Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

Planning Committee

10 March 2026

Applicant: Lake District Estates Co Ltd

Parish: Casterton

Application No: S/05/9D

Site Address: Woodclose Caravan Park, High Casterton, Carnforth, LA6 2SE

Proposal: Full planning permission for expansion of existing caravan site for 6 additional units with associated access, parking, landscaping and installation of a sewage package treatment plant

Purpose of Report

1. That Members **refuse** planning permission for the above development in accordance with the recommendations below.



Reason For Committee Consideration

2. This application is reported to Committee for the following reason: the Parish Council recommendation is contrary to the decision which the Head of Development Management proposes to take.

Application Site

3. Woodclose Caravan Park is a long-established caravan site located to the north of the A65, approximately 1km south-east of the centre of Kirkby Lonsdale. The application site comprises a roughly rectangular parcel of land that projects north from the existing caravan park and measures approx. 50m x 210m, slightly tapering towards the northern end.

4. Along part of the western boundary of the site is a small area of more manicured grass that is separated from the rest of the site by a post and rail fence which is understood to be used for tented camping under permitted development rights. The remainder of the site is divided in two with a post and wire fence crossing it and is semi-improved grassland. Mature tree cover extends along the western, northern and southern boundaries of the site. On the eastern boundary, at the southern end there is some mature tree and hedge planting, but this peters out about halfway up the site and there are only a few trees along this boundary and little evidence of any form of hedgerow on this part of the boundary.

5. Public right of way (PROW) 509004 runs to the south and east of the site and PROW 509019 runs along the western boundary. There are views into the site from PROW 509004 as the land rises to the east.

6. At present, the number of units at the caravan park are: 11 lodges, 85 static caravans, 10 pods and 28 touring caravan pitches. The planning history indicates that permission has previously been granted for a total of 100 static caravans and 50 touring pitches.

Proposal

7. This application is for full planning permission for the expansion of the existing caravan site for 6 additional lodge units with associated access, parking, landscaping and installation of a sewage package treatment plant

8. This application comprises the change of use of the field to form an extension to the existing caravan park to enable the siting of 6 lodges and associated infrastructure. The site would be accessed by a new road that is to be constructed of grasscrete. No precise details or plans of the lodges have been provided, however the proposed

site plan indicates that they would measure 40 ft x 16 ft (12m x 4.8m) and would be of a timber construction.

Relevant Planning History

9. The following applications are relevant:

SL/2010/724 – Full planning permission for the change of use of land for the siting of 31 holiday static caravans. Approved – Conditional 01/03/2011.

SL/2014/31 – Full planning permission for the change of use of land to accommodate the revised siting of a wigwam camping cabin. Approved 25/02/2014.

S/05/9A - Full planning permission for the change of use of land to form an extension to the existing caravan park, and siting of 23 holiday static caravans and associated infrastructure. Refused 04/08/2021.

S/05/9B - Full planning permission for the change of use of land to form an extension to the existing caravan park, and siting of holiday units and associated infrastructure. Refused 24/10/2022.

Consultations

10. The comments of statutory and non-statutory consultees are summarized below:

Head of Visitor Services – No response received.

Environment Agency – No response received.

United Utilities Water Ltd – No response received.

Area Ranger (Western Dales) - No objection. PROW 509004 passes close to the site. Please ensure the PROW always remains clear and unobstructed during construction. The walked line and the digitised definitive line do not match up at this location. Although this may be due to a digitised definitive line misalignment. No new crossing points or gates are permitted on the PROW without approval through a Section 146 application. The Ranger service would welcome the opportunity to remove barriers to the network at this location if they are no longer necessary for the PROW or land owner (e.g. the removal of the kissing gate and stone stile on FP509004).

Trees and Woodlands - The woodlands and groups of trees around the Caravan Park are integral to the landscape, both for habitat and amenity value, and so their protection should be considered a high priority. No objections to the proposed development, on the condition that the mitigation and protection measures as

outlined in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, prepared by Yew Tree and Gardens, 14 August 2025, are adhered to, to ensure continued protection of the existing trees on site.

Pg.8 in the AIA incorrectly references the British Standards as 3857'. Protection measures need to be in line with BS 5837:2012. An appropriate landscaping plan for the proposed additional planting, to include species, protection and aftercare to ensure their survival is required.

Planning Ecologist - The Preliminary Ecological Assessment is satisfactory subject to a minor issue. The landscape plans differ slightly to the proposed BNG and ideally they should align.

Fire Officer – No objection. Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service is committed to reducing the impact of fire on people, property and the environment. For this reason, it is recommended that the applicant should give consideration to the inclusion of a sprinkler system within the design of the premises.

Environmental Health - No objection. However, as there is limited detail regarding a new proposed package treatment system to serve the development a condition is recommended.

Police – No comments or observations to offer in respect of this proposal.

Highways - The layout details shown on the submitted plan are considered satisfactory from a highway perspective - no objection to the proposed development. It is noted that no mention is made to provide safe/secure cycle parking for guests. This requirement should be addressed and included in any design.

Lead Local Flood Authority - It should be noted however that the surface water discharge rate should not be greater than existing and if installi g a soakaway, we would advise it is not situated within 5 metres of the property or highway.

Casterton Parish Council – “Two previous applications on this site were refused in part because of the visibility of the structures from nearby PROWs. This is still an issue with this application. The statement that one of these PROWs (Laitha Lane) 'seems predominantly used by caravan park residents' is incorrect. This path is widely used, year round, by residents, visitors, fell walkers and cyclists.

Development will extend the site into an area which is visually distinct at present, presenting in our view moderate harm to the landscape.

But in view of the more modest scale of this proposal Casterton Parish Council supports the development subject to satisfactory screening over and above that proposed:

The eastern boundary abuts rising ground which means significant interruption to the views from footpath 509004. This means stronger growth species will be needed to be planted to minimise this effect on the landscape.

The application states that 'Laitha Lane runs parallel to the western boundary separated by a 10m belt of woodland'. This is incorrect, as it is merely a hedge. The second condition we suggest is that the siting of the lodges is moved across to the east side of the field so as to enable the creation of a 10m wide belt of suitable species. This would maximise screening from Laitha Lane without detriment to the overall environment. This 10m belt does exist further up the field, we're merely suggesting extending it."

11. A site notice was displayed on 12 November 2025 and expired on 03 December 2025. Public responses received at the time of writing: 0

Assessment

Key Issues:

- Planning Policy
- Landscape Impact
- Impact on Trees
- Impact on Biodiversity
- Parish Council comments

Planning Policy

12. Policy T6 of the South Lakeland Local Plan (2006) permits small-scale extensions to existing caravan sites only where there is no adverse impact on:
    a) The conservation of the landscape and built environment;
    b) The capacity of the surrounding road system and the adequacy of parking and access; or
    c) The protection of wildlife, archaeological and geological features.

13. Policy T6 states that development will only be granted for proposals limited to a size which can be satisfactorily integrated into it's surroundings, without detriment to the landscape of the area. The policy explains that this includes modest extensions to existing sites and gives guidance of a 10% increase in the number of caravans.

14. Policy CS7.6 of the South Lakeland Core Strategy (2010) supports the creation, enhancement and expansion of tourist attractions and tourism infrastructure provided that it is of an appropriate scale and would be located where the environment and infrastructure can accommodate the visitor impact.

15. The Authority is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan (2025–2040) for the whole National Park which will replace the Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2015-2030) and the old South Lakeland, Eden, and Lancaster Local Plans. The Local Plan has

reached an advanced stage, and weight is given to the plan in decisions on planning applications.

16. Policy E11 of the draft Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2025-2040) states that the development of non-permanent (reversible) self-catering visitor accommodation will be permitted subject to the following:

- Sites are well screened at the time of the application and subsequently, to the extent that development will not cause an adverse impact upon the landscape;
- The accommodation does not constitute a caravan;
- The accommodation is for short term let only;
- Units are restricted to a maximum size of 21 square metres
- The intensity of the use is appropriate for the location, and the infrastructure is available;
- Access arrangements would be adequate and traffic movements would not be harmful to the highway network, local landscape, neighbouring uses of rights of work network;
- The site is capable of effective management without a new dwelling;
- The scheme will comply with the relevant lighting standards set out in Policy L6 (dark skies)
- Any recreational disturbance to woodland, designated habitats and species will be avoided or can be mitigated in relation to NE1

17. The supporting text to this policy advises that static caravan sites are harmful in some of the more open landscapes, and even where sites have been successful they have tended to take decades to assimilate into the landscape. It is considered that there are better replacements for caravans that will fit more harmoniously into the landscape. The supporting text goes on to state that Policy E11 is therefore restrictive towards the use of land for more static caravans. The policy does however permit extensions to existing sites as long as the new units would be well screened or will facilitate a remodelling scheme that will improve the overall visual impact of an existing site.

18. The proposed development of Woodclose Caravan Park would extend the site to the north into new area of undeveloped land that is physically and visually separate from the existing site and would be readily visible from the nearby public footpath and viewed as a new intervention in the landscape. At present, there is a clear northern boundary of the existing site which contains the existing caravans within the wider landscape. The proposed development would result in the encroachment of the caravan park further north beyond this containment into the surrounding open countryside into a field which is not well screened. The development would not improve the existing site either. As such, the development would have a harmful adverse impact on the landscape and would be contrary to policies T6 and CS7.6 of the South Lakeland Local Plan and Core Strategy, as well as Policy E11 of the draft Yorkshire Dales Local Plan.

19. With regard to the appearance of the individual units proposed, policy CS8.2 of the Core Strategy states that development proposals should demonstrate that their location, scale, design and materials will protect, conserve and, where possible, enhance the special qualities of the environment associated with the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Policy CS8.10 of the Core Strategy states that the siting, design, scale and materials of all development should be of a character which maintains or enhances the quality of the landscape or townscape and, where appropriate, should be in keeping with local vernacular tradition.

20. Policy CP6 of draft Yorkshire Dales Local Plan states that development proposals that deliver high quality design, incorporating good visual appearance will be supported, and that design proposals must not conflict with the conversation and enhancement of the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park.

21. No details have been provided of the proposed lodges in respect of design, scale or use of materials. However, the proposed site plan shows the siting of the lodges, and the footprint which would be 12 metres x 4.8 metres. This is considered to be a significant size, and it is considered that the proposals would not meet the requirements of policy CS8.2, CS8.10 and CP6.

Landscape Impact

22. Policy CP8 of the draft Yorkshire Dales Local Plan requires new development to conserve and enhance the natural beauty and the special character of the landscape of the National Park. In assessing proposals regard must be had to the design, layout and scale of proposals and their fit with the distinctive physical and natural character of the landscape in which they would be located.

23. Woodclose Caravan Park lies within the Lower Lune Valley, an area of mixed landscapes, comprising agricultural land, parklands associated with the historic halls in the area and more closely managed land in the form of golf courses, one of which is close to the application site. Settlements and buildings are widely dispersed within the valley as is common in rural areas.

24. The application site is a long undeveloped strip of land, sloping gently up in a northerly and easterly direction from the existing caravan site and is surrounded on three sides by agricultural land. Whilst the site is well screened visually from the north and west by existing tree screening and from the south by the caravan site, the site is clearly visible from much of PROW 509004 to the east, especially in the northern part of the application site that has very little existing tree planting or hedgerow planting along it.

25. The existing development at Woodclose is contained within a roughly square area of land bounded by mature tree cover along the western and eastern boundaries. Whilst the holiday units are readily visible from PROW 555003 and 318020, which

run through the site, the site is contained within the wider landscape owing to its clearly defined and well-established borders. The proposed siting of 6 lodge units within the application site would extend the caravan park into a new of undeveloped land that is visually distinct from the existing site, which currently has a clearly defined and uniform northern boundary. The proposal would therefore result in a harmful encroachment into the surrounding open countryside. The units, access road and parking areas would all be readily visible from PROW 509004. Whilst additional landscaping is proposed this will take time to grow and even when mature, will be unlikely to adequately screen the views into the site from PROW 509004 as the path looks down into the site from the nearby ridge.

26. Static caravans and holiday lodges are not sympathetic to the rural character of the landscape within the National Park. As such, new caravan sites and extensions to existing sites are only supported in the limited instances where it has been clearly demonstrated that any new units would not have a harmful landscape impact or there would be overall improvements to existing sites. The siting of 6 units, each measuring approximately 12m x 4.8m, with parking spaces for at least 1 vehicle per unit, and the creation of a new section of access road measuring approximately 80m would fundamentally transform the appearance of the application site. Whereas the site currently forms part of the northern boundary to the caravan park, separating the existing holiday units from the undeveloped character of the surrounding landscape, the development would extend a caravan site approximately 100m in a northerly direction into the open countryside. This would have a significant harmful landscape impact when viewed from the adjacent PROW. The dimensions of the site, namely its length and narrow form, mean that it would be viewed as distinct from and visually separate to the existing caravan park thereby enhancing the prominence of any development in this location.

27. A landscaping plan has been submitted with the application, which includes native species tree and hedgerow species planting. This has been increased since the earlier application was refused, however it is considered that the proposed planting would not be adequate to screen the development from the PROW and would not be sufficient to ensure development is successfully integrated within the landscape even when matured owing to views afforded from the PROW into the site from the higher land to the east.

28. The supporting statement submitted by the applicant refers to the installation of six low level bollard lights of under 500 lumens to be used within the site and each unit would have one or two PIR down lighters. The applicant has stated that conditions can be used to control external lighting, however this may not be easy to secure as residents of the units may attach additional lights to their units when in occupation and there will be light emitted from inside the units out into the wider area when it is dark. There will also be light emitted from vehicles accessing the site when it is dark, again introducing an intrusion of light into what is already a dark and unlit area. Policy C5 of the Local Plan seeks to control light emissions, particularly in rural areas. It is considered that the extension and encroachment of the site of

approximately 100m in a northerly direction would result in additional light emissions, which would have a harmful landscape impact. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy C5 of the South Lakeland Local Plan and Policy L6 of the draft Yorkshire Dales Local Plan, which seeks to maintain and enhance the quality of the Yorkshire Dales Dark Sky Reserve.

29. Pre-application advice has been given prior to the submission of this application advising that a much more low-key form of development that would be more consistent with the character of the site may be considered acceptable. The applicant was advised that a lesser number of modest sized camping pods/huts sited within the very southern part of the site could potentially be assimilated better into the landscape and as such are more likely to be supported as smaller pods could be easier to incorporate within the landscape in terms of their shape, size and materials and additional landscape planting can be closer and planted within the site not just on the periphery. However, whilst the scheme has been reduced to propose a lesser number of units within the southern part of the site, the development of 6 large lodges is not in line with the advice given, and would have a significant adverse impact upon the visual amenity of the site and surrounding landscape.

30. Whilst there have been attempts to mitigate the visual and landscape impact of the development on the landscape, the proposed siting of 6 units and associated infrastructure, including access road and parking spaces, would be readily visible from the nearby PROW and would have a harmful landscape impact contrary to policies CS8.2 and CS8.10 of the Core Strategy, and Policy CP8 of the draft Yorkshire Dales Local Plan.

Impact on Trees

31. A tree survey and impact assessment has been submitted with the application detailing the impact of development on nearby trees. Following consultation, the Authority's Trees and Woodlands Officer has no objections to the application in regard to the impact on trees, subject to the recommendations of the assessment being adhered to through the imposition of a suitably worded planning condition.

Impact on Biodiversity

32. Following consultation, the Planning Ecologist has confirmed that the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal submitted in support of the application is satisfactory. However, there are minor issues with the Biodiversity Net Gain aspect of the application, which could be resolved should the Authority be minded to approve the application.

Parish Council Comments

33. The Parish Council has raised concerns with the development due to its visibility from nearby PROWs, and considers that the development will extend the site into an area which is visually distinct at present, presenting in our view moderate harm to

the landscape. However, in view of the more modest scale of this proposal Casterton Parish Council supports the development subject to satisfactory screening over and above that proposed:

34. Nevertheless, the Parish Council notes that the eastern boundary abuts rising ground which means significant interruption to the views from footpath 509004 and that better landscape planting is necessary. The Parish Council also requests that the siting of the lodges is moved across to the east side of the field to enable the creation of a 10m wide belt of planting to improve screening.

35. Whilst the Parish Council supports the application there are clearly concerns over the visual impact of the proposals which align with Officer's concerns expressed above.

Equality Act

36. The Authority has a duty under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant characteristic and persons who do not share it. The relevant characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

37. It is considered that there are no overt reasons why this proposal would affect anyone with the protected characteristics such that the application should be permitted or refused on equality grounds.

Conclusion

38. It is considered that the proposed siting of 6 holiday lodges and the erection of the associated infrastructure would have a detrimental effect on the visual quality and intrinsic character of the surrounding landscape through the encroachment of the development into an undeveloped area of land that is visually distinct from the existing caravan park. The proposed development is contrary to policies T6 and C5 of the South Lakeland Local Plan, policies CS7.6, CS8.2, CS8.10 and C5 of the South Lakeland Core Strategy, and Policies E11, CP6, CP8 and L6 of the draft Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2025-2040).

Recommendation

39. It is recommended that permission be refused based on the following:

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the proposal would result in significant harm to the visual quality and intrinsic character of the National Park landscape by

reason of the visual intrusion of the units and associated activity, and the scale and unsympathetic appearance of the units, access road and vehicle parking. The proposed development would be readily visible from public footpath 509004 and by extending development into an area of land that is undeveloped and visually distinct from the existing caravan park would negatively affect views from the footpath and the character of its surroundings. Insufficient details have been submitted regarding external lighting, and it has not been demonstrated that light emissions from the development would not also have a harmful impact on the dark skies character of the area. As such, the proposal is not consistent with saved policies T6 and C5 of the South Lakeland Local Plan (2006), policies CS7.6, CS8.2 and CS8.10 of the South Lakeland Core Strategy (2010), Policies E11, CP6 and CP8 of the draft Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2025-2040), guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and the first statutory purpose of the National Park (Environment Act 1995).

Report Author: Joanne Wood

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