

ITEM:		RECOMMENDATION:	REFUSAL
REF NO:	3PL/2017/1475/F	CASE OFFICER	Fiona Hunter
LOCATION:	GRESSENHALL Land known as Church Farm, Church Lane Gressenhall	APPNTYPE:	Full
APPLICANT:	Mrs A Wilcox Breckenbrae Green Lane	POLICY:	Out Settlemnt Bndry
AGENT:	Holt Architectural Brambly Hedge Dereham Road	ALLOCATION:	N
PROPOSAL:	Change of use of land to camping site with shepherds huts, disabled pods, bell tents, tent pitches, internal road and parking areas, shower and toilet facilities, together with house and cart shed for the site warden, landscaping and access works		
		CONS AREA:	N
		LB GRADE:	N
		TPO:	N

REASON FOR COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

The application is a major development.

KEY ISSUES

Principle of Development - The Campsite
Principle of Development - The Warden's Dwelling
Impact Upon the Countryside
Highways Safety
Trees and Ecology
Residential Amenity
Contamination
Parking
Heritage

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Full planning permission is sought for development of a campsite and associated infrastructure for land currently used as an agricultural field. The key physical components of the proposal are:

- 5 'Shepherd Huts' (5.9m in length x 2.5m in width x 2.6m in height);
- 7 tent pitches;
- 3 disabled camping pods, height of 3.1m, served by a detached WC/Shower building;
- 5 bell tents;
- Bathroom block, height of 3.7m, width of 3.6m and length of 14m. The building would be located at the eastern side of the field adjacent to Church Lane;

- Three hard standing waste store areas;
- An internal track system; and
- A two storey house at the north of the site with incorporated reception and 3 bay 'cart shed' for car parking.

SITE AND LOCATION

The application site comprises an irregular shaped agricultural field extending to 5.73ha. The site is accessed from Church Lane at its' northern end via a secure metal gate. The site is bounded on all sides by hedges and trees, with some areas of fencing.

Public highway single carriage way Church Lane runs along the sites eastern boundary. To the south, east and west of the site is agricultural land. To the north-east is Gressenhall village, including residential neighbours 100m distant.

To the south-east across Church Lane is residential neighbours including: Glebe House, Radford Hall, The Rectory and Glebe Cottage.

To the north is a stream valley running approximately west to east, surrounded by woodland.

246m to the south-west of the site, is Grade 1 Listed St Mary's Church.

Policy SS 1 identifies Gressenhall as a rural settlement which is largely dependent on higher order settlements for services and facilities and as such the settlement is not considered suitable for significant housing growth. The village has a village shop/post office (0.3 miles), Gressenhall Rural Life Museum (1 mile) and a restaurant (1.4 miles). In addition, Dereham Town Centre is 2.8 miles by road to the south-east of the site, which has numerous facilities.

EIA REQUIRED

No

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

3PL/2016/0801/F	Withdrawn	17-11-16
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Erect dwelling, garage/shower block & machinery store in connection with use of land for standing 5 shepherds huts for holiday accommodation & camping area

3PL/2016/1360/F	Refusal	05-04-17
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Erection of dwelling and double garage

3PL/2016/1360/F - Erection of dwelling and double garage, refused 05/04/2017. Dismissed on appeal 25/08/2017.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The following policies of the adopted Breckland Core Strategy and Development Control Policies and the adopted Site Specific Policies and Proposals Document, including the Proposals Maps, have been taken into consideration in the determination of this application. The provisions of the National Planning Policy

Framework and National Planning Policy Guidance have also been taken into account, where appropriate

CP.1 Housing

CP.10 Natural Environment

CP.11 Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape

CP.14 Sustainable Rural Communities

DC.01 Protection of Amenity

DC.02 Principles of New Housing

DC.08 Tourism Related Development

DC.12 Trees and Landscape

DC.13 Flood Risk

DC.16 Design

DC.18 Community facilities, recreation and leisure

DC.19 Parking Provision

SS.1 Spatial Strategy

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework

NPPG National Planning Practice Guidance

OBLIGATIONS/CIL

Not Applicable

CONSULTATIONS

GRESSENHALL P C

04/02/2018

The application is outside the settlement boundary, on agricultural land and it is general council policy to object to new developments outside the guidelines. The access and road surface are not sufficient for the increased traffic. The scale of the application is too large for such a site.

27/07/2018

The parish council are not aware of significant changes to the application since it was last considered. The reason for dismissal of the previous application made by the Planning Inspectorate was that a single dwelling is an encroachment on the countryside. This has not been addressed and no justification or need has been proved. The councillors therefore object to the application for the following reasons: The access is not suitable; The application is outside the guidelines; and The scale of the development.

NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS

Whilst the site is outside the village, it is only a short walk away and neither pedestrian safety, nor highway safety, would be significantly prejudiced. No objection subject to conditions.

ECOLOGICAL AND BIODIVERSITY CONSULTANT

If the council are minded to approve this application, we recommend that you condition:

- Mitigation for the loss of the important hedgerow which must be carried out in accordance with the habitat removal (7.2 and 7.3) and habitat creation (7.5, 7.6 and 7.7) sections of the ecology report (Philip Parker Associates; July 2016).
- An update badger survey report is necessary prior to development works commencing. The update badger survey report needs to be used to inform the CEMP or licence application, if required.

- No development works shall take place until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.
- Working practices outlined in the Biodiversity Method Statement need to be adhered to.
- Vegetation clearance needs to be subject to a timing constraint.
- Enhancement for ecology is conditioned, in line with the NPPF (Para 118) as outlined in section 7 of the ecology report (Philip Parker Associates; July 2016).

TREE AND COUNTRYSIDE CONSULTANT

No comments to make.

CONTAMINATED LAND OFFICER

No objection subject to the development proceeding as submitted.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS

No objection subject to the development proceeding as submitted.

ANGLIAN WATER SERVICE

No comments due to the foul and surface water drainage systems proposed.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SERVICE

Based on currently available information the proposed development will not have any significant impact on the historic environment and we do not wish to make any recommendations for archaeological work.

NATURAL ENGLAND

No objection subject to all surface water and foul drainage infrastructure is in place prior to the operation of the site.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS CONSULTANT

No comment (no apparent impact on above ground designated heritage assets)

NATIONAL GRID

No Comments Received

PRINCIPAL PLANNER MINERAL & WASTE POLICY

No Comments Received

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was advertised in the local press on 08/01/2018, a site notice displayed on 04/01/2018 and again on the 19/01/2018 due to the first one being removed, and letters sent to neighbouring residents on 02/01/2018.

Due to submission of additional information and amended proposals two further consultations took place, including letters being sent to the Parish Council and local residents on 19/03/2018 and 09/07/2018.

The following representations in objection to and support of the development were received and are summarised below. A number of the supporting representations come from persons who do not live in Gressenhall or the immediate local area.

Objections (approx. 67 responses)

- Not an appropriate location for a campsite and will encroach into the countryside.
- A campsite will lead to noise and a proliferation of litter.

- Unsuitable location for a dwelling and not satisfactorily justified.
- A newspaper campaign on the grounds that this is a facility for the disabled is both cynical and specious.
- The Church Lane/ Dereham Road/ Bridge Street had very poor visibility.
- Church Lane is a narrow lane with no passing places
- The economic argument and business case for the application is not well made/ correct.
- The village needs affordable starter homes.
- Positive impacts for local businesses will be minimal.
- There is no indication given with regard to the treatment of waste water/sewage.
- This could set a precedent for other similar developments.
- The applicant has not demonstrated the need for a campsite and therefore the application is in conflict with Policy DC 8.
- Concerns about impacts on nearby Grade I listed church
- The Planning Inspectorate have already refused a dwelling on the site.
- The area is already served by camping facilities.
- Site is in a Groundwater Source Protection Zone 3 and no evidence has been presented to help understand any potential impacts.
- Destruction of hedgerow and wildlife habitat.
- Poor design of machinery barn and house.
- Shepherd huts no longer a feature of Norfolk and would appear contrived.
- The development will create a precedent.
- The development would result in disturbance to nearby land which the persons use for relaxation and recreation.
- There is sufficient camping sites locally to meet demand. Shepherd huts are a passing trend.
- Negative impact on broadband.
- The employment and food generated by the land in its current agricultural use has not been considered.
- Local wildlife, protected species, ecological features and bees that could be impacted by this development.
- Dangerous plants on site which can harm human health.
- Submitted need data incorrect/ biased

Support (approx. 110 responses)

- It would be good for the village to have a campsite and associated increase in rural tourism.
- It would be beneficial for the village bringing business into Gressenhall.
- It is nice to see a young local family with long ties to Gressenhall wanting to invest in the village.
- Good location for a small campsite.
- Shepherd huts sound a great idea and something a bit different too.
- The development would be unique, high quality, safe and inclusive holiday/leisure experience which is both sustainable and meets identified needs not catered for elsewhere in the area.
- Traffic movements to the site would be minimal.
- The site would be ideal for walkers and is near to excellent footpaths and trails .
- 24 hour supervision is needed hence the need for a house.
- The proposal is unobtrusive and on the edge of the settlement boundary.
- The nature and scale of the development will enable it to integrate perfectly into its natural, rural environment providing the perfect setting for people of all ages and abilities who wish to enjoy the exceptional facilities this area has to offer.
- Gressenhall museum continues to grow from strength to strength and this wonderful attraction is within walking distance of the site.
- There will be no impact on the amenity of local residents.
- The Parish Council had made up its mind concerning this application ahead of the meeting, effectively

negating public comments.

- The house would be screened by trees to the north
- The proposal will create jobs
- The Gressenhall Caravan/Motorhome Club certified 5 van has been constantly busy from Easter to November with over 800 nights/pitches taken during last year. On several occasions last year the site was full and customers had to be turned away.

Other

- Development will create a precedent

ASSESSMENT NOTES

1.0 Principle of Development - The Campsite

1.1 This application seeks full planning permission for a tourist accommodation camping site, with associated facilities. Policy DC8, encourages this type of development where 4 criteria are met (f - i), together with a restriction on new buildings subject to 3 additional criteria (j -k). An assessment of the proposal against these criteria is provided below:

Criteria F - A need can be demonstrated for the proposal;

1.2 The applicant has submitted information' which sought to set out the need for the development. This has been subsequently further explored and presented by a 'Site Development Assessment' (SDA) (revision 1 and 2) prepared by Destination Research. Under Section 2 Supply Analysis, it states there is a low supply of camping and caravan sites within a 10 mile radius. However, the sites identified under section 2, page 4, has excluded at least five relevant sites as follows:

- Gingerbread Cottages (Yurts), Dereham 5.8 miles from Gressenhall
- Spring Farm (tents and mobile caravans), Shipdham 8.7 miles from Gressenhall
- West Lexham Education Centre (tree houses, bell tents, roundhouses and barn) West Lexham, 9 miles from Gressenhall
- Natures Path Holidays (bell tents/ wigwams) Yaxham, 4.9 miles from Gressenhall
- Brick Kiln Farm, Ashill (tents, mobile caravans, glamping 'pods'), 9 miles from Gressenhall

1.3 The analysis of supply and competition is therefore not considered comprehensive. Page 5 of the SDA sets out that the site will offer a different type of provision than the identified sites by way of the 'glamping' provision together with disabled provision. However, when the above four additional sites are taken into consideration this argument is undermined.

1.4 In respect of the three disability pods, these will provide a reasonably sized flexible open space of 4.8 x 3m. This will allow disabled persons to have the camping experience, with the space they need and without having to set up their own tent. A single disabled toilet and shower is provided near to the pods. The submitted pod plans shows there is no level access between the ground and the door which reduces their accessibility. However, as the 4 glamping and camping sites listed above have been excluded from the SDA report, it is unknown whether the disabled pods are a unique local offer. Irrespective, this is still considered a positive aspect of the proposal given the disabled parking spaces and W/C facility.

1.5 For need, the report has advised there is limited occupancy data for camping and caravanning sites and

it is acknowledged that this type of data is not always available to an extent where it can reliably establish need for new facilities. Whilst the number of "bednights" has increased between 2015 and 2016 for Breckland, this does not necessarily mean there is insufficient camping and 'glamping' provision.

1.6 On the above basis, the exact quantum and type of need for the development has not been identified, however, it is acknowledged is likely to be difficult to establish. Furthermore, Visit England, via the applicant, have supported the application citing the general need for increased tourism in Breckland and the quality nature of the accommodation. In summary, the need for more tourism accommodation is accepted.

Criteria G - The development forms part of a rural diversification scheme or is for the expansion of an existing attraction;

1.7 The development does not form part of a rural diversification scheme, as the site owner does not own any adjacent or nearby rural land. In addition, the development is not the expansion of an existing attraction.

1.8 The applicant has questioned this, advising the site will also be used for hay cutting and cattle grazing. However, the operation would not support a wider existing farm and therefore is considered a new isolated operation. Therefore, the development does not comply with criteria G.

Criteria H - It is well related to an existing settlement and facilities; and

1.9 The development is 100m from Gressenhall which has a number of facilities which could be used by the site customers, including a restaurant and post office. In addition, the site is only 2.6miles from Dereham by road, which provides a much wider range of services and facilities. On this basis, the application meets the requirements of Criteria H.

Criteria I - The occupation of new tourist accommodation will be restricted through the use of conditions or legal agreements to ensure a tourist use solely and not permanent residential use.

1.10 The use of the site and buildings can be restricted by condition.

Criteria J - The sustainability advantages of requiring new buildings;

1.11 No evidence of sustainability advantages of new buildings have been submitted in support of the application.

Criteria K - The particular countryside attraction that the new buildings will support;

1.12 The new buildings would support the proposed camping site and would support local attractions such as the popular Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse 1.5 miles from the site.

1.13 The modest Shepard huts, disabled pods, WC / shower block are also considered proportionate and reasonable for the proposed use.

Criteria L - The absence of suitable existing buildings in the vicinity.

1.14 There are no existing buildings on the site which the applicant could utilise. It is not considered logical or practical to require them to use off-site buildings to support the camp site for toilets, showers or guest accommodation.

2.0 Principle of Development - The Warden's Dwelling

2.1 In addition to the campsite, the application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a two storey house and cart shed to act as warden accommodation. The site is located within the countryside, outside the Gressenhall settlement boundary. For this reason, the proposal conflicts, in principle, with Policies SS01, DC02 and CP14 of the adopted Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document, (2009), which seek to focus new housing within defined Settlement Boundaries. The application should be refused, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

2.2 The Council does not currently have a published 5 year land housing supply as required by the National Planning Policy Framework, which provides national planning guidance for local planning authorities and is a strong material consideration in the determination of planning applications. Paragraph 49 of the NPPF, states that where an authority does not have an up-to-date five year housing land supply the relevant local policies specifically for the supply of housing, should not be considered up-to-date. Furthermore, housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development unless any adverse impacts of doing so would demonstrably outweigh the benefits or specific policies in the Framework indicate that development should be restricted. On the aforementioned basis, other principle planning issues for the application are considered below and comprise: whether the location is sustainable for new housing; impact on the countryside; and whether it is necessary to support a viable business.

Sustainable location

2.3 As aforementioned the site is 100m to the south of Gressenhall which is a rural village with settlement boundary. The village benefits from a shop/post office (0.3 miles), a public house (0.3 miles), shop/ post office (0.5 miles) and a restaurant (1.4 miles). In addition, Dereham Town Centre is 2.8 miles by road to the south-east of the site, which has numerous facilities.

2.4 Church Lane does not have a pavement, requiring pedestrians to walk on the grass verge or road for 76m. They would then turn onto Bridge Road, also without pavement for 423m where bus stops and the public house are located.

2.5 The lack of pedestrian route with pavement is not considered sufficiently isolated to make the site an unsustainable location given the proximity to facilities and services in Gressenhall and the village location where this can be expected. The previous appeal for the site confirmed that the site was considered to have suitable access to services and facilities.

Impact on the countryside

2.6 The design, that of a 4 bedroom 2 storey pitched roof house, would result in the building being visible from local views from Church Lane. Some screening would be provided by existing and proposed hedges and trees.

2.7 The site would not be seen in the context of the village as it is 100m to the south, separated by stream valley woodland. The proposal would therefore appear as an isolated countryside development. This is confirmed by a recent Planning Inspector decision for a new dwelling in approximately the same position, however, a few metres further from the road (ref:APP/F2605/W/17/3175051). The Inspector found:

"The site boundary is not contiguous with the built area of the village but is separated from it by a stream and its valley. This valley and the adjacent woodland provide a substantial visual separation between the two. I saw on my site visit that, in addition to marking the start and finish of the 30 mph speed restrictions, the

bridge over the stream serves as a clear physical and functional demarcation of the extent of the village. On crossing this bridge one has a strong sense of leaving the village behind and passing into an expansive area of open countryside characterised by agricultural land and only isolated or small clusters of houses.

Given this clear demarcation the proposal would represent a significant and harmful encroachment of built development into the open countryside. Due to its scale and the screening provided by retained and new boundary hedges, the new dwelling would not be seen in medium and longer distance views and would not have a significant effect on the wider landscape. Nevertheless, it would cause significant detriment to the open character of the site itself and significant harm to the rural setting of the village.

The proposal does, therefore, conflict with that part of Policy CP 14 which seeks to protect the form and character of settlements from inappropriate proposals and with one of the core planning principles in paragraph 17 of the Framework of recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. It also conflicts with Policy DC 16 which requires that all new development should be of the highest standard of design which preserves or enhances the existing character of the area. The proposal would fail to do this."

2.8 The Inspector's decision and comments are applicable and relevant to this application and it is continued to be considered that the dwelling would result in harmful encroachment into the open countryside which is flat and rural in character, causing significant harm to the open character of the area and the rural setting of the village.

Whether the house is necessary to support a viable business

2.9 Policy CP 14 and paragraph 79 of the NPPF permit rural workers dwelling in the countryside where there is an essential need. The applicant sets out that the new 2 storey 4 bedroom house and cart lodge is needed to support the development. The supporting documents detail that *"an on-site warden is required to assist and deal with any problems or emergencies at all times as well as providing 24-hour security. In addition, the on-site warden would be responsible for the disabled pods and the security of the site. The residential dwelling would also have a room to enable carers to stay on the site. This accommodation would allow those staying in the disabled pods to have independence whilst also having access to 24 hour care in case of emergency."*

2.10 The proposal seeks permission for a total of 20 'pitches' (5 shepherd huts, 7 camping pitches, 3 disabled pods and 5 bell tents). For a development of this size, a small reception building with details of an out of hours emergency number and a checkout box is considered sufficient for a countryside location. For security, cameras could be erected, for example, facing the site vehicle access point. For any carers, a further pod/s could be erected, with a slight buffer to provide privacy/ independence. On the foregoing basis, it is not accepted that a large house is necessary to support and/or facilitate a camp site with 20 pitches.

2.11 The applicant's report further details that having a warden on site will enable a 24 hour service to be provided for the disabled patrons using the pods, with a buzzer directly connected to the warden's dwelling in case of emergency. Whilst this is a positive feature which would enable disabled persons to use the site, a large 4 bedroom house is considered disproportionate to support 3 disabled pods. Instead, the buzzer could connect the a carers Pod and/ or to a phone number for the off-site warden.

2.12 A further consideration is whether the business is viable to justify on-site accommodation in the countryside where housing is usually resisted. The applicant has submitted a business case as part of their supporting information, with an updated income/cost schedule. However, the submitted costs did not include the land purchase costs for the 5.7ha site which is likely to be a significant cost. Based on the emerging plan Local Plan and CIL Viability Assessment (March 2017), greenfield land not adjacent to a settlement

boundary has a value of £25,000 per acre. This would give the land a value of £352,124 without any incentive to sell. This would therefore be a significant cost of the development which has not been factored into the business plan. With the anticipated profits after allowing a salary (using the lower 2019/2020 salary), it would take less than 20 years to pay off the site acquisition costs and physical site development costs. This is considerable a reasonable time to pay back the development set up costs, whilst also providing a salary above the living wage.

2.13 The shepherd huts are identified as having a high rate per night (exact amount private and confidential information). Given their small size, it is not considered the rate is realistic, however, given they have allowed for low occupancy rates in the peak summer months, this is expected to balance out.

2.14 On this basis, it is considered the business could viably support the development of the house. However, the house is not considered necessary to support the business, furthermore it does not relate to an established business and therefore does not comply with Policy CP14 or NPPF paragraph 79.

3.0 Impact Upon the Countryside

3.1 The house has been found to significantly negatively encroach into the countryside as established by the August 2017 appeal decision. This section will consider the impact of the camping facilities.

3.2 The proposal includes 5 shepherd huts which are 2.6m in height, 3 disabled pods 3.1m in height and a bathroom block of 3.7m in height. In addition, the proposal includes 5 tent pitches and 5 bell tents which will vary in terms of visibility due to design, height, position and whether the pitch is booked.

3.3 The bathroom block would have the greatest visual impact due to its proximity to Church Lane, particularly in winter months when the native hedge loses its leaves. Due to the site topography, existing hedgerow and distance from the road, the Shepard Huts are unlikely to be visible.

3.4 Camping site developments will usually be in the countryside, outside of any development boundary and will therefore usually cause some encroachment and change the character of the site. In addition, it is their rural nature which makes countryside land desirable for camping. Whilst this is recognised, the application site's large size and linear nature running along the adopted highway results in a site which has a greater presence than would usually be expected for a camping site, together with the site forming part of the setting of the village. As discussed, the proposal will introduce leisure holiday use to the site, including vehicle movements and vehicle parking, light and human movement and noise. Due to the site's current agricultural use and extensive size, together with presence along the road and creating part of the setting of the village, the proposed change of on site activities together with physical development is considered to have a significant negative impact to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside in this location which is peaceful and rural in nature and therefore conflicts with paragraph 170(b) of the NPPF and policy CP 11.

4.0 Highways safety

4.1 The Highways Authority have not objected to the application on the provision that a condition is imposed which restricts the use to holiday lets only and the number of pitches to 7 tent pitches, 5 shepherd huts, 3 camping pods and 5 bell tents in order that the number of associated vehicular movements are also kept to a minimum. In addition, the Highways Authority require that caravans are not permitted to further prevent the potential of slow moving traffic turning right from Dereham Road into Church Lane together with a number of standard highways conditions.

4.2 On the foregoing basis, the development is considered acceptable in terms of highways safety and capacity.

5.0 Trees and Ecology

5.1 The site is boarded by hedges and trees which are proposed to be maintained in majority as part of the development. In addition, new planting is also proposed running parallel to Church Lane. The Tree and Countryside Officer has responded confirming he has no comments to make on the application.

5.2 Norfolk County Council Natural Environment Team have not objected to the proposal on ecological grounds subject to conditions relating to mitigation, badger survey updates, an environmental management plan, biodiversity Method Statement and vegetation clearance time constraints.

5.3 Natural England have following receipt of drainage information, not objected to the application subject to the drainage systems being in place prior to first use of the development.

6.0 Residential Amenity

6.1 Policy DC1 seeks to protect residential amenity of existing and future residents. The proposal would not impact the residential amenity of any existing dwellings. In terms of noise, any noise from the campsite will be mitigated due to the 100m separation distance to the nearest dwelling.

6.2 The proposed warden's house demonstrates sufficient privacy, daylight and external and internal space. The proposal, therefore, is considered to comply with Policy DC01.

7.0 Contamination

7.1 Policy CP9 seeks to ensure that development minimises any unavoidable polluting effects and the development's design should actively seek to minimise or mitigate against all forms of pollution. The Contaminated Land Officer was consulted on this application and raised no objections, subject to compliance with the submitted details.

8.0 Parking

8.1 The house has parking for 9 cars, together with a further 2 cars at the front of the site. Whilst this is more than would usually be expected for a 4 bedroom house, the house does also act as the reception and they can use these spaces in connection with this secondary function and for camping pitches and bell tents.

8.2 Three disabled parking spaces are proposed for the disabled pods located immediately adjacent, the Shepherd Huts have space for 2 cars next to each structure. There is 8 parking spaces for the 7 camping pitches and 5 bell tents between Shepard huts 1 and 2.

8.3 The car parking arrangements are considered acceptable.

9.0 Heritage

9.1 The site is 230m to the north-north-east of Grade I listed Church of St Mary which is visible from the site. The applicant has submitted a Summary Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by Contura Heritage Consultancy. This document advises that the application site cannot be seen from the church and the development would not result in harm to the setting and/ or significance of the Grade I Listed Church. The

Historic Building Office has not objected to the proposal. Historic Environment Service has not requested any archaeological work.

9.2 On basis of the foregoing, the development is not considered to cause harm to any heritage assets, and therefore complies with Policy DC 17.

10.0 Conclusion/ Planning Balance

10.1 The adopted development plan recognises that tourism/ holiday accommodation performs an important economic function and there is scope for the further growth of this sector of the economy in Breckland. Paragraph 83 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2018) (NPPF) also supports "sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside". It therefore agreed that Breckland would benefit from more quality holiday accommodation. The exact quantum and type and location of need has not been established due to lack of commercially available data for Breckland.

10.2 Policy DC 8 sets out a number of criteria for new tourism accommodation, advising it will be encouraged where it forms part of a rural diversification scheme. The applicant does not own any adjacent or nearby rural land or businesses and therefore does not meet this particular criteria. The development does not therefore benefit from support from this Policy.

10.3 The development would result in significant harmful encroachment into the countryside which in this location is characterised by its flat, tranquil and rural nature. This is due to the change of use of 5.73ha of land to a camping site and the erection of permanent buildings, with particular regard to the 2 storey pitched roof house, cart lodge and bathroom block and change of use of the land. More specifically, the development would cause significant harm to the open character of the site itself, immediate views and the rural setting of the village. In relation to the setting of the village, the proposal would extend development beyond the natural barrier and screen created by the stream valley woodland which separates the site and the village. The proposal therefore also conflicts with Policy CP 11 and paragraph 170(b) of the NPPF, which identifies the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services.

10.4 The development of a two storey dwelling at the northern part of the site has already been established at appeal to significantly outweigh the benefits when considered in isolation. It is not agreed that a dwelling is necessary to support a campsite with 20 pitches, particularly a large 4 bedroom property and therefore this aspect of the development is not considered acceptable and conflict with Policy CP 14 and paragraph 79 of the NPPF. Other provisions could instead be put in place such as a security camera, reception building, notice board and emergency telephone number. If the camp site expanded in future once successfully established, this aspect could be re-considered.

10.5 The campsite would have some economic benefit by way of the construction works, business rates, supporting local tourism and local services and facilities. In addition, the development would deliver one market home which would contribute towards Breckland's 0.23 year land housing supply shortfall. However, these benefits of the proposal are not considered to outweigh the significant harm which would be caused by the development by way of intrusion into the countryside and harm to the open character of the site itself and rural setting of Gressenhall. In addition, the extent of encroachment due to the substantial site area of 5.7ha is considered unnecessary to support a high quality camping site for 20 pitches and is not an efficient and effective use of land as required by 117 of the NPPF. Therefore refusal of the planning application is recommended.

RECOMMENDATION

Refusal of Planning Permission

REASON(S) FOR REFUSAL

1 Impact on the Countyside, the site & setting of the village

The change of use of 5.73ha of agricultural land which is adjacent to the public highways and forms part of the setting to the village of Gressenhall to camping site, with associated new buildings, hard standing, human activity and two storey house and cart shed would result in significant harmful encroachment into the open countryside which in this location is rural, flat and tranquil in character, with wide expansive views. In addition, the development would cause significant adverse impacts to the open character of the extensive site and the rural setting of the village. For the foregoing reasons, the development is therefore not considered to comply with Policies CP 11 of the Breckland Council Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (2009) or paragraph 170(b) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2018), which advises decisions should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services.

2 New dwelling in countyside

The site is outside of a settlement boundary and the proposed house is therefore contrary to Policies SS1, CP14, DC2 of the adopted Breckland Core strategy and Development Control Policies DPD, 2009 that seek to sustainably manage growth in the district by directing new houses to within existing settlements. In addition, the house would result in the significant adverse encroachment of built development into the countryside. The house is also not considered necessary to support the proposed campsite, due to the small amount of proposed accommodation together with it not relating to an established business and therefore does not meet the requirements of Policy CP 14 of the adopted Breckland Core strategy and Development Control Policies DPD, 2009 or paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2018).

As a result the house proposals would not form sustainable development and there are no material considerations that would outweigh the significant harm caused to the encroachment into the countryside, the setting of the village and the site itself.