Hanmer Touring Park, Hamner SY13 3DE

Section 73 application to amend condition 3 of planning permission ref: P/2020/0100 regarding period of opening of the site

Supporting Statement

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Prepared by:
RICHARD LEE PROJECT PLANNING

Client:
Carlton Property Holdings Ltd

Date:
21st October 2024

RLPP
Richard Lee Project Planning

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 RLPP has been instructed to submit this Section 73 application to amend condition 3 of planning permission ref: P/2020/0100 regarding period of opening of Hanmer Touring Park

1.2 The current condition 3 states:

"This permission shall operate between the months of April 1st and October 1st only."

1.3 The reason for imposing the condition was:

"In the interest of safeguarding the visual amenity of the area in accordance with UDP Policy GDP1"

1.4 It is proposed to amend this condition as follows:

"The approved touring caravan park shall be occupied for holiday purposes only and shall not be occupied as a person's sole or main place of residence and not for the storage of caravans which are not in use. No person(s) shall occupy the approved caravan pitches for a continuous period of more than 28 days at a time and they shall not be re-occupied by the same person(s) within 28 days following the end of that period. The owners/operators shall maintain an up-to-date register of the names of all visitors and of their main home address and shall make this information available at all reasonable times to the Local Planning Authority."

1.5 The purpose of this statement is to explain the reasons for seeking to extend the period of opening the touring park and to address any potential amenity issues in terms of the relevant legislation, national policy and the development.

Community and Statutory Involvement

1.6 No specific community involvement has been undertaken with regard to the proposal because the caravan park has already been approved and the nature of the proposed change is minor.

2. CURRENT POSITION & JUSTIFICATION

2.1 Construction of the touring park and its associated amenity building, accessways and landscaping has been completed in accordance with the approved plans and discharged planning conditions. A copy of the Building Control Completion Certificate for the amenity building is provided at Appendix 1. The park is unable to open at present due to the period of opening restriction imposed by condition 3.

2.2 As explained in the information submitted in support of the approved application, an important factor in developing the park was to contribute to the continuing viability of Hanmer Arms by providing a wider choice of accommodation options to suit different tourist needs than those already catered for. The importance of tourism in supporting local businesses is not limited to the period stipulated in condition 3. People with touring caravans are wanting to visit touring parks throughout the year, including the winter period. This will support the ongoing viability of Hanmer Arms which is an important community facility for local people and other local businesses. Instead of seasonal employment, it will ensure continued employment in operating the site throughout the year. The proposed extension of the park's opening season safeguards existing employment positions, creates additional employment opportunities, brings additional disposable income into the area and provides sustainability for the Hanmer Arms.

2.3 Whilst the park's operation is currently restricted to an 8-month period each year, it will be Business Rated across the full year by the Valuation Office. This will have a considerable impact upon its viability and sustainability. Similar caravan parks in the area are not restricted to the short season and are only limited to being open to an 11-month season to ensure that the caravan pitches do not become residentially occupied on a permanent basis. The proposed amended condition 3 addresses this point.

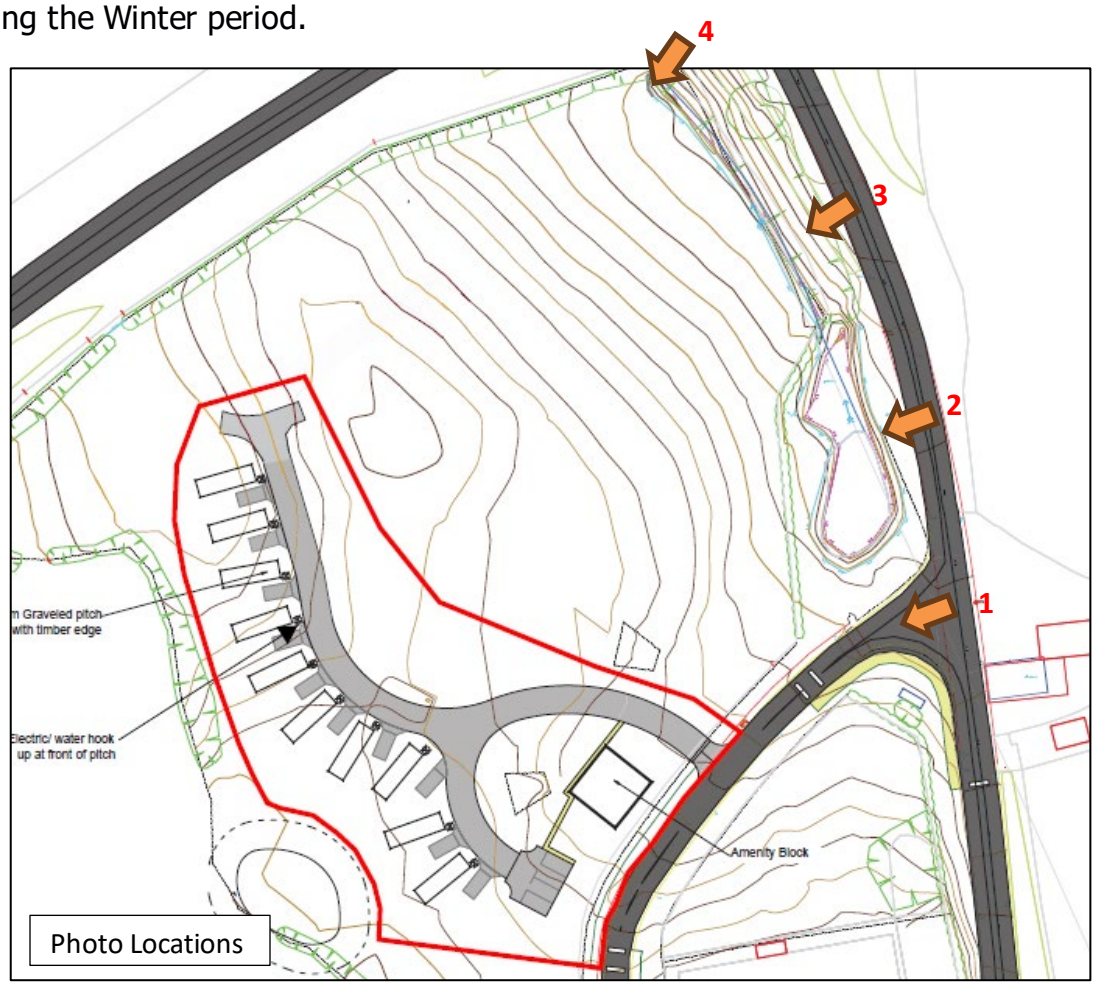
2.4 It is recognised that the reason for imposing condition was to safeguard visual amenity. However, it is contended that the local economic benefits of opening the park throughout the year outweigh this consideration. Furthermore, the LVIA submitted with the approved application systematically assessed the visual impact of the park. At para 5.2.3 it advised:

> "In general, there are few locations in the surrounding area from where the site is visible due to the enclosure provided by intervening topography, built form and vegetation, including, hedges and trees on the site boundaries. Views of the site are limited to locations in close proximity to, and on the boundaries of, the development and the site cannot be openly viewed from the wider area. Views toward the site from publicly accessible locations tend to be glimpsed and are often heavily filtered by the intervening topography, built form, mature trees and hedgerows."

2.5 The Planning Officer's report took a similar position with regard to the park's visual impact, subject to the implementation of supplemental landscaping (now completed). However, the Planning Officer considered that existing screening would be reduced during winter months and imposed a condition to restrict the operating period of the site to exclude the Winter months.

2.6 The photographs on the following pages are views towards/across the park taken in February 2023 from the locations that were considered to be the most open, particularly during the Winter period, i.e. the period when condition 3 requires the site to be closed. Photograph 1 shows the site entrance viewed from the junction of the Hanmer Arms access road with Hanmer Village Road. Whilst it is acknowledged that there were no caravans on the site at the time this photo was taken, the approved amenity building is the most visually prominent structure. This permanent structure was not considered to be an issue visually in determining the application.

2.7 The majority of the caravan pitches are set into the ground beyond the ridge which traverses the site from north to south. Touring caravans would therefore be largely screened from this direction by the amenity building and the site's topography, even during the Winter period.



2.8 Photographs 2 and 3 are taken from location on Hanmer Village Road across the site in a south westerly direction. Again, the majority of the caravan pitches are set into the ground beyond the ridge which traverses the site. Touring caravans would therefore be largely screened from this direction by the site's topography and intervening hedgerows and trees which include ivy and other evergreen species, even during the Winter period. The approved mixed woodland planting belt will provide additional screening.

2.9 Photograph 4 is taken from the junction of Hanmer Village Road and the A539 across the site in a south westerly direction. Again, the majority of the caravan pitches are set into the ground beyond the ridge which traverses the site. Touring caravans would therefore be largely screened from this direction by the site's topography and intervening hedgerows and trees which include ivy which is an evergreen species. The approved mixed woodland planting belt will provide additional screening.



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4

3. ASSESSMENT

3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan for the area unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.2 The current Development Plan for this area comprises the Wrexham LDP covering the period 2013 to 2028. It forms part of the statutory development plan alongside "Future Wales: The National Plan 2040".

3.3 The following planning policies are relevant to development:

Policy SP2	Location of Development
Policy SP9	Economic Growth Employment and Enterprise
Policy SP15	Natural Environment
Policy SP16	Historic and Cultural Environment
Policy SP20	Green Infrastructure
Policy DM1	Development Management Considerations
Policy NE1	International & Nationally Designated Nature Conservation Sites
Policy NE2	Locally Designated Sites of Nature Conservation Importance
Policy NE3	Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows
Policy NE5	Special Landscape Areas
Policy EM5	Visitor Accommodation Outside Settlement Limits

3.4 The principle of a touring caravan park in this location has already been established by the planning permission ref: P/2020/0100. The reason for imposing the condition 3 referred to safeguarding the visual amenity of the area in accordance with the now superseded UDP Policy GDP1 – "General Development Principles".

3.5 LDP Policy EM5: "Visitor Accommodation Outside Settlement Limits", at sub para c), supports new touring caravan and camping sites provided that:

i. The scale, form and location of the development does not have a harmful effect on the character of the countryside.

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

3.6 The previously submitted LVIA identified the existing landscape character and visual amenity resource, including Hanmer Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings. It considered the likely effects of the proposals upon this baseline situation. It then went on to systematically consider the residual effects of the application proposals on the landscape character and the visual amenity of the area. It concluded that the site has capacity to accommodate the proposed development and that any resultant effects on landscape and views would be slight and hardly perceptible from the surrounding area. Furthermore, the LVIA advised that there was significant scope to include landscaping

as additional screening. In view of the findings in respect of the approved application regarding its impact upon visual amenity, the previously submitted LVIA and the information provided in paras 2.1-2.9 of this Supporting Statement, it is contended that the proposed revisions to condition 3 will not result in an adverse impact upon visual amenity.

3.7 It is also noted that Policy EM5 provides greater flexibility with regard to screening than the now superseded UDP Policy CLF10. The reports accompanying planning permission ref: P/2020/0100 demonstrated that the application proposals would not have an adverse impact upon the local landscape, Hanmer Conservation Area, wildlife habitats nor or other features of acknowledged importance.

3.8 LDP Policy SP9 promotes the diversification of the local economy and the widening of the economic base by a range of measures, including:

> "Maintaining and enhancing the County Borough's tourism, culture and leisure offer taking into account the unique character, local distinctiveness and heritage of the area and its context in the wider sub region."

3.9 The proposed extension of the site's period of opening is further supported by guidance encouraging tourism contained within "Future Wales: The National Plan 2040" which is supportive of tourism and rural diversification.

3.10 The local visitor economy helps to sustain the local community and businesses (Hanmer Arms, village shops: butcher, post office) in terms of income and jobs. In the absence of a range of accommodation facilities available throughout the year, visitors are staying elsewhere, including in Shropshire and Cheshire, which means that the local and Welsh economy is not maximizing its potential returns from visitors to the area. The proposed extension of the park's opening period will support increased investment in both Hanmer Arms and other village businesses, thereby further improving its sustainability. It is therefore contended that the application proposal accords to current Development Plan and national policies in this regard.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 There are no other material considerations that would outweigh the planning benefits of the proposed extension to the touring park's opening period. Any concerns regarding the site being permanently residentially occupied are fully addressed in the proposed amendment to condition 3. The planning balance is weighed strongly in support of the application proposal. Wrexham County Borough Council is therefore respectfully requested to support this proposal.

APPENDIX 1

Final Certificate

QUADRANT BUILDING CONTROL
A SOCOTEC COMPANY

Section 51 of the Building Act 1984 ("The Act")
The Building (Approved Inspectors etc.) Regulations 2010 ("The Regulations")

1	This certificate relates to the following work: **Detached Amenity Building** **Land to the north of Hanmer Arms, Hanmer, Whitchurch, Shropshire, SY13 3DE** (see exclusions**)	**Ref:** 22-71953 **Date:** 27/09/2024
2	We, Quadrant Building Control, are an Approved Inspector, and the work described above was [the whole]/[~~part~~] of the work described in an Initial Notice given by us and dated 09/02/2022 [~~and amended on~~]	
3	Subject to what is said in paragraph 4 below, the work described above has been completed and we have performed the functions assigned to us by regulation 8 of the 2010 Regulations.	
4	[~~The work described above involves the insertion of insulating material into a cavity wall and this [has]/[has not] been carried out.~~]	
5	[A Final Certificate has now been issued in respect of all the work described in the Initial Notice referred to in paragraph 2 above.]	
6	A copy of the notice of approval as an approved inspector under regulation 5 of the 2010 Regulations in relation to the work described in this final certificate is on the register kept by the body designated under regulation 3 of the 2010 Regulations.	
7	The work [~~is~~]/[is not] minor work	Regulation 9(5) of the Regulations
8	We, Quadrant Building Control, have had no professional or financial interest in the work described above since giving the Initial Notice described in paragraph 2 above.	
9	This certificate is evidence (but not conclusive evidence) that the requirements specified in the certificate have been complied with.	

Quadrant Building Control the registered building control approver confirm that none of the work to which this certificate relates is higher-risk building work.

Kat Forte
Quadrant Building Control

Date: 27/09/2024

****Excluding any works carried out in accordance with the self-certified scheme. As defined in Schedule 3 (Competent Person Scheme) Building Regulations 2010 as amended.**
****Excluding any works carried out under the Gas Safety (installation and use) Regulations 1998**

RICS abca

Quadrant Building Control is the trading name of QAI Services Ltd. Registered in England: Company No. 5970091.
Registered Office: Socotec House, Bretby Business Park, Burton-On-Trent, Derbyshire DE15 0YZ