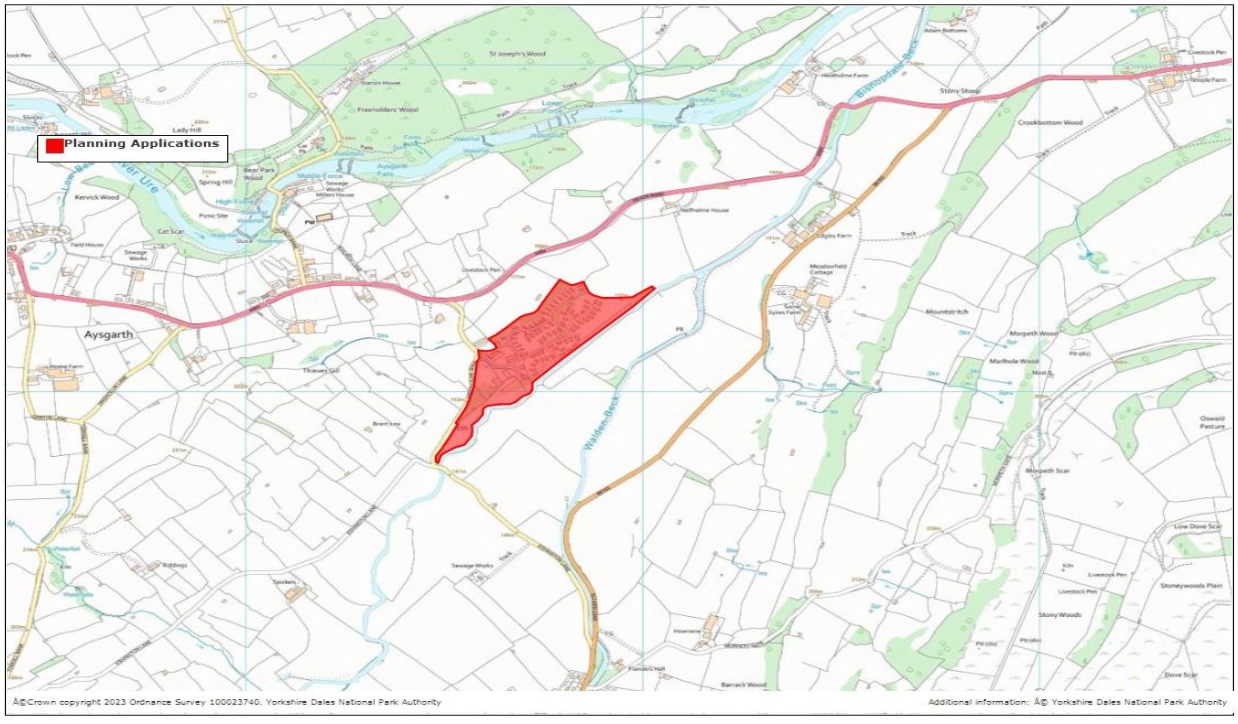
Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

Committee: Planning

Parish: Burton cum Walden
Date: 15 October 2024
Officer: Mark Williams
Applicant: Leisure Resorts Ltd
Application No: R/54/7W
Site Address: Aysgarth Lodge Holidays, Westholme Bank, Aysgarth, Leyburn, North Yorkshire, DL8 3SP

Proposal: Full planning permission for use of land for siting of caravan for use as holiday park reception and office and site wide lighting plan (retrospective)



Reason for Committee Consideration

1. 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

2. Aysgarth caravan park lies to the south of Aysgarth, off Westholme Bank, the minor road linking the A684 with the B6160 on Bishopdale. The park extends to the northeast along the north bank of Bishopdale Beck. The site comprises 74 static holiday caravans served

by internal roads, together with associated buildings including a clubhouse, toilet and shower block.

Proposal

3. Retrospective planning permission is sought for two elements:

- the use of land for the siting of a caravan for use as holiday park reception and office
- the retention of a 49 lighting bollards

Relevant Planning History

4. The following applications are relevant:

R/54/7Q - full planning permission for erection of extension to existing toilet block to form shower and laundry facilities. Approved - Conditional 15/03/1995

R/54/7R- full planning permission for remodelling holiday park to accommodate 74 static holiday caravans, retention of existing access and buildings and change of use of land to agriculture. Approved - Conditional 30/03/2007

R/54/7S-full planning permission for alterations to existing clubhouse. Refused 12/09/2008

R/54/7T- full planning permission for removal of Condition 5 of planning permission R/54/7R to provide an extended operational season. Approved 17/08/2010

R/54/7X- Full planning permission for removal of 2 holiday lodges and siting of 6 glamping pods and associated works. Approved - Conditional 17/03/2023

Consultations

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

(N.B. Both Parish Councils have been notified of the proposal to install dimmer light bulbs).

Aysgarth & District PC - Not received at time of writing.

Environmental Health - do not object to the development.

Area Ranger (Lower Wensleydale) – the development would not affect the public right of way.

Burton-cum-Walden PC - The Council remains concerned about light pollution, particularly as we have supported the Dark Skies initiative, but we will review the situation when the proposals are implemented. One suggestion for the planning authority to consider might be that the external lights could be switched off at, say, 11.00 pm or midnight.

Having studied the submissions from residents and investigated the matter further, we would like to request that this planning application is brought before the full Planning Committee at the first available opportunity to ensure that the complex complies fully with the recommendations of the Enforcement Officer.

The Council has no objection in principle to the creation of a leisure facility on this scale in our vicinity. It has over the years contributed to the economy and to employment in our Parish. However, we feel that the management and appearance of the site must be in keeping with the ethos of the National Park and should not impinge unduly on the surrounding area and the local residents. Further, the way the complex is developing seems to be in danger of destroying the very aspects that it highlights as the attraction of coming to the Yorkshire Dales.

Yoredale Ward Councillor – "Do not think the reflection that the lights generate have alleviated the problem.

The light pollution which can be seen for miles across has raised numerous concerns. The YDNPA has been promoting the Dark Sky project which is very popular and yet in the middle of Wensleydale out in the countryside we see such huge lighting."

Environment Agency - The FRA confirms that the caravan is located in Flood Zone 1, and therefore have no objection or comments to make.

Lead Local Flood Authority (North Yorkshire Council) - would not usually comment on site of this size which is minor development.

Wildlife Officer – no objection

Public Responses

6**.** Advertised by site notice. No responses received.

Assessment

Key Issues:

- Planning policy
- Landscape
- Light pollution
- Parish Council comments
- Equality Act

Planning Policy

7. Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2015-30) Policy SP2 stipulates that development proposals must further the National Park statutory purposes, the first of which is the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage. Policy SP4 (Development Quality) sets out a series of design standards for new development.

Landscape

8. The office/reception building is a single-storey monopitch building which has been sited next to existing car parking spaces at the end of the access drive. It is surrounded by an area of decking with glass-panelled fencing to edges. This building sits towards the south end of the park but is well screened by existing vegetation to the extent that it does not impinge on the wider landscape outside the park. The continued presence of this building is therefore considered to be acceptable.

Light Pollution

9. Policy SP4 (Development Quality) states that development should not give rise to unacceptable, adverse impacts in terms of the darkness of the night sky.

10. To that end the Authority has published Good Lighting Advice for the benefit of developers. This includes advice on the siting and specifications of external lighting. Among the recommended criteria are:

- Lights should be angled downwards
- Lamps of 500 lumens and less are appropriate for most domestic purposes
- All lights should have a colour temperature less than 3000K as a default specification
- Switch lights off when not needed. Use proximity sensors. Avoid dusk-till-dawn sensors.

11. The bulbs which have been installed in the lighting bollards do not comply with this advice, being 6000K. Following the consideration of alternatives, the applicant has now agreed to replace these with dimmer bulbs. These would be 2700K and 470 lumens, and 'warm white' colour. These bulbs would comply with the Authority's advice and represent a significant improvement over the existing situation. The replacement of the existing bulbs with the dimmer specification can be required by condition, with a compliance period of one month considered to be reasonable. This would mean that the new bulbs would be in place for most of the winter of 2024/25 and thereafter.

12. The applicant has been asked to consider having the lights permanently turned off at night (e.g. 2300-0600 hours). At the time of writing a response had not been received but an update will be given at the meeting.

Parish Council Comments

13. The Parish Council's concerns relate principally to the impact of light pollution on the Dark Skies environment, which is addressed in the main body of the report. Subject to the use of dimmer bulbs and to conditions, the development is now considered to be acceptable. Both Parish Councils have been notified of the proposed use of dimmer bulbs. Any further responses will be reported at the meeting.

Equality Act

14. 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.

15. 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

16. Subject to conditions the proposed development would significantly reduce light pollution emitted from this site in line with the Authority's Good Lighting advice. As such

the proposed development is considered to be in accordance with Local Plan Policies SP2, SP4 and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Recommendation

17. It is recommended that permission is GRANTED subject to conditions including the following:

Approved plans
Replacement of existing bulbs within one month
Control over new external lighting