henfield Neighbourhood Development Plan has been quashed. The Parish Council is currently considering how they will move forward. Henfield Parish continues to be covered by the Horsham District Local Plan, and this plan remains the current and up to date plan for the area.

##### PLANNING HISTORY

HF/37/00	Certificate of lawful use for storage of caravans	Application 25.07.2001	Refused	on
HF/123/00	Two-storey side & rear extensions	Application 30.11.2000	Permitted	on
DC/08/1909	Provision of caravan and camping site for a maximum of 75 pitches in Field 1, erection of a toilet	Application 09.04.2009	Permitted	on

and washing facilities building and retention of farm office and camping reception office and additional landscaping.

DC/08/1910	Retention of existing caravan and camping site for a maximum total of 100 pitches, consisting 50 in Field 1 and 50 in Field 2. Replacement of existing toilet and washing facilities and retention of existing farm office and camping reception office and additional landscaping	Application 03.12.2008	Refused	on
DC/13/0532	Construction of 6 log cabins for use as holiday accommodation	Application 23.07.2013	Permitted	on
DC/16/2517	Regularisation of toilet and shower blocks and reception and ancillary camp site shop building associated with Blacklands Farm Campsite	Application 09.01.2017	Permitted	on
DC/16/2912	Commercial Fishing of the lake and four ponds on site as shown on drawing numbers 2016/105/PL6 and 2016/105/PL8 (Lawful Development Certificate - Existing)	Application 09.03.2017	Permitted	on

### 3. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 Where consultation responses have been summarised, it should be noted that Officers have had consideration of the full comments received, which are available to view on the public file at [www.horsham.gov.uk](http://www.horsham.gov.uk).

#### INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

- 3.2 Landscape Architect Officer: No comment.
- 3.3 Public Health and Licensing: No objection, subject to conditions.

#### OUTSIDE AGENCIES

- 3.4 County Council - Public Rights of Way: No Objection.
- 3.5 County Council – Highways: Any comments will be reported verbally at Planning Committee.

#### PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

- 3.6 Henfield Parish Council: No objection.
- 3.7 Shermanbury Parish Council: Concerns regarding the use of the field and the surrounding footpaths, which from their assessment, were unclearly indicated on the submitted plans.
- 3.8 8 letters of support were received, and these can be summarised as follows:
- Encourages local business and employment within the area
  - Provides recreational opportunities and use of the countryside
- 3.9 8 letters of objection were received, and these can be summarised as follows:
- Noise pollution
  - Litter disposal along public footpaths
  - Traffic impact

- Abuse of 28-day permitted development allowance

3.10 Any further representations will be reported at Planning Committee.

#### **4. HOW THE PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION WILL PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS**

4.1 Article 8 (Right to respect of a Private and Family Life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (Protection of Property) of the Human Rights Act 1998 are relevant to this application, Consideration of Human rights forms part of the planning assessment below.

#### **5. HOW THE PROPOSAL WILL HELP TO REDUCE CRIME AND DISORDER**

5.1 It is not considered that the development would be likely to have any significant impact on crime and disorder.

#### **6. PLANNING ASSESSMENTS**

6.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the extension of the existing campsite to provide 50 pitches seasonally between 1st March and 30th September, and the retention of the access tracks and washing facilities.

##### **Principle of Development**

6.2 Policies 10 and 11 of the HDPF state that sustainable rural economic development and enterprise which promotes tourism will be encouraged in order to generate local employment opportunities and economic, social and environmental benefits for local communities.

6.3 The existing campsite has been running for the past 8 years and has proven to be a popular facility within the District, with pressure now arising for additional pitches. The application therefore proposes use of an additional field ('Field 2') on a permanent basis for camping between 1st March and 30th September each year, with the field reverting to agricultural use outside of these months.

6.4 The application site is located within close proximity to a number of footpaths and public bridleways, with the settlement of Henfield and the South Downs National Park in close proximity. The proposal would encourage recreational use within a countryside location and would support, further enhance and diversify the existing campsite. The proposal is considered to encourage informal recreation within the countryside, as well as support the sustainable development of the rural area. Whilst the proposal would extend the campsite further into the countryside, in principle, the nature of the proposed use is considered to be of a scale appropriate to the character and location of the area, whilst improving the range and quality of facilities for visitors.

6.5 The proposed use for 50 x tent/caravan pitches within Field 2 is therefore considered to contribute to sustainable rural economic development, supporting and enabling the recreational use of the countryside. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with Policies 10, 11 and 26 of the HDPF.

##### **Landscape character of the site and surroundings**

6.7 Policies 25, 32 and 33 promote development which is of high quality and design, and is sympathetic to the distinctiveness of the dwelling and surroundings. Development should

protect, conserve and enhance the landscape character, taking account of the nature environment, landscape and landform pattern to which it forms a part.

- 6.8 A previous application was refused for the provision of a total of 100 tent / caravan pitches, 50 pitches to 'field 1' and 50 pitches to 'field 2' (ref: DC/08/1910). As part of this application it was considered that 'field 2' was visible in distant views from higher ground to the north-east and from surrounding residential properties, with the proposal resulting in harm to the countryside location, particularly in terms of visual impact, noise and air pollution, and general level of activity associated with the campsite.
- 6.9 Since this decision in 2008 additional landscaping has been undertaken, including the planting of new hedgerows and trees, to the south of the site and all field boundaries. This landscaping was undertaken to further screen the site and mitigate the visual impact of the use on the wider surroundings.
- 6.10 The application site is approximately 200m from the public highway and approximately 180m from the nearest neighbouring dwelling. The landscaping of the site, which is greater than that present in 2008, includes woodland to the north and south, and field boundaries to the north, east and west that are highly vegetated with hedging and planting. In this context it is considered that the proposed use of 'field 2' between March and September each year would not result in demonstrable harm to the landscape character of the area, particularly given the established and lawful use of the neighbouring field ('field 1') as a campsite. The site would revert to agricultural use outside of the proposed camping season, when the site would be most visible.
- 6.11 The washing facilities are built of timber and are positioned along the western boundary of Field 2. These are considered to be of a reasonable scale and are sited in an area that would limit visual prominence and impact. The structure is considered to relate sympathetically with the landscape character and rural context of the site and wider surroundings.
- 6.12 The tracks as built provides access to the western and northern sections of the field for vehicles. The tracks have been constructed of Type 1 MOT that has a dark finish, and these are considered to be consistent with the landscape character and rural nature of the surroundings.
- 6.13 It is considered, for the reasons outlined above, that the proposed pitches, along with the washing-up facilities and access tracks, would not be harmful or erode the landscape character and appearance of the site and surroundings, in accordance with Policies 25, 32 and 33 of the HDPF.

#### **Amenities of the occupiers of adjoining properties**

- 6.14 Policy 33 states that development should consider the scale, massing and orientation between buildings, respecting the amenities and sensitivities of neighbouring properties.
- 6.15 It is recognised that sporadic residential development is positioned to the north, south and west of the site, albeit at a substantial distance from Field 2. Whilst the proposed camping use would contribute to an increased level of activity it is considered that the distance between the site and neighbouring properties would mitigate the potential for harm. The Environmental Health Team has raised no objections subject to conditions, and these are recommended in order to protect neighbouring amenity. Subject to these conditions the proposal would accord with Policy 33 of the HDPF.

#### **Existing Parking and Traffic Conditions**

- 6.16 Policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF states that development should provide safe and adequate access and parking, suitable for all users.
- 6.17 The proposal would utilise existing access arrangements to the campsite and no objection is raised to this arrangement; any comments from the Highway Authority will be reported at the Committee meeting. The tracks within the site provide access to the western and northern sections of the field for vehicles in association with both the campsite and wider agricultural use. These have been constructed of Type 1 MOT that has a dark finish. This is a form of sub-base that has good load bearing quality and is commonly used for hardstanding, driveways, and footpaths. This finish, at the width proposed, is considered to provide adequate access to the site, and as such is considered to accord with Policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF.

### **Conclusion**

- 6.18 The proposed extension to the camp site, to provide an additional 50 pitches, is considered to further diversify and enhance the facilities and recreational provision of the camp site, and is not considered to result in severe harm to the visual amenities and landscape character of the area. Furthermore, subject to conditions, the proposal is not considered to harm the amenities of neighbouring properties. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with Policies 10, 11, 25, 26, 32, 33, 40, and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:-

- 1 A listed of the approved plans
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 3 The hereby approved use shall not commence until a Site Management Plan for the campsite has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Site Management Plan shall include the following:-
  - Where bins and recycling bins would be located;
  - How waste would be disposed of and how frequently;
  - How the site would be split between tents and caravans;
  - Applicant to notify the Local Planning Authority that there are no caravans on site between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> February each year;
  - How the site will be laid out, details to include water points, waste water disposal, electrical safety and fire prevention;
  - A log book shall be kept of all bookings/movements and shall include the date of arrival and departure of persons staying at the campsite and the field to which the individual/group is stationed;

The development shall subsequently be undertaken in accordance with the approved Site Management Plan unless alternative details are agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reasons: In the interests of amenity for site users and surrounding residential properties, and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 4 The campsite hereby approved shall not be occupied between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> February of each year, and all caravans and tents shall be removed from the site between October and February each year.

Reason: In the interests of visual and neighbouring amenity and in accordance with Policies 25, 26 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 5 The development hereby approved shall be used for touring caravans and tents and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in any Class in the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.

Reason: Changes of use as permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 are not considered appropriate in this case under Policies 25, 26 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 6 The total number of caravans and tents combined on the site identified as 'Field 2' on the approved plans shall at no time exceed 50.

Reason: To avoid an overcrowded appearance and to secure satisfactory standards of space and amenity in accordance with Policies 33 and 43 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 7 No individual touring caravan / tent / caravanette shall remain on the site for a period longer than 4 weeks in any one year.

Reason: To protect the appearance and character of the area and to ensure that adequate provision is retained for use of touring caravans / tents / caravanettes, in accordance with Policy 43 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 8 The site shall not be used for the parking of vehicles in use for any trade or business, or for any other aspect of a business or commercial activity other than that normally ancillary to the operation of a touring caravan site.

Reason: To protect the visual amenities and landscape character of the area, and the amenities of residents in the area, in accordance with Policies 25, 26 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 9 No amplified music shall be played at the site.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of nearby residents in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

#### NOTE TO APPLICANT

An increased number of toilets, basins, and sinks may be needed for the increased number of pitches. This requirement will be covered by the Caravan Site Licence, but the applicant should ensure that planning permission is gained, if required, for any increase in buildings required to house these.