TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

PLANNING STATEMENT

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE PROPOSED MIXED USE OF EXISTING LAND AND CARAVAN TO ALLOW ITS USE AS A SELF-CONTAINED INDEPENDENT HOLIDAY LET AND FOR PURPOSES ANCILLARY TO THE RESIDENTIAL USE OF THE DWELLINGHOUSE

RIDGEFIELD FARM, GREEN ROAD, THE RIDGE, WILTSHIRE, SN13 9PW

Prepared by

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Our Reference: LPC.5462

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to supplement the submission of a planning application seeking planning permission for the mixed use of the caravan and associated land at Ridgefield Farm, Green Road, The Ridge, Wiltshire, SN13 9PW to allow its use as a self-contained independent holiday let and for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwellinghouse.

1.2 This statement will describe the location of the site and will set out what is proposed by the planning application. The statement will then provide an overview of the planning policy context and an assessment of the key material planning considerations, demonstrating the proposal's acceptability.

1.3 The planning application is supported by the following plans:-

- Location Plan – Drawing no.LPC.5462 EX 301
- Site Plan Existing – Drawing no.LPC.5462 EX 102
- Site Plan Proposed– Drawing no.LPC.5462 EX 302

1.4 The caravan complies with the legal definition of caravan/mobile home as detailed below therefore elevation plans are not necessary because it is not classed as a 'building'. This statement however includes a floor plan and photographs of the caravan and can be conditioned as part of any planning permission that may be granted.

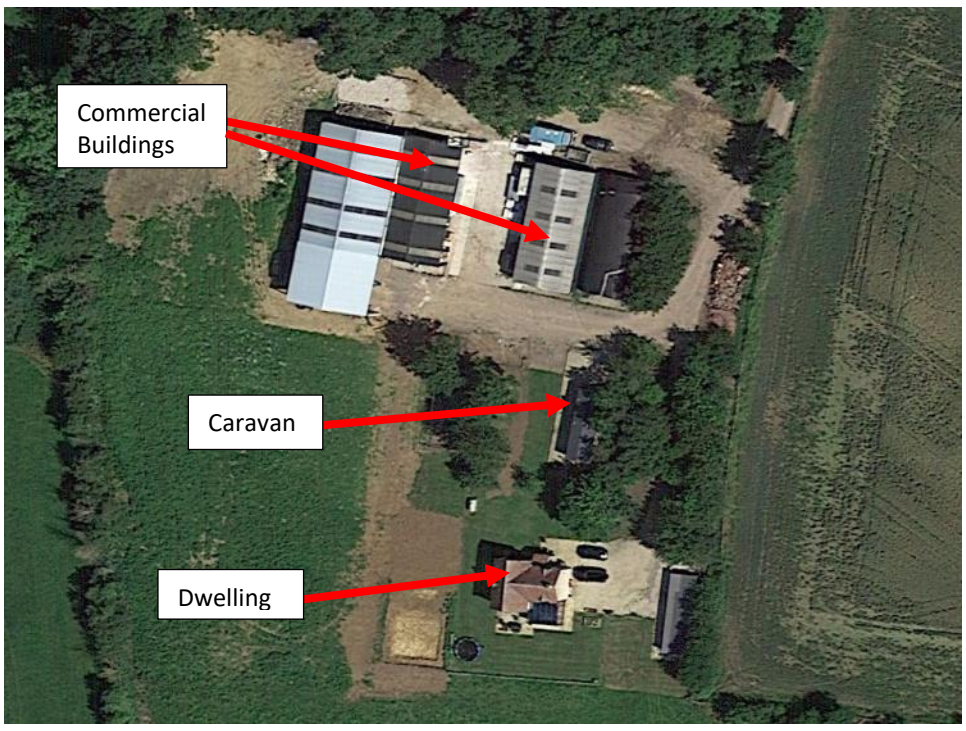
2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION & PLANNING HISTORY

2.1 The application property, Ridgefield Farm, is located approximately 1km south of Corsham. The property is a short drive from the B3353 via Monk's Lane and Green Road.

2.2 Ridgefield Farm was historically operated by Wiltshire Mushrooms and there has been an ongoing mix of agricultural and commercial activities at this site for many years. The dwelling at the property was permitted in 1999 as an agricultural workers dwelling in connection with the mushroom farming business (planning permission reference 99/00501/FUL). The dwelling has an agricultural tie via a condition of the original planning permission.

2.3 A number of polytunnels were erected in support of the mushroom farming business during the 1990s and permission later granted in 2017 for the erection of two agricultural buildings (planning permission reference 17/04190/FUL).

2.4 The buildings are currently occupied for mixed uses falling within Use Classes B2 and B8 to the Schedule to the Use Classes Order which planning application reference PL/2023/05206 seeks to authorise.

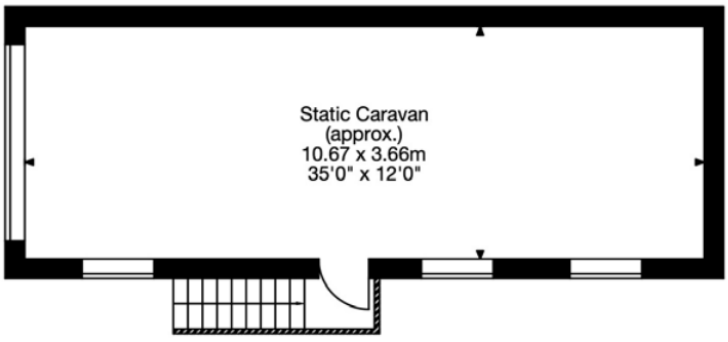


Aerial photograph showing application property (Source Google / Date 18.07.21)

2.5 A caravan is located within the residential curtilage of the dwelling as identified on the aerial photograph above and below. The caravan and associated land is the subject of this planning application.



2.6 The caravan complies with the legal definition of a caravan/mobile home as outlined within section 21(1) of the Caravan Sites & Control of Development Act 1960, as amended by section 13(1) of the Caravan Sites Act 1968 (as amended by the Social Landlords (Permissible Additional Purposes) (England) Order 2006 (Definition of Caravan) (Amendment) (England) Order 2006.



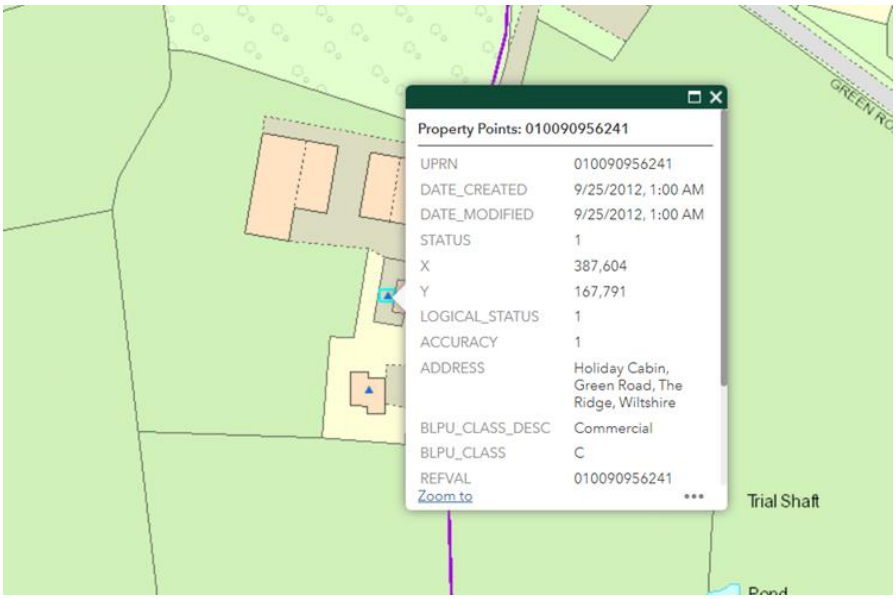
Caravan Floor Plan



Aerial Photograph (Source: Carter Jonas Sales Brochure)

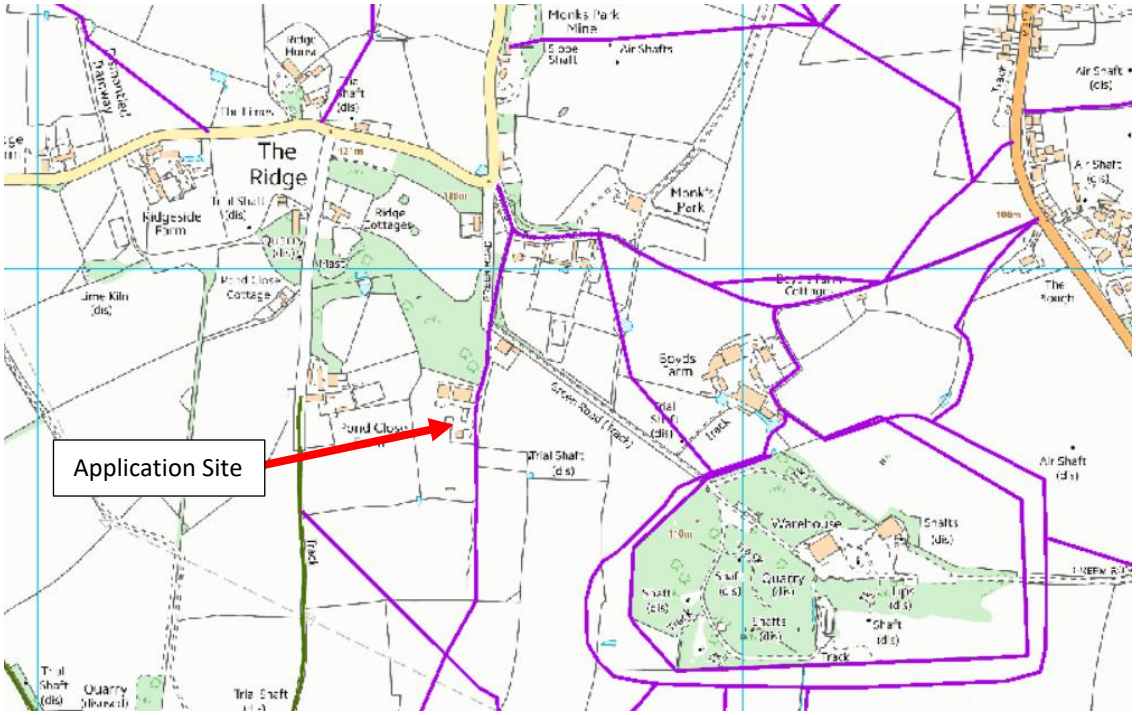
2.7 The land the subject of this application was the focus of an application (reference N/11/03489/FUL) for the erection of a holiday cabin in 2011. The application was refused under the policies of the former District Local Plan due to its location and impact on landscape character. It appears however that a caravan was later placed on the land, now over a decade ago, and used as ancillary accommodation to the dwellinghouse but also as a self-contained independent unit of residential accommodation.

2.8 The Council's Planning Explorer Website shows there is a registered address point for the caravan which is a 'Holiday Cabin' as shown on the screen extract copied below:-



2.9 The caravan has recently been the subject of discussions between the applicant and the Local Planning Authority's Enforcement team (case reference ENF/2022/00436-Mr D Tyrrell). It was concluded following a site visit on the 1st March 2023 by the Council's Enforcement Officer that the caravan is now lawfully in use for ancillary purposes to the dwelling house.

2.10 The application property is linked to a network of public rights of way as shown on the map below (identified by purple lines). Footpath ref CORM27 crosses the application property.



Map showing Public Right of Way Network

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The application seeks a flexible planning permission for the dual use of the caravan to allow it to continue to be used for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwellinghouse or as a self-contained independent holiday let use.

3.2 In terms of the proposed flexible use of the land and caravan, Schedule 2, Part 3, Class V of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) allows the change of use of a building or other land from a use permitted by planning permission on an application, to another use which that permission would have specifically authorised when it was granted. This application therefore seeks a flexible planning permission to enable the owner to switch between the specified uses in the future under the permitted development rights. It is recognised that (in accordance with condition V.1.c of Class V) at the end of a 10 year period, whichever use would be functioning at the time becomes the permanent lawful use of the land.

3.3 The purpose of the proposal is to allow the caravan to continue to be utilised for its established use for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwellinghouse such as overspill accommodation, and also as a self-contained holiday let. The application does not propose any operational development. The application is limited to the proposed change of use only to enable the caravan to be used as a small holiday let, in combination with the established lawful use of the land. These uses have successfully operated from the land in the past without detriment to the surrounding area.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlights that planning law (section 70 [2] of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38 [6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan relevant to this application is the Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted 2015).

4.2 The development plan must be read as a whole but the following policies are of particular relevance to the proposed development:-

- Core Policy 39 – Tourist Development
- Core Policy 40 – Hotels, Bed & Breakfasts, Guest Houses and Conference Facilities
- Core Policy 51 – Landscape
- Core Policy 57 – Ensuring high quality design and place shaping
- Core Policy 60 – Sustainable Transport
- Core Policy 61 – Transport and Development

4.3 The NPPF, and associated Planning Practice Guidance, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions. The policies within the following chapters of the NPPF are relevant to the assessment of the proposed development:-

- Chapter 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Chapter 4 – Decision-making
- Chapter 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
- Chapter 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Chapter 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

4.4 The site does not lie within a Neighbourhood Plan designated area.

5.0 KEY ISSUES AND PLANNING ASSESSMENT

5.1 In light of the context of the site and relevant national and local planning policies the key material planning considerations are considered to be:-

i) The principle of development

ii) Impact on highway safety

iii) Impact on residential amenity

Principle of Development

5.2 The continued use of the caravan for uses incidental and ancillary to the residential use of the dwellinghouse would not result in 'development', as defined by section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). Section 55, clause (2) (d) states that "the use of any buildings or other land within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse as such" does not involved development of the land. The applicant wishes to continue to utilise the caravan for these purposes but also seeks permission for a material change of use of the land to use the caravan as a holiday let. The flexible uses being sought would enable the applicant to switch between using the land for these purposes in accordance with the permitted development rights detailed above.

5.3 In terms of the principle of the holiday use, the NPPF advises that "Planning policies and decisions should enable: a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings; … [and] … c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside" (paragraph 84). The Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) adopts a positive approach to tourism proposals. Its Spatial Vision and strategic objectives seek to grow Wiltshire's tourism sector in a sustainable way.

5.4 The WCS includes a Spatial Strategy which sets the foundations for how 'sustainable development' is defined and applied within Wiltshire. It has three key elements; a Settlement Strategy, Delivery Strategy and Infrastructure Requirements. The settlement and delivery strategies define where development will be the most sustainable across Wiltshire's settlements.

5.5 Core Policy 1 'Settlement Strategy' and Core Policy 2 'Delivery Strategy' of the WCS outline that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages and development should be restricted to within the limits of development other than in exceptional circumstances as set out within the relevant core policies contained within the plan, i.e. the 'exception policies'.

5.6 The WCS 'exception policies' that permit new development within the countryside, in line with the delivery strategy outlined in Core Policy 2, are listed within paragraph 4.25. These include development related to tourism covered by Core Policy 39 'Tourist Development' and Core Policy 40 'Hotels, Bed & Breakfasts, Guest Houses and Conference Facilities'.

5.7 The tourism policies of the local plan seek to direct new tourist development to the Principal Settlements and Market Towns but provide scope for new development outside settlement boundaries in certain circumstances. Core Policy 39 outlines that new tourist and visitor facilities should be located in or close to Local Service Centres or Large and Small Villages and, where practicable, be located in existing or replacement buildings. If new buildings are required in the countryside for tourist development, these should be directed towards the Local Service Centres and Large and Small Villages.

5.8 The application property lies on the periphery of The Ridge village within the Corsham Community Area, in between the Small Villages of Neston and Gastard and to the south of the Market Town of Corsham. It lies

within the ‘countryside’ for planning policy purposes but is not isolated. The proposed development does not involve the provision of a new building but would utilise the existing caravan and there would be no operational development.

5.9 The small scale development would contribute towards the diversification of the agricultural and commercial activities at the property. The proposal would not only support the business but also the wider economy as a result of the income future occupiers would bring to the area. The site is well placed to enable future occupiers to explore the rich built and historic environment Wiltshire has to offer.

5.10 In light of the above, the proposal is considered to align with the objectives and requirements of the tourism related policies of the NPPF and local plan and is therefore acceptable in principle. The following sections will however consider the other key material planning considerations.

Neighbour Amenity Impacts

5.11 The tourism policies of the local plan require new proposals to be compatible with their wider landscape setting and not be detrimental to the amenities of residential areas. This latter objective is also reflected within Core Policy 57 which seeks to ensure new developments are compatible with adjoining buildings and uses and do not have an adverse impact on the amenities of existing occupants.

5.12 The proposed development will involve the use of the existing caravan and there will be no operational development. As such, there will be no impact on landscape character. The position of the caravan means that there is no potential to impact the amenities of neighbouring residents.

5.13 The caravan is located within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse which enables it to be used for ancillary purposes, however the layout of the property enables the caravan to be occupied as a holiday let without detriment to the occupiers of the dwelling house. The caravan and

dwellinghouse can both be served by adequate parking and amenity areas which would be shared. The owners and residents of the dwellinghouse would also provide on-site management to ensure the smooth running of the holiday let. The photograph below shows the position of the caravan in relation to the dwelling house.



Transport Impacts

5.14 Core Policy 61 'Transport and new development' seek to ensure that new development is as sustainable as possible in terms of its location and design and is capable of being served by safe access to the highway network. The proposed development relies on an exception policy of the local plan which provides scope for tourist attraction and visitor facilities outside defined settlements. The tourism policies however seek to ensure that new development can be served by adequate access and infrastructure and have reasonable access to local services.

5.15 The application property lies within the countryside but can easily be reached from the primary road network. The site is only 1km from the market town of Corsham and a short 2 minute drive from the B3353 which provides direct access to Corsham to the north and Melksham to the south. The caravan is already connected with the required services

and can be used as a holiday let without the need for any further infrastructure to be put in place. The local highway network is considered more than capable of accommodating the typical low number of vehicular movements associated with the proposed use.



6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 The application seeks planning permission for the mixed use of the caravan and associated land at Ridgefield Farm, Green Road, The Ridge, Wiltshire, SN13 9PW to allow its use as a self-contained independent holiday let and for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwellinghouse.

6.2 The proposed development is considered to meet the objectives of national planning policy which provides support for the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas and the creation of sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside. The site lies within the countryside but is close to a number of settlements and can be served by adequate access and infrastructure.

6.3 The proposed holiday let use can be accommodated without the need for any operational development and therefore there would be no impact on the existing character or appearance of the site. The development would contribute towards the diversification of the agricultural activities at the property and support the wider economy.

6.4 The NPPF highlights purpose of the planning system is to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development which has three overarching objectives – economic, social, and environmental. The objectives are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. The development the subject of this planning application is considered to be a sustainable form or rural tourist development, and while the proposal is of a small scale it would deliver local social and economic benefits without any adverse environmental benefits.

6.5 The proposal is considered to align with the policies of the development plan and therefore it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted for the proposed development.