

Planning Committee: 26 March 2019

Item Number: 14

Application No: [W 19 / 0130](#)

Town/Parish Council: Rowington

Case Officer:

Helena Obremski

01926 456531 Helena.Obremski@warwickdc.gov.uk

Registration Date: 28/01/19

Expiry Date: 25/03/19

Campsite, Mousley House Farm, Case Lane, Rowington

Proposed variation of condition 1 of permission W/15/1925 (approved for: change of use from grazing land to camping site) to increase the number of pitches from 23 to 48. FOR Mr Hughes

This application is being presented to Committee due to an objection from the Parish Council having been received.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Committee are recommended to grant planning permission, subject to the condition and notes listed in the report.

DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission is sought for variation of condition 1 of permission W/15/1925, which was approved for the "change of use from grazing land to camping site", to allow for an increase in the number of pitches from 23 to 48.

The scheme remains the same as implemented permission W/15/1925 and seeks only to vary the wording of condition 1. It is therefore this element only which is considered below.

The Design and Access Statement provided in support of the application states that,

"In recent times we have continued to operate at full capacity particularly during the summer months where we have had bookings 12 months in advance. As such we seek to increase the number of pitches available on site to 48. This will not only support our business but also those within the vicinity and within the wider Warwick area.

There are currently only five other campsites in the Warwick Area, four of these are small and provide five pitches on each site. The fifth site is the largest with 58 pitches located at Warwick race course. In total there are 78 pitches in the Warwick area. Furthermore, the five other campsites fail to cater for tents providing only pitches for caravans and motorhomes. Warwick has a lot to offer its visitors and it is considered that an increase in pitches at our site would help support tourism in the area. The limited availability unfortunately forces visitors to only visit for the day, the other sites also provide a far less affordable form of accommodation. When our premises are at capacity, we are unfortunately

having to turn visitors away, this means visitors begin to look further afield for camping grounds often relocating to Stratford upon Avon. Unfortunately, this means local businesses and the attractions of Warwick are not supported as well as possible."

THE SITE AND ITS LOCATION

The application site relates to a field located on the southern side of Case Lane, a rural lane located within the Green Belt. There are sporadic residential properties along the lane and a public house, however no buildings adjoin the application site. The application site is 3.88 acres and has planning permission for use as a camping site which is to be used seven months of the year between March and October.

PLANNING HISTORY

W/12/1395 LDC: Land to be used as a campsite and erection of gate: Granted 03/01/13.

W/15/1925: Change of use from grazing land to camping site: Granted 09.02.16.

RELEVANT POLICIES

- National Planning Policy Framework
- The Current Local Plan
- BE1 - Layout and Design (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- BE3 - Amenity (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- TR1 - Access and Choice (Warwick District Local Plan - 2011-2029)
- TR2 - Traffic generation (Warwick Local Plan - 2011-2029)
- TR3 - Parking (Warwick District Local Plan - 2011-2029)
- NE2 - Protecting Designated Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- NE5 - Protection of Natural Resources (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- CT6 - Camping and Caravan Sites (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- CT4 - Extensions to Tourism, Cultural or Leisure Facilities in Rural Areas (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- DS18 - Green Belt (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Rowington Parish Council: Objection, highway capacity is inadequate to cope with the additional traffic generated by further pitches. Case Lane is unsuitable for HGVs or large caravans and has already been damaged as a result of the existing use of the site. Makes requests that if planning permission is granted measures are put in place to limit damage to Case Lane.

Councillor Gallagher: Supports application as a well-run site and an asset to the area.

WCC Highways: No objection.

(Environmental Protection) Licensing: No objection.

WCC Ecology: No objection, subject to the inclusion of advisory notes.

ASSESSMENT

Principle of the Development

Local Plan policy CT4 states that, extensions to or intensification of tourism, cultural or leisure facilities in rural areas will be permitted where these do not:

- a) establish new uses which are not ancillary to the normal business of the operation;
- b) generate significant volumes of additional traffic; and
- c) harm the character of the area.

The proposed variation of condition would not establish a new use and represents the intensification of the existing use of the site. The proposal would generate additional traffic, however, it is not considered that the proposal would generate *significant* volumes of additional traffic, which is discussed in more detail below. The proposed variation of condition is unlikely to harm the character of the area.

Therefore, the proposed variation of condition is considered to be in accordance with Local Plan policy CT4.

Impact on Neighbouring Residential Amenity

The campsite has already been in operation for six seasons and there have been no negative responses to its operation received from local residents in relation to this planning application.

It is recognised that the proposed variation of condition will intensify the use of the site, however, there are few residential properties nearby to the application site, with the closest being some 80 metres away. It is also noted that the Council's licensing department has expressed no concerns regarding the intensification of the use of the site.

It is therefore considered that the proposed variation of condition would not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring residential amenity and is considered to be in accordance with Local Plan policy BE3.

Highway Safety

Rowington Parish Council have objected to the proposed development. They consider that the increase in traffic volume on Case Lane will cause highway issues with so many vehicles accessing and egressing the site on a daily basis, particularly at peak season. The Parish Council state that Case Lane is a single-track road between the camp site and Quarry Lane and suffers from regular damage from vehicles, particularly to verges. There are no passing places and it is quite unsuitable for the volume of traffic now proposed. The Parish Council go on to say that fewer than 10 vehicles (including caravans) are on site at the

moment and already considerable damage to the road and/or verges has occurred, although some of this may be due to agricultural vehicles from local farms. Damage of this type will only occur when two-way traffic occurs, hence the need to limit the volume of traffic using Case Lane.

The Parish Council conclude however that if Officers are minded to grant the application, they request that the following measures are adopted to minimize the damage to Case Lane:

- Conduct a survey of local residents prior to granting approval as three out of three local residents spoken to on 9 March, were unaware of the application.
- Make all or part of Case Lane "one way" only in order to prevent two-way traffic from damaging road edges and verges. There already is a parallel road going past Mousley Hill Farm that could be used for the "return loop", thereby protecting the narrowest part of Case Lane;
- Alternatively, install passing places;
- Grant any approval on a temporary basis such as for 12 months and closely monitor the impact on Case Lane;
- Introduce a no-left or no-right turn at the exit to the camp site. This will reduce conflicting traffic on the narrowest part of Case Lane;
- Limit the number of large vehicles and caravans allowed to access the camp site; and
- Ensure that the costs of the above actions are recovered using Section 106 or equivalent powers.

WCC Highways were consulted and have made the following comments regarding the proposed variation of condition:

The Highway Authority recommended a restriction on the number of pitches to be approved as part of the original application. This was due to a lack of information in respect of trip numbers contained within that submission and the acceptance that the facility had been operating at a similar level for some time without issue.

The proposal approximately doubles the level of pitches, and therefore it could be reasonably assumed that the level of vehicle trips would also double as a result.

The Highway Authority notes the objection from the Parish Council in relation to traffic levels, however, the rural location and the current low level of traffic on Case Lane will make it unlikely that capacity issues will result from the traffic increase associated with the increase in numbers of vehicles accessing the site. Our site visit noted that there were some instances of verge over running along Case Lane, although it cannot be established whether this is as a result of the current use of the campsite or general over running by agricultural vehicles.

In view of the above, the Highway Authority is satisfied that there are no safety or capacity issues relating from the proposed use which could be classed as severe under NPPF paragraph 109, therefore, the response of Warwickshire County Council as the Local Highway Authority is one of no objection to the increase in the number of pitches.

Whilst the concerns of the Parish Council are noted, there is no evidence to suggest that the existing damage to highway verges is a result of traffic from the application site, and could quite reasonably be from agricultural vehicles in this rural location. Furthermore, there is also no evidence to suggest that the existing highway network would not be able to cope with the, in relative terms, modest increase in traffic using Case Lane.

The number of vehicles accessing the site will increase, however, it is not considered that the increase in number of pitches (by 25) is going to lead to significant addition volumes of traffic which would have a detrimental impact on highway safety, to the extent which would warrant a reason for refusal. For this reason, the above measures proposed by the Parish Council would be unreasonable to impose on the applicant. The site however will be limited to a maximum of 48 pitches to ensure that any potential proposed future growth can be assessed.

The proposal is considered to be in accordance with Local Plan policies TR1, TR2 and TR3.

Rights of Way

Under the original application, the County Public Rights of Way Team (PROW Team) commented that the public footpath (W65 on the Definitive Map) crosses the south western corner of the application site. The PROW Team understood that the public are currently walking a different route rather than the alignment recorded on the Definitive Map. However, unless and until the public footpath is legally diverted, the route recorded on the Definitive Map should be open and unobstructed.

This application does not require the diversion of footpath W65 as no development is proposed and the field remains open. Any changes to the footpath alignment would need to be dealt with by an application to legally divert the public footpath onto the currently walked route, which would be assessed by the County Council.

The note previously added to the original application will be taken forward to ensure that the applicant is aware of their obligations to ensure that measures are taken to prevent users of the campsite from obstructing the public footpath in any way, such as with tents or vehicles.

Ecological Impact

WCC Ecology have assessed the application and recommend the inclusion of advisory notes relating to lighting and biodiversity enhancements. These are considered to be reasonable and will be added.

The proposed variation of condition is not considered to be harmful to protected species and is therefore considered to be in accordance with Local Plan policy NE2.

Conclusion

The proposed variation of condition is considered to be acceptable in principle and there is no evidence presented to suggest that the increase in number of pitches would have such a harmful impact on highway safety which would warrant a reason for refusal of the application. The proposed variation of condition is unlikely to impact neighbouring residential amenity or protected species and therefore, should be approved.

CONDITIONS

- 1 The seasonal campsite hereby permitted shall be limited to up to and including 48 pitches at any one time. **REASON:** In the interests of highway safety and the amenities of the occupiers of nearby properties in accordance with Policies TR1 & BE3 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2019.
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