

Date of Meeting	9 th April 2015
Application Number	15/00150/FUL
Site Address	Stonehenge Campsite, Berwick Road, Winterbourne Stoke. SP3 4TQ
Proposal	Erection of a log cabin for use as a reception building for the campsite
Applicant	Mr W Grant
Town/Parish Council	Winterbourne Stoke
Ward	Till and Wyllye Valley
Grid Ref	407465 140569
Type of application	Full Planning
Case Officer	Tom Wippell

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

The application has been called to committee by Councillor Ian West if minded to approve, in view of the scale of the development, the visual impact on the surrounding area, the relationship to adjoining properties and the design- bulk, height and general appearance.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the recommendation of the Area Development Manager (South) that planning permission be **Granted** subject to conditions.

2. Report Summary

The issues in this case are:

- Principle / Site History
- Impact on Visual Amenity
- Impact on Residential Amenity
- Other Issues

Publicity of the application has resulted in an objection from the Winterbourne Stoke Parish Council and 2 objection letters. There have been no letters of support.

3. Site Description

The site forms part of Stonehenge Campsite which is located between Winterbourne Stoke and Berwick St James. The campsite is outside of a housing policy boundary and is therefore within 'open countryside' designated as a Special Landscape Area and is adjacent to the Winterbourne Stoke Conservation Area.

The campsite is divided into three distinct parts comprising an upper paddock, closest to the Berwick Road, a middle paddock, and a levelled lower section closest to the river.

The lower section has permission for the stationing of 15 caravans all year round and contains hard surfaced standings used as caravan pitches, as well as various associated facilities in connection with the campsite including an existing shower/toilet block.

4. Planning History

There is a lengthy planning history for this site, but in summary it is noted that planning permission has been granted for camping and caravanning, subject to a number of restrictions and conditions.

S/2010/0007	Change of use of land to touring caravan and camping site, including retention of access, driveway, hardstandings, shower/wc block, chemical toilet disposal area, cess pit and electric hook up points	Refused 11.05.2010 Allowed at appeal 11.11.2011
S/2012/0132	Erection of timber post and rail fence of 1.1m high along part of the western boundary of the site.	AC 03.05.2012
S/2012/1555	Retention of concrete base, construction of further concrete base and siting of two purpose built "Wessington" portakabin type shower blocks to be used as toilet/wash blocks in associated with the existing campsite	AC 07.03.2013
S/2012/1777	Development of land without compliance with condition 11 imposed upon Appeal C (S/2010/0007) and in accord with the Landscape Management information submitted with this application	AC 07.03.2013
S/2013/0056	Change of use of land to touring caravan and camping site (amended proposal to planning permission S/2010/0007/FULL incorporating use of pitch 6 as either a caravan pitch or the stationing of a motor home/caravan/pod for occupation by the senior site warden and use of pitch 7 (between 1st April - 30th September in any year) as either a caravan pitch or the stationing of a motorhome/caravan/pod for occupation by assistant wardens in association with the management of the existing campsite)	Refused 18/04/2013 Appeal dismissed 11/11/2013
14/10830/VAR	Vary condition 5 of S/2010/0007 to extend the dates when the campsite can be operated from 19th March to 30th September in and calendar year to 1st march to 31st October in any calendar year	Approved 26/02/15

5. The Proposal

Planning permission is sought to construct a log cabin in the lower section of the campsite, for use as a reception building for visitors. The cabin has already been erected without planning permission, and therefore this application is now retrospective.

6. Planning Policy

C6, CN11

Core Policy 39, Core Policy 57, Core Policy 50

NPPF

Archaeology:

This site is an archaeologically sensitive one as there are significant archaeological features within and in the immediate vicinity of the campsite. However, in this particular case the building has been erected on a hard standing which formed part of an earlier building. As a consequence, I do not consider that archaeological works would have been required.

It is important that I make the point, however, that this and any other works that have the potential to affect either below ground archaeological remains, or the earthworks that are present within or near the site, would be likely to require archaeological investigation.

Any future application should therefore include a proportionate heritage assessment. I would also be happy to discuss any future proposed development with the applicant, in advance, in order to decide whether I would recommend that field evaluation is necessary.

Highways: - No objection

Highways Agency: - No objection

Environmental Health:

Public Protection have no comments with regard to the operation / opening times of the this camp site and any complaints received by Public Protection relating to noise from specific events held at the site would be dealt using the relevant provisions contained within noise nuisance legislation. I am also advised that a Planning Officer based in the West of our County granted planning permission for a similar application where Public Protection had made objections / comments because of persistent noise issues in relation to the site. The Planning Officer stated that planning permission could not be refused based upon our comments objections in relation to noise issues.

Winterbourne Stoke Parish Council:

The application was discussed by Cllrs and it was unanimously agreed that Winterbourne Stoke Parish Council OBJECTED to the application. The site is very visible from the A303, B3083 and adjacent parish footpaths and the new log cabin (noting that the erection was completed on 23 Feb 15) is very prominent in the landscape. The size and scale is incongruous with the actual requirement for a

“modest reception area” and the location on the site is illogical as it requires visitors to travel through the whole site to book in; the argument for it to be in the 365 day occupied sub-site (known as the campsite) is weak as this has a very limited capacity whereas the considerably larger rally fields would be the logical location and would probably realise the benefit of a small portable reception facility.

Berwick St James Parish Council: - No comments received

8. Publicity

The application has been advertised by way of site notice and letters to near neighbours.

The publicity has generated two letters of objection and no letters of support.

The letters of objection are summarised as follows:

- The new building had been erected and stood proud above the campsite there was nothing "modest" about it, which was the epithet the Agent had applied for
- The cabin is not "sympathetic" to the surrounding environs, and does not reflect the character of the local area. It certainly is not minimal within the surrounding landscape.
- This new edifice can be clearly seen from all the roads around especially when it is lit up by night.
- We wonder why a pitched roof has been chosen when other designs may not have made the building so obtrusive in the landscape.
- Why does a small campsite which has maximum facilities for 15 pitches 365 days of the year and is seldom at capacity seem to necessitate such a large building to service its needs.
- The placing of this new building at a place in the campsite when, in busiest times, clients will surely find a cause of congestion coming to and from the reception building at a distance from the camping field.
- This new building, not the need for up-dating existing reception facilities
- There is no requirement for warden's accommodation
- No plans have been submitted for the internal layout, or statement of the facilities to be provided such as electricity, water, toilets, drainage connection and similar, so we have little idea what the applicant proposes.
- The use of the cabin is unclear and unnecessary
- Cabin is sited in the wrong place to welcome visitors
- The cabin is not screened from the footpath as claimed, and the planted hedge is not high enough to provide sufficient screening
- A precedent may be set for yet more extensions to the site facilities, with or without permission, which may not be desirable but which might be hard to resist if the this application is approved

- No reason or justification has been given for either location or size. Based on the use proposed, the building is too big, too visible and in the wrong place.

9. Planning Considerations

9.1 Principle

Core Policy 39 states that 'Proposals for camping and touring caravan sites (including extensions) will be supported where they can be accommodated without adverse impact on the character and appearance of the landscape', and... 'The scale, design and use of the proposal is compatible with its wider landscape setting and would not detract from the character or appearance of the landscape or settlement and would not be detrimental to the amenities of residential areas'

Core Policy 50 ensures that there will be no adverse impact on Biodiversity and geodiversity

Core Policy 57 ensures high quality design and place shaping

Core Policy 58 ensure the conservation of the historic environment

'Saved' Local Plan Policy C6 ensure that there will be no adverse impact on the Special Landscape Area

9.2 Visual Impact

The A303 is in an elevated position to the north-west of the site, where there is an exposed section following the removal of trees and vegetation by the Highways Agency. Fleeting views are available from the A303 towards the site from passing vehicles. Views of the Rally Fields are also available from Scotland Lodge, which is at a slightly elevated position above the A303, and parts of the site can also be seen from Over the Hill to the south and parts of the gardens of Till Cottage and Keepers Cottage.

Officers consider that the now well-established landscaping around the site provides significant screening to the site, and as such it is considered that the log cabin would not have a detrimental impact upon the immediate visual amenities of the site or the wider landscape context.

The log cabin is relatively small in footprint (5.74m x 4 m), and has a relatively low ridgeheight (3.6 metres). The building is not considered to be excessive in size for the proposed use as a reception area, and the materials are considered acceptable for this semi-rural location (with the 'yellowness' of the timber dulling down over time).

Views of the site from the A303, views from the footpath/ river behind the cabin, the cumulative visual impact of all the buildings within the site, and the thickness of the boundary screening have all been considered as part of the assessment on visual amenity.

9.3 Impact on Residential Amenity / Use of Cabin

The cabin will be used as a reception area for visitors to the campsite, and will provide a sheltered space to book people into the campsite away from the elements. The cabin will not be used as accommodation- this can be conditioned accordingly.

The new cabin would not create any additional noise or disturbance to the occupiers of neighbouring properties, and the restrictive conditions for the campsite imposed on the previous applications (ie- the amount of tents, opening dates, use of the site etc) will remain unaltered.

Any complaints received by Public Protection relating to noise from specific events held at the site would be dealt using the relevant provisions contained within noise nuisance legislation.

9.4 Other Issues

Objections have been received in regard to the retrospective nature of the application, and the perception that the applicant is continuing to ignore the due-planning-process by erecting buildings without consent and then applying afterwards. In response to this concern, it should be noted that any buildings erected by the applicant without planning permission are liable for enforcement action, and that any new structures may need to be taken down at the applicant's expense if retrospective planning permission is refused.

The scheme has not resulted in pollution occurring to nearby wildlife/ watercourses over current levels.

The scheme has not resulted in additional flooding or unacceptable surface water run-off occurring.

There will be no adverse impact on highway safety.

Any archaeological remains will have already been disturbed and the County Archaeologist raises no objections.

9.5 Conclusion

It considered that the erection of a log cabin for use as a reception building (now retrospective) for the campsite has not had any significant visual impact, no significant impact on residential amenity, and no significant impact on any other material planning considerations outline above. The scheme is therefore considered to be an acceptable form of development, in compliance with Local and National Planning Policy.

Recommendation

Approve subject to conditions

In pursuance of its powers under the above Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Council hereby grant PLANNING PERMISSION for the above development to be carried out in accordance with the application and plans submitted (listed below), subject to compliance with the condition(s) specified hereunder:-

1. The cabin hereby permitted shall only be used as a reception building in connection with the running of the campsite and for no other purposes. The building shall not be converted to habitable accommodation.

REASON: The site lies within an area where it is against the policy of the Local Planning Authority to allow permanent accommodation without a special agricultural (or other proven, local) need.

2. This development shall be in accordance with the submitted drawings
 - Elevations, dated 28/05/14 and received to this office on 27/01/15
 - Floor Plan, dated 26/01/15 and received to this office on 27/01/15
 - Block Plan, dated 08/01/15 and received to this office on 15/01/15

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt.