DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GLAMPING SITE AT

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1.0 Executive Summary

Proposed is the installation of 5 no. glamping pods for overnight guest use, 2 saunas, associated decking, footpaths, a new parking area, secure bicycle storage, recycling/refuse storage and a service hut. Also intended is minor landscaping of the site, planting of native species trees, hedgerows, shrubbery, and meadow grass with wildflowers throughout the site.

All pods will have incinerating toilets within, and grey water will be connected to a new private package treatment plant. All hard landscaping will be constructed from permeable materials and all pods will be surrounded by a gravel border to allow roof run-off to easily infiltrate the ground.

The chosen high-end glamping pods will be constructed off-site by manufacturers Outerspace Group and Pod Factory and delivered as a full unit ready for installation.

The application site is situated on the southern edge of the village of Glyn Ceiriog. The site location will be easily accessible from across the country. The proposal supports sustainable travel by including E.V. charging points, secure bicycle storage, and lending.

The small-scale, sustainable development will provide subtle and discreet countryside holiday accommodation for tourists visiting the area on short breaks and weekend stays. The site is proposed to be in operation year-round, making it an excellent option for visitors to retreat and access everything the area has to offer in all seasons.

2.0 Policy

In designing the proposed site, the Wrexham Local Development Plan 2 (2013 to 2028) was referenced, and the following policies were considered. It is believed that the proposal is compliant with each of the following policies:

- Policy SP2 – Location of Development

The site is located in the countryside and outside of any defined settlements according to the proposal map. According to 3.60 of Planning Policy Wales (edition 11, February 2021)59, development in these areas will be strictly controlled. Section 3.60 states the following:

'Development in the countryside should be located within and adjoining those settlements where it can best be accommodated in terms of infrastructure, access, habitat and landscape conservation. Infilling or minor extensions to existing settlements may be acceptable, in particular where they meet a local need for affordable housing or it can be demonstrated that the proposal will increase local economic activity. However, new buildings in the open countryside away from existing settlements or areas allocated for development in development plans must continue to be strictly controlled. All new development should be of a scale and design that respects the character of the surrounding area.'

The proposed development sits on the outskirts of Glyn Ceiriog and could be considered an infill development due to the existing caravan park to the south and residential properties to the north. Development has already been brought down to this area and the proposed glamping pods would be in keeping with the existing character of the area with only 5 units proposed and native screening to shield them.

Guests would be a suitable distance from the centre of the village to utilise the existing facilities on offer such as a village pub, local shop, and pharmacy. It is noted Glyn Ceiriog is a tier 3 local service centre.

- Policy SP8 – Economic Growth, Employment and Enterprise

This policy looks to support new development which can positively contribute to the local economy by providing new employment opportunities and maintaining and enhancing the county's tourism, culture and leisure offer. It is believed the new glamping site in this location would help to create at least 3 new jobs within the area and bring more tourists to the area to help local businesses and add to the yearly tourism spend across Wrexham. Please see the accompanying Market research report which suggests the expected yearly profit and spending from visitors.

- Policy SP11 – Transport and Accessibility

The development benefits from an existing access which will be improved for this application. Due to the small-scale nature of this development and only 5 cars expected on the site at one time, no unacceptable impact will be created upon the existing transport network.

Guests will be encouraged to explore the area via the surrounding walking and cycling routes. Secure bike storage will also be provided on-site to promote this.

- Policy SP12 – Design Principles & Masterplanning Framework

The site has been carefully designed to ensure it complements its surroundings and is of a high quality, sustainable design. Please see section 5.0 of this report for more information on sustainability.

Each unit has been positioned along an existing tree line which will provide shelter and coverage from exterior views. Existing planting and new trees/hedgerows will provide further coverage to the western side to ensure the units are well hidden.

All units have been carefully located to ensure they are out of any areas at risk of flooding and to ensure the safety of visitors in the unlikely occurrence of a flooding event.

- Policy SP14 – Natural Environment

According to the proposal map, the site is located in a Special Landscape Area. The design and layout of the site aim to conserve and enhance the biodiversity and natural features on the land. Little groundwork will be required to prepare areas for the units and trees/hedges shall be retained where possible.

- Policy SP17 – Sustainable Waste Management

The site will benefit from refuse and recycling bins for guest use. All guests will be expected to follow the rules presented to them upon booking. Each pod will be equipped with incinerating toilets with grey water being discharged via a new sustainable drainage system.

- Policy EM5 – Visitor Accommodation Outside Settlement Limits

It is stated that new glamping sites would be permitted providing they comply with the following:

'a) The scale, form and location of the development does not have a harmful effect on the character of the countryside; and

b) The site is used for touring purposes only and not for the storage of caravans which are not in use.'

There is no intention to house/store any caravans, pods, or motorhomes which are not in use. It is also thought that the small number of units would be suitable in this location as there will be no harm to the character of the countryside. Additional biodiversity enhancements have been proposed to help contribute positively to the landscape and to enhance the character of the area.

- Policy NE5 – Special Landscape Areas

As previously mentioned, the site lies within the Special Landscape Area of Ceiriog Valley. Due to the existing screening of the site and the depth of the valley, it is thought the proposed development would not create a harmful impact on the key features of the landscape. Additional landscape features have been proposed to help enhance the character and appearance of the area in question.

- Policy NE6 – Waste Water Treatment and River Water Quality

Due to the remote location of the proposed site, there is no mains wastewater infrastructure the development can connect to. In order to reduce the creation of additional phosphorus levels the site will utilise incinerating toilets within each unit. This will provide mitigation measures to reduce the amount of wastewater created in the area. The grey water from the units will then connect to a new water treatment plant to accommodate all 5 pods.

Each pod is expected to use approximately 100 litres per day, with a maximum of 4 people in each unit. Therefore, this suggests a total of 1,000 litres per day for the entire site.

3.0 Site Context



Aerial view of proposed site.

3.1 Location

The proposed site is a short distance from the centre of Glyn Ceiriog where guests will have access to a convenience store, pharmacy, and restaurant. Multiple bus stops in Glyn Ceiriog will provide sustainable transportation options for guests to explore surrounding towns and villages.

The larger town of Chirk is approximately 7 miles east where guests can access further transport options via train along with more eating establishments and stores.

Many tourist spots and attractions are within a suitable travel distance to the site, such as Chirk Castle. It is perfectly suited for visitors looking to enjoy the natural beauty of this area and the proposal will create a significant economic benefit to the surrounding area and local businesses.



Figure 1. Aerial view of site location. Source: Bing Maps

3.2 Proposed Site Information

The proposed site is located on the outskirts of the settlement of Glyn Ceiriog and therefore predominantly in the countryside. The area also appears to be in a Special Landscape Area, much like other open areas of the county.

The site itself benefits from existing mature tree planting to the north, east, and west boundaries of the land.

River Ceiriog also runs along the western boundary of the site, there is some flood risk associated with the river which has been noted on the plans.

An existing footbridge and vehicle crossing provides safe access across the river. Guests will park on the west side of the river and use the existing footbridge to access the pods. Guests in pod 5 will use the existing road bridge to access their pod and follow an existing track towards their parking bay.

Some areas of the site are seen to be sloped and therefore will require some landscaping to create appropriate areas for the units.

The nearest neighbouring property is located west across the river. The units have been positioned to ensure no overlooking or risk to residential amenities is created. The existing tree planting provides a natural barrier to conceal the proposed development.



Figure 2. Aerial view of site. Source: Bing Maps

3.3 Site Access

The glamping site will be reached by following Llanarmon Road (B4500). It is felt that the additional traffic generated by the glamping site will not negatively impact other road users. The existing access is in good condition however is proposed to be widened for the purpose of this development. The access is shared by a neighbouring property however is under the ownership of the applicant.

Visibility in both directions from the site entrance onto the public road where the access lies perpendicular can be seen below in Figures 3 and 4.



Figure 3. Facing North on public road.



Figure 4. Facing South on public road.

3.4 Site Photos



1. Existing access joining the public road.



2 & 3. Existing access over water.





4 &5. Proposed site facing north.





6. Proposed site facing northwest.



7. Proposed site facing south.

3.5 Flood Risk

It has been identified from flood maps that partial areas of the site lie within areas at risk of flooding. Due to the proximity to the River Ceiriog, there are areas at risk of river flooding.

Figures 5 and 6 show the map and ownership boundaries of surface water and river flooding. A full flood risk assessment has been carried out and submitted as part of this application, please see the report for further information.

The units have been positioned in areas not at risk of flooding in flood zone A. This will ensure there is likely to be no change in flood risk elsewhere as a result of development.

As the site will not be used for permanent residential use the site will be closed in the event of any flood warning or weather warnings. The site will then not reopen until warnings have been lifted.

All hard landscaping will be constructed from permeable materials to allow water to freely infiltrate the ground. Likewise, a pebble border around the pods will be provided for roof run-off. See drawing 'Drainage Plan' for additional information.

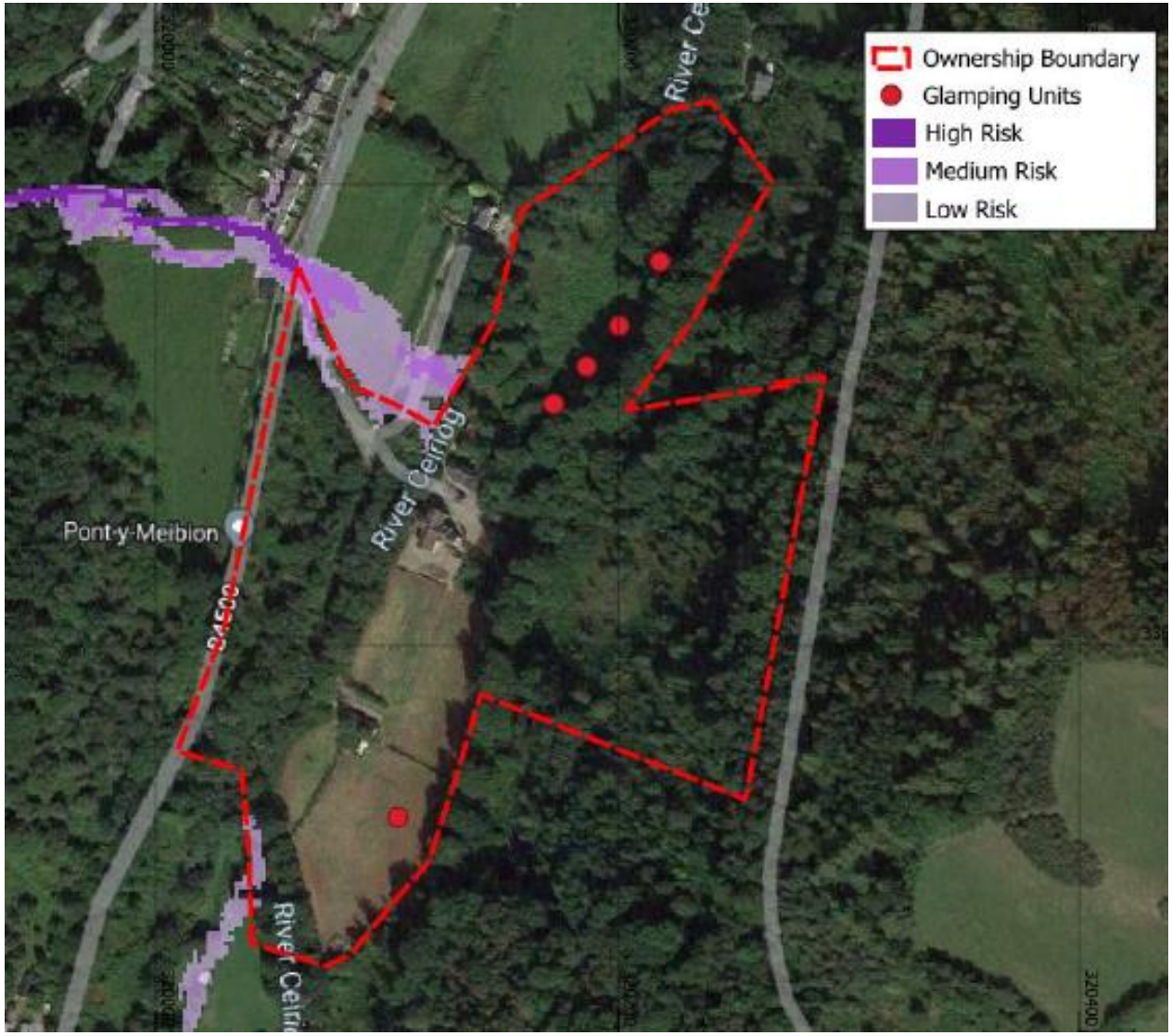


Figure 5. Extract of surface water flooding from Flood Risk Assessment.

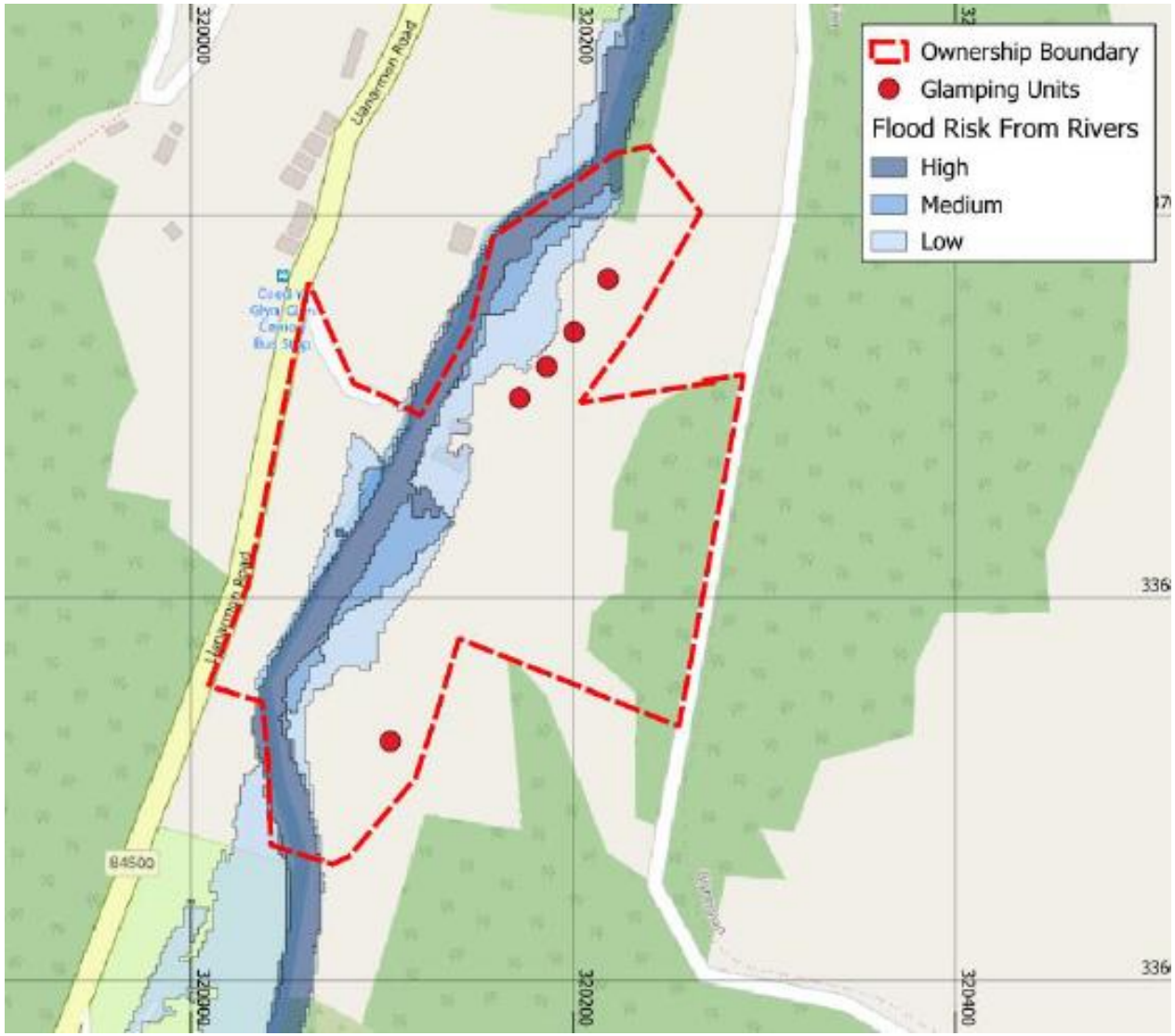


Figure 6. Extract of river flooding from Flood Risk Assessment.

3.6 Public Rights of Way

No public rights of way will be affected by this proposal either during construction or after completion.

The site is well located for guests to explore walks in the area and also to walk into the village of Glyn Ceiriog.

The surrounding public right-of-way footpaths in the area will allow guests to easily explore the area on foot or bicycle, reducing the need for cars. These routes will be promoted within the pods to encourage guest use and to provide insights into the local area.

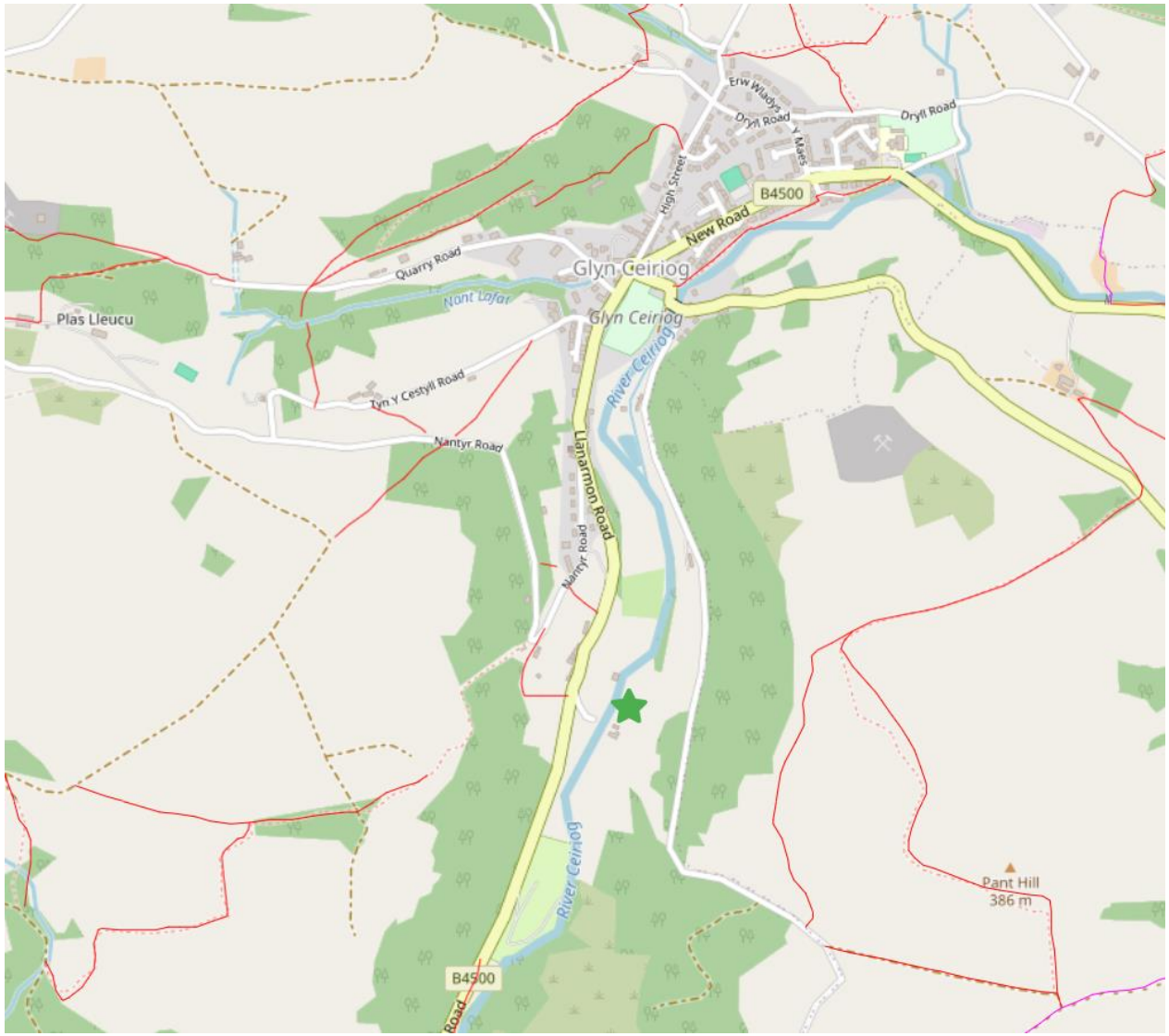


Figure 7. Map of Public rights of way – site indicated by green star. Source: footpathmap.co.uk

3.7 Justification for Proposed Use

The proposed glamping site will offer contemporary, luxury holiday accommodation to visitors within a suitable travel distance of Wrexham and further afield across the country, thus being suitable for weekend trips and short stays.

The area and surroundings are rich in tourist attractions. Nearby towns and villages offer plenty of cafes, restaurants, and local shops for guests to visit and as such, the proposal will create an economic benefit to local businesses and services. The proposed accommodation will allow visitors to spend time outdoors to relax in a natural setting as well as explore the surrounding area.

The site will offer a unique experience for guests and stand out from competitors due to the proposed units being bespoke and one-of-a-kind.

Glamping installations require minimal groundwork and non-harmful construction practices. We, therefore, believe the proposed small-scale glamping pods, built from natural materials, will provide an ecologically viable accommodation solution, suited to the area.

The concept of luxury glamping is now gaining popularity throughout the UK, with standards and guests' expectations on the rise. This site is intended to be amongst the best available in the area and provide an exciting new alternative, offering guests a secluded retreat in nature and high-quality, modern glamping accommodation.

4.0 Design



Proposed pods 1 – 3.

4.1 Proposed Layout

The existing access from Llanarmon Road will direct guests to a new parking area located on the western side of the river. From here guests will follow the existing bridge over the river towards the proposed glamping area. Refuse and recycling bins have been proposed outside the parking area for easy access.

Once over the bridge, guests will follow permeable footpaths towards the guest pods. Pods 1, 2, 4 and 5 will face towards the river with pod 3 facing east towards the trees so no overlooking of neighbouring properties occurs. A communal sauna has been proposed for guest use.

The 5th pod is located further south adjacent to old stables and will have a private sauna surrounded by new native planting.

The existing flood risk on site has been considered when designing the layout, all pods are located out of this zone and will therefore not be at risk if an unlikely flooding event occurs.

Biodiversity enhancements such as hedgerows, tree planting, and shrubs have been proposed around the site to help integrate the units further and to improve the biodiversity on site.

Secure bike storage has been proposed to promote and encourage the use of bikes by guests when exploring the area. A service hut is also proposed to house an honesty shop and also a communal AED machine and anaphylaxis kits. See drawing 'Proposed Layout Plan' for further information.



Figure 8. Proposed Layout Plan

4.2 Landscaping

The proposed site has an upward slope running from west to east. As a result, some minor levelling may be required to create suitable footings for the pods (small footings or ground screws). Where needed, a minor cut-and-fill exercise will be carried out so there will be no need for the removal of any earth from the site. Any broken ground will be re-instated (turfed where required).

The intention is to maintain the existing topography of the site, thus preventing the need for any retaining structures. The pods will be installed on adjacent ground levels and, therefore will be at varying levels relative to each other.

The design of the glamping site has been developed with landscaping, ecology and biodiversity at the forefront. Landscape features include:

- Introducing a new native hedgerow throughout the site of the site for screening and habitat creation for small mammals and birds.
- Providing habitat opportunities with the installation of dead wood piles as well as bat and bird boxes.
- Minimising lighting to avoid disturbance to wildlife and dark skies.
- Native tree and shrub planting around the units.

4.3 Drainage Strategy

The grey water from each unit will be connected to a new package water treatment plant and soakaway, located south of the site beside pod 5. See drawing 'Drainage Plan' for further information. An EcoFlo non-electric sewage treatment plant will be installed for the grey water, this is a sustainable wastewater treatment system which will be suitable for at least 20 people.

Each pod will be fitted with an incinerating toilet. The chosen model will be the Cinderella Comfort toilet which requires a 10A electric supply and is a water-free toilet. The model has a closed-air system where fresh air for the incineration process is supplied via a separate air pipe.

New vehicular track and parking/turning area are to be constructed with a porous build-up on free-draining stone. All new footpaths are to be constructed with a build-up of permeable gravel with timber borders.

All pods are to have a 250mm wide by a min 200mm deep gravel border to all draining sides.

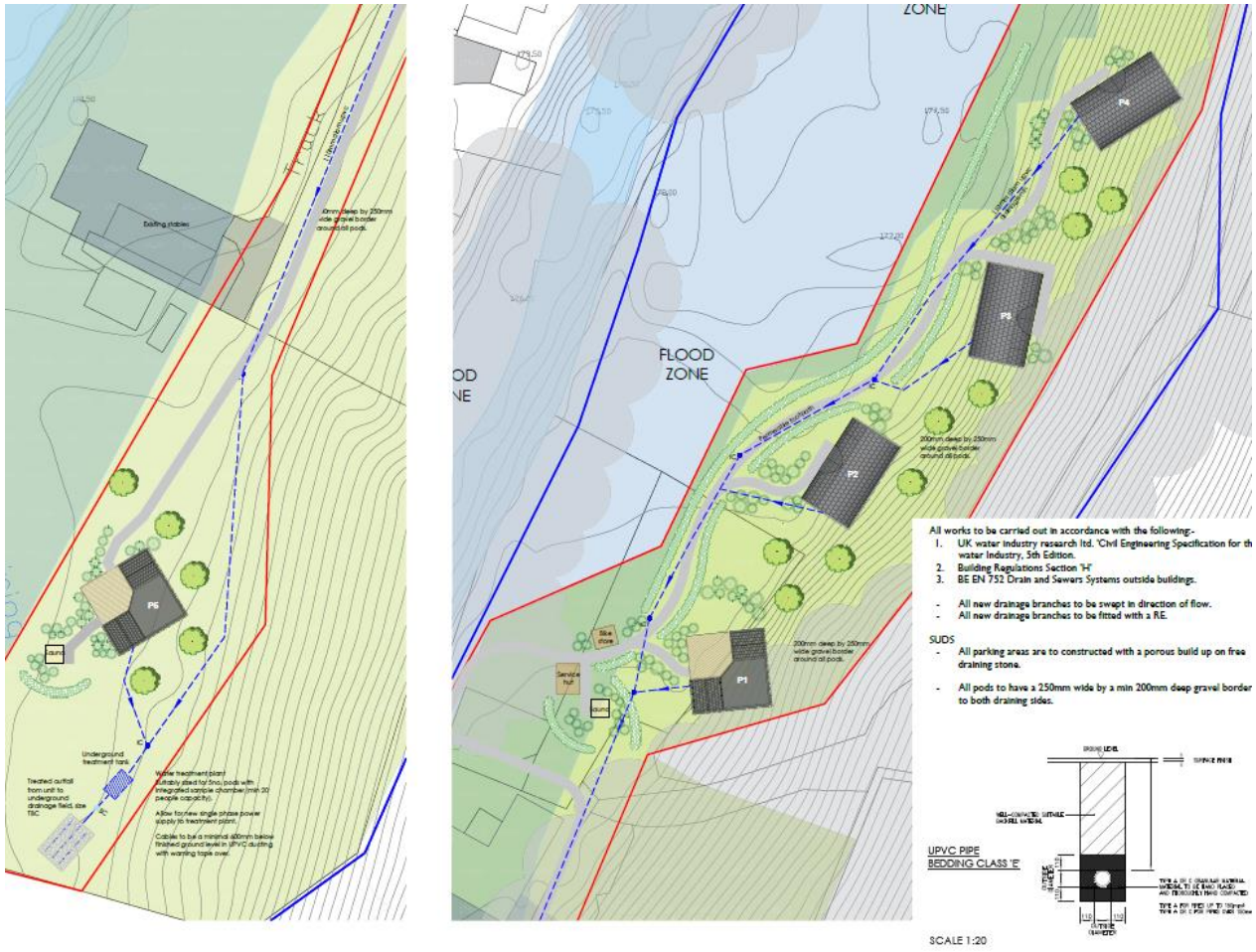


Figure 9. Proposed Drainage Plan

4.4 Lighting Strategy

9 no. LED lighting bollards with PIR sensor will be provided along footpaths for safety when walking at night.

The chosen lighting will minimise effects on local wildlife, not cause disruption to neighbours and is suitable for use in dark sky areas.

Benefits of low-level lighting bollards:

- LED mains are wired.
- Low-level height, only 40cm high.
- LED bulbs installed into this pillar lamp are in such a manner that they shine downwards onto cascading reflectors, keeping all light at low level.
- Integrated PIR sensor, keeping light levels low and only on when required.
- Range 2-8metres, set at 5m as shown.
- Lighting duration (5 seconds to 6 minutes) are configurable.
- Detects movement at an angle of 90 degrees.



Figure 10. Lighting Plan

4.5 Proposed Units

5 no. high-quality glamping pods are to be installed, to be constructed off-site and delivered as full units. Two pod designs have been chosen, allowing guests to have a variety of booking options. See drawing 'Pod Plan and Elevations' for more details.

The units are considered to be temporary structures and have been designed to meet the specifications to be defined as a caravan under the Caravan Act. A single-story unit (approx. 3m internal height) so no restriction of neighbouring views will occur, given their proposed locations and the surrounding properties they shall be out of sight from exterior views.

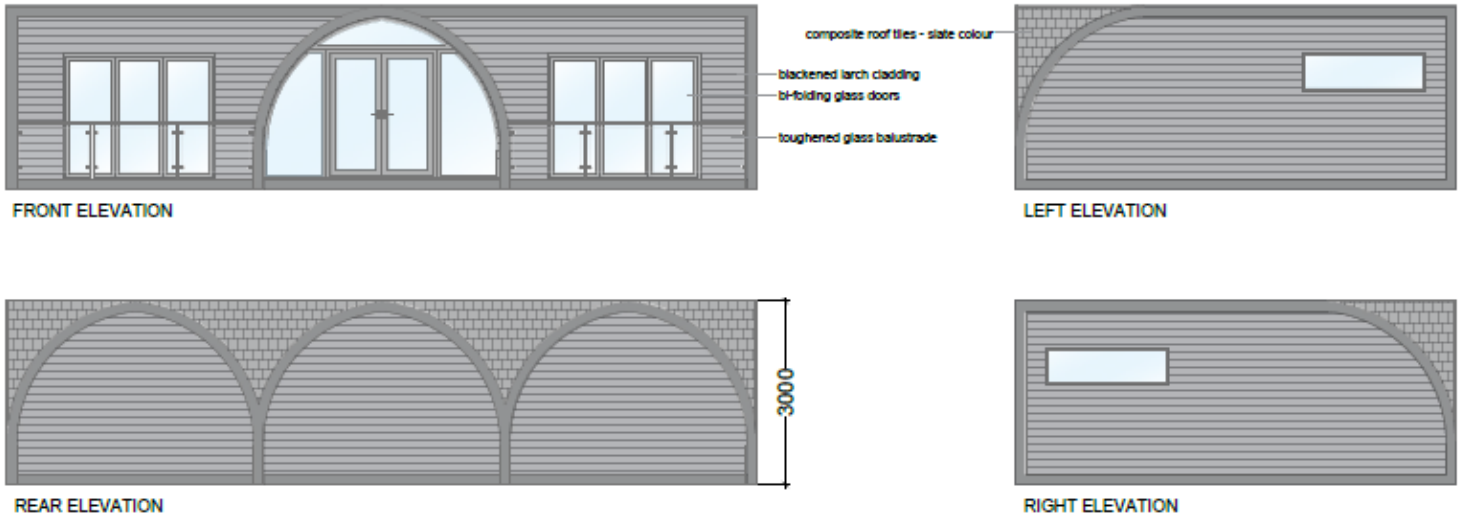


Figure 11. Proposed pod drawings

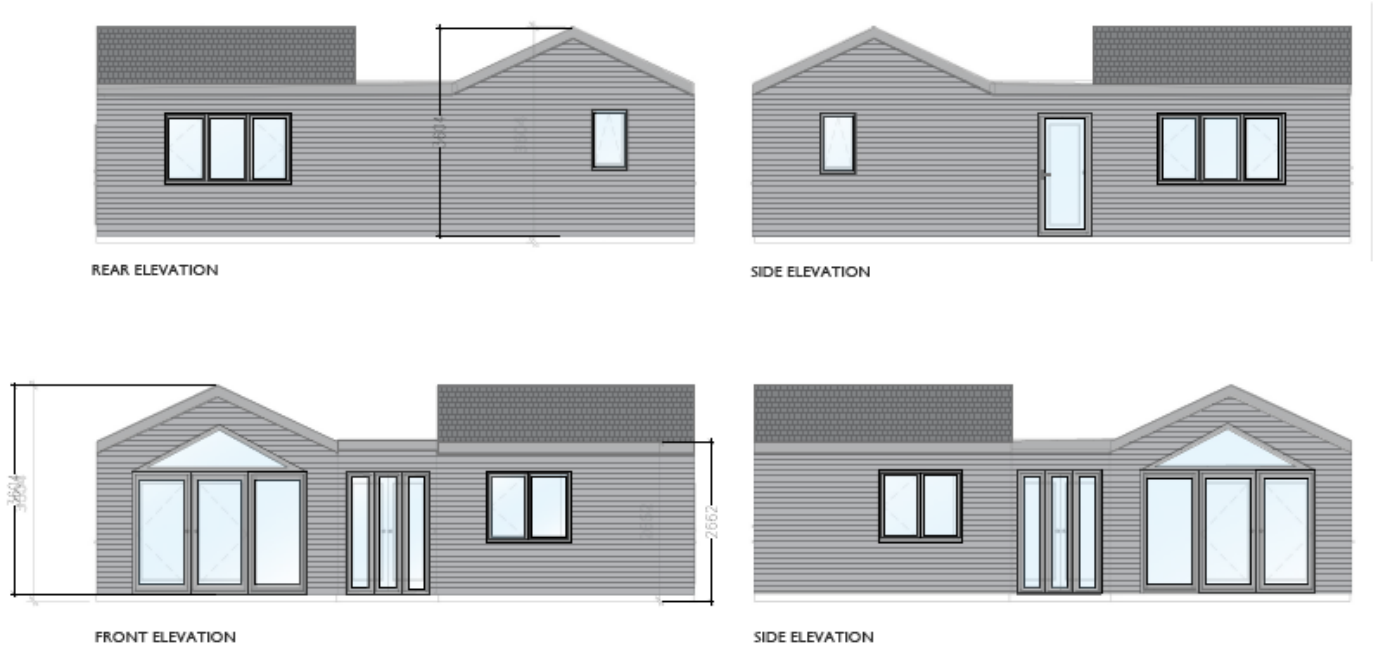


Figure 12. Proposed pod drawings

4.6 Use

The site will be operated as a typical (year-round) holiday let, with the glamping pods being rented out on a per-nightly basis. Patrons will likely be couples and small families as the chosen target markets by the site operators. Party groups will not be permitted.

The site will be marketed as a peaceful and relaxing retreat in nature, which should mean noise from guests is not a consideration, with minimal likelihood of noise and disruption to neighbouring properties and road users etc.

The units will also not be used as a long-term lease / permanent residence.

Land Usage Item	Area Used	% Of Site
Ownership Area (Blue Line Boundary)	50,400 m^2	-
Site Area (Red Line Boundary)	8,800 m^2	17.5 % (of blue line)
Green Space – After Site Build	7,128 m^2	81 % (of red line)
Existing access track	780 m^2	8.9 %
Glamping Pods (5no. units)	403 m^2	4.5 %
Additional structures	34 m^2	0.4 %
Parking and turning area	190 m^2	2.2 %
Permeable Footpaths	265 m^2	3 %

4.7 Installation

4.7.1 Stage 1 – Access

The minimal increase in traffic associated with the glamping site will have a negligible impact on the surrounding area with a maximum of 5 no. vehicles on-site at any one time. The existing access is of suitable condition to provide easy and safe vehicle access, this is proposed to be widened for guest use. The existing access will provide initial access for the installation of plant and services and will then become the main visitor access as well as provide access for any maintenance vehicles when the site is in operation.

4.7.2 Stage 2 - Groundwork

The slightly sloping gradient across the site will mean some minor groundwork may be required to level the ground for the footings of the units. The existing topography will be retained, with no retaining walls or structures required.

All units will have incinerating toilets and the grey water will connect to a new package treatment plant. See drawing 'Proposed Drainage Plan' for further information. Service ducting will be laid for power, water, and telecoms as required. Pipework will be run for water and cables for electricity and telecoms will be pulled. All service installation and groundwork will be conducted by local contractors.

4.7.3 Stage 3 – Unit Install

5 no. pods are to be prefabricated off-site and delivered as full units, ready to connect to services. By manufacturing the pods off-site, construction waste will be kept to a minimum and a high-quality finish can be achieved more easily than traditional construction. The choice of glamping pods aims to minimise disruption to the site as much as possible due to their temporary nature.

Any new native hedgerow, shrubbery and wildflowers planted will match species of the local area as closely as possible.

4.7.4 Stage 4 – Roads, Parking & Clean up

No more plant/transport access is required other than to build up the parking/ turning area and footpaths. These will be constructed with permeable materials to avoid the use of concrete/tarmac and a dedicated surface water drainage system.

Finally, a total clear-out of the site will be carried out to ensure no leftover waste from the build stage is left. All cleaning waste will be recycled where possible and safely disposed of otherwise.



Proposed pods 1 and 2.

5.0 Sustainability

The glamping pods are designed and manufactured to be energy efficient, using materials with a low environmental impact such as reclaimed wood, recycled materials, or composite materials made from recycled content wherever possible. Additionally, locally sourced materials will be used as much as possible. Low VOC (volatile organic compound) paints and finishes will be employed to ensure good indoor air quality. Floors and walls will be well-insulated with high-quality insulation to minimise heat loss during colder seasons and reduce the need for heating or cooling. Double glazing will be utilised throughout to also reduce heat loss. LED light fittings will be installed as standard throughout.

Water-saving sanitary fittings and appliances within the units will deliver water efficiency to the site. A sustainable surface water drainage strategy (SuDS) will be implemented across the site with all hard landscaping to be constructed from permeable materials to allow water to freely infiltrate the ground without the need of a dedicated surface water drainage system. Minimal surface water run-off from the pods will discharge into pebble borders around the units.

Appropriate implementation of measures will minimise environmental impacts arising from any site works; the site will be constructed with efficient construction methods as stated in Stage 3 above thus reducing any waste and carefully considered groundworks will result in no removals required from the site. The site has been designed to integrate harmoniously with the surrounding natural environment to minimise disruption and preserve natural features.

An efficient operational waste management and recycling strategy will be carried out by the operator as required by the council. The waste and recycling bins will be located near the parking area for easy access by guests and will be moved to the public roadside by the site operator on collection days.

6.0 Summary

The proposed glamping site will provide a new and exciting accommodation option for the surrounding area, offering a unique relaxing and sustainable stay in nature. Demand for this type of rural accommodation is high throughout the country, which has also been shown to be true of other glamping sites within this part of the country.

The development will increase footfall for local businesses and through correct marketing, should increase the length of time tourists remain in the local area. This will be beneficial to the local economy including tourist attractions, restaurants, other businesses and local services. The Applicant intends to build relationships with local businesses in the area to offer their goods and services to guests, including taxi services, shops, cafes, and restaurants to name but a few. The operator will promote these services within the pods, along with providing the guests with local knowledge of the many beauty spots to visit, allowing them to connect with nature and the surrounding area.

The operator also intends to use local businesses where possible to carry out groundworks and installation of services, utilising local suppliers and local labour. The development will also support local employment with the creation of 3 part-time roles for site cleaning and maintenance.

The construction of a glamping site in this location using glamping pods with a small footprint and of a temporary nature can be achieved in less time, with less intrusive construction methods and less environmental impact, than traditional permanent tourist accommodation builds require. This is clearly favourable in an area of countryside rich in natural beauty.

Through a thoughtful and considered approach, the design for this proposal emphasises the integration of a small-scale glamping development with the natural landscape to ensure a comfortable and enjoyable experience for all guests. The project aims to promote sustainability and a harmonious connection between the built environment and the rural surroundings. Based on the points discussed throughout this document, it is reasonable to suggest that the proposed glamping accommodation is warranted in this location, to cater for increasing visitor demand, without sacrificing the area's beauty, ecology or heritage assets.