

**STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

29th February 2024

Application No:	SMD/2023/0476	
Location	The Dairy, Hollington Road, Freehay, Cheadle, Staffordshire, ST10 1RE	
Proposal	Siting of Glamping Pod	
Applicant	Mr L Doyle	
Agent	Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd	
Parish/ward	Cheadle	Date registered: 22 nd September 2023
If you have a question about this report please contact: Rebecca Bowers email: Rebecca.Bowers@highpeak.gov.uk		

REFERRAL

The application is before committee as Cllr Mike Haines requested that it be called-in.

1. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

2.1 The application relates to The Dairy a residential dwelling located in Freehay. The property benefits from a private access off Hollington Road.

2.2 The site is located within a semi rural location close to Freehay and in immediate area the land is agricultural in character with occasional private residences and farmsteads along Hollington Road.

2.3 To the north west of the site the application is an agricultural storage building under the ownership of The Dairy and relates to the agricultural land to the south of the dwelling.

3. THE APPLICATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

3.1 Consent is sought for the siting of a glamping pod on land adjacent to The Dairy to be used for holiday accommodation. The pod would be constructed in timber with a domed appearance. The pod would comprise of two bedrooms with living space and a bathroom.

3.2 The site would benefit from a shared access with the applicants address off Hollington Road and the accommodation will benefit from two parking spaces that are to be created to the north of the site.

3.3 It is important to note that the applicant's agent has described the development as being within the application site's garden area. However, in accordance with the approved application DET/2014/0054 the curtilage associated with the dwelling is tightly drawn around the building with a small garden area to the west of the site. As such the development is outside of the applicants' garden area. The enlarged garden area is therefore unauthorised.

3.4 Details of the application scheme can be viewed at:

<http://publicaccess.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/portal/servlets/ApplicationSearchServlet?PKID=174264>

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

DET/2014/0054- Change of use of agricultural barn to residential dwelling- approved with conditions

SMD/2014/0202- Erection of single agricultural pole barn structure- approved

4. PLANNING POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

Staffordshire Moorland Borough Council Local Plan

SS1 Development Principles
SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
SS 11 Churnet Valley Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
E4 Tourism and Cultural Development
NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Resources
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 12,13,15 and 16

Guidance

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide

5. CONSULTATIONS

Public response to consultation

5.1 One letter of representation has been received objecting to the development for the following reasons

- The area has no local amenities or services.
- Access to the site can only be made by car.
- There are already three caravan/camping sites in the area.
- Development will cause additional noise, light pollution and privacy security issues.

Cllr Haines has written in support of the application stating that the development will benefit the local economy and tourism.

Town / Parish Council

5.2 No comments have been received Cheadle Town Council

Staffordshire County Council Highways

Recommendation Summary: Conditional Approval

Site Visit Conducted on: 04-Oct-2023

Comment: Access was constructed under SMD/2021/0540. It is existing and in current use. Surfacing is provided and gates are setback. Visibility at the access is good. There were no recorded personal injury collisions on Dalebank Road within 215m of the site access in the previous 5 years.

Condition: Before the proposed development is brought into use, the parking and turning area shall be provided in accordance with the approved plan 233/676/02/A. The parking and turning area shall thereafter be retained for the life of the development.

6. OFFICER COMMENT AND PLANNING BALANCE

Main Issues

- Principle
- Design and Impact on Visual Amenity
- Neighbour Amenity
- Highway Safety

Principle of Development

6.1 Policy E4 (1) states that new tourism and cultural development which complements the distinctive character and quality of the District will be supported having regard to the Area Strategies in Policies SS 5 to SS 10 and Churnet Valley Strategy Policy SS 11.

6.2 New tourist, visitor and cultural accommodation, attractions and facilities should be developed in locations that offer, or are capable of offering either:

- A) good connectivity with other tourist destinations and amenities, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling; or

B) in locations in or close to settlements where local services, facilities and public transport are available; or

C) in areas specifically identified for tourism development in the Churnet Valley Masterplan or other relevant documents.

6.6 The application site is located in the open countryside and is not considered to be in a sustainable location. The occupiers of the camping pod would be mainly reliant on the use of a private motor vehicle as the site is not readily accessible by public transport. There is a bus stop close to the application site however this bus route (411) only runs on Wednesdays. The occupiers would need to travel from the bus stop on the A522 (Freehay Road) to access the site as this is a more regular bus route. This would involve walking approx. 1.6 miles on an unlit part 60/40mph road without a pavement. Similarly the closest train station to the site is 7.7 miles away in Uttoxeter. Travelling from this train station would mean the occupiers are reliant on a private car to get to the site.

6.6 The closest service centre is Cheadle which is approx. 1.8 miles from the site. There is no direct bus route through to Cheadle. The applicant's agent has identified that the site is accessible via cycle. However having reviewed the route it has a continuous gradual incline when returning from Cheadle to the site especially on Rakeway Road. It is assumed that the average hobby cyclist would struggle with this section of road, and this raises safety concerns particularly with the lack of suitable places to stop. The proposal does not make particular provision for secure cycle storage or parking to encourage this type of transport. Both modes of transport would follow routes that are predominately unlit at night and would be unsuitable for parents with young children, wheelchair users or people with restricted mobility. Therefore, it is likely that visitors would rely on their own private car to visit Cheadle and other tourist destinations in the area such as the Churnet Valley, Peak Wildlife Park etc.

6.7 There is a Public House, The Queens at Freehay, on the junction of Hollington Road and Counslow Road. Whilst this is in proximity to the site being 10 minutes walk away visitors would be expected to walk on an unlit road without a pavement and therefore it is unlikely that families especially with young children, wheelchair users or people with restricted mobility would make the choice to walk to the site as opposed to a short car journey. A similar view would be taken for the choice between travelling by a bicycle or driving a short car journey.

6.8 The largest and closest tourist attraction is Alton Towers which is 5.5 miles from the site. To visit this site the occupiers would be reliant on a private car due to lack of public transport in the area. Alton Towers also benefits from onsite accommodation and therefore it is more likely that visitors to Alton Towers would stay on site or within a surrounding village with more services available.

6.9 Therefore the site does not have good connectivity with other tourist destinations and amenities, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling; and is not in a location in or close to settlements where local services, facilities and public transport are available. The area has not been specifically identified for Tourism Development

within the Churnet Valley Masterplan or other relevant documents. As such the site is clearly contrary to Policy E4(1)

6.10 As the site is considered to be in an unsustainable location due to its rural location and lack of usable public transport the development needs to be assessed against E4 (2) which says that developments in other locations may be supported where a rural location can be justified but that new accommodation, attractions and facilities should:

A) support the provision and expansion of tourist, visitor and cultural facilities in the rural areas where needs are not met by existing facilities; and

B) all development shall be of an appropriate quality, scale and character compatible with the local area, protect the residential amenity of the area, enhance the heritage, landscape and biodiversity of the area and shall not harm interests of acknowledged importance.

6.15 There are a number of premises within the area that provide holiday accommodation for tourists. These relate but are not limited to the following.

- Quarry Walk Park.
- Sweet Hills Cottage.
- Peakstones Inn.
- Springfield Barn.
- Marmadukes Folly.
- Alton Towers Hotel and Pods.

6.16 As such it is clear that in this location that existing needs for tourist accommodation are already being met. The applicant's agent has not provided any justification to demonstrate why an additional unit is needed at the site. As such the development would introduce the type of development that would contribute to a general or random dispersal of new development. The limited nature of the development would not provide such economic benefits to the local economy that would outweigh this harm. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy E4 (2)

6.17 Overall, it is considered that the site would not have good connectivity with other tourist destinations and amenities and particularly by modes of transport other than the private car. As such the proposal is not considered to be in a suitable location for tourism development. As such it would conflict with Policies E4, SS10 and S11 of the Local Plan and Paragraph 88 of the NPPF.

Design and impact on Visual Amenity of the Area

6.18 Policy DC 1 states that all development shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area in line with the Council's Design Guide SPD.

6.19 It has been highlighted to the applicant's agent that the camping pod has incorrectly been identified as being within the applicant's garden area. The agent is

aware of the need for a separate application to address the unauthorised works that have been carried out on site.

6.20 Notwithstanding the above the proposed glamping pod is a simple, low-key form of development which despite being situated outside of the sites curtilage would not result in a prominent form of development. The camping pod would relate well to the existing group of buildings and the parking area associated is screened behind the main dwelling The Dairy.

6.21 The development does not propose any additional landscaping but if Members are minded that the application should be approved it is recommended for a landscaping scheme to be submitted that is proportionate to the size of the development to benefit the visual amenity of the area and provide ecological enhancements on the site.

Neighbour Amenity

6.23 The closest neighbour to the site is Hulme Farm. This neighbour is a detached dwelling. The pod would be situated on the opposite side of The Dairy and therefore the development would be a sufficient distance away to ensure that the development would not cause harm in relation to loss of light or privacy. Any concerns with regards to excessive noise would be dealt with by the relevant authority. However given the proximity to the applicants address it is unlikely that these neighbours would experience unacceptable levels of noise nuisance as the applicants would also experience this disturbance and would be like to monitor and respond to any noise at the site.

6.24 This neighbour has raised concerns regarding disturbance to their property due to the use of the private access. It is considered that due to the limited size of the accommodation that disturbance from vehicular movements would not be so significant to warrant refusal of the application on these grounds. Overall the scheme is found to be acceptable in amenity terms.

Highway Safety

6.25 The proposed dwelling would be accessed via an existing access off Hollington Road. The highway authority has commented on the proposal and have no objection to the scheme subject to a condition requiring the parking area to be laid out before the development is occupied. As such the development is considered to have an acceptable impact on highway safety.

Ecology

6.26 Policy NE1 requires that the biodiversity and geological resources of the District and neighbouring areas will be conserved and enhanced by positive management and strict control of development (and having regard to relevant ecological evidence) by:

•Expecting all development where possible seeks to deliver a net gain in biodiversity proportionate to the size and scale of the development.

6.27 The application site does not propose any net gain enhancements and therefore it would be appropriate to condition a landscaping scheme which incorporates biodiversity net gain.

7. PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The site does not have good connectivity with other tourist destinations and amenities, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling; and is not in a location in or close to settlements where local services, facilities and public transport are available. The area has not been specifically identified for Tourism Development within the Churnet Valley Masterplan or other relevant documents. As such the site is clearly contrary to Policy E4(1)

7.2 There are a number of other premises offering accommodation in this area and there is no evidence to suggest that tourist needs are not being met by existing facilities in this part of the District, given its location in an area which is poorly connected to key tourist attractions and destinations. The proposal therefore fails to comply with the first limb of Policy E4(2)

7.3 Whilst it is acknowledged that the scheme is acceptable in terms of design, amenity, heritage, landscape and biodiversity, and would make a contribution to the local tourist economy, any economic contribution would be likely to be modest and therefore would not outweigh this harm. Therefore the application is recommended for refusal.

12. RECOMMENDATION

A. That planning permission be REFUSED for the following reason(s):

1. The development would contribute to a random dispersal of new tourist development. The location proposed does not have good connectivity with other tourist destinations and amenities, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling; it is not in, or close to, settlements where local services, facilities and public transport are available; and, it is not considered to be a development required to support the provision and expansion of tourist, visitor and cultural facilities in the rural areas as needs are being met by other existing facilities. It is not within an area which has been specifically identified for tourism development in the Churnet Valley Masterplan or other relevant documents. As such, the development would be an unsustainable form of tourism development and contrary to Policies SS10, SS11, and E4 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, and the terms of the NPPF.

- B. In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions/informatives/planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Head of Development Services has delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Applications Committee, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's Decision.

Site Location Plan

