

PLANNING STATEMENT RELATING TO PROPOSED WORKS AT:

Lady Margarets Park Caravan and Motorhome Club Site
Chirk
Wrexham
LL14 5AA

APRIL 2021

1.0 Introduction

This Planning Statement accompanies a planning application to Wrexham County Borough Council submitted by the Caravan and Motorhome Club (CAMC) in relation to the Lady Margarets Park CAMC Site.

The statement should be read in conjunction with the detailed Design and Access Statement accompanying this application.

Site designations

Map 4 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan shows the site to be within a special landscape area and the Magic Map application shows the site located within a World Heritage Site buffer zone.

2.0 Material considerations

The application site is an existing tourism site and policy considerations relating to the development therefore centre on the specific impacts of development and site reconfiguration.

The proposed development will improve the quality of this tourism site to the potential benefit of the local economy and environment.

The redevelopment is considered to comply with the policies of Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 2011.

As cited in TAN 24, the location within a World Heritage Site Buffer Zone is a material consideration. With this in mind the proposals have been specifically designed to be in keeping with the existing site in scale, layout and design with the substantial mature boundary planting retained to protect the World Heritage Site from any adverse visual impacts.

3.0 Site description

The site is an established tourism site, acquired by CAMC in 1973 and operating as a touring caravan site since. It is located to the west of Chirk adjacent to the grounds of Chirk Castle. Bordering the castle grounds and the caravan site is a strip of established, mature woodland known as The Belt, obscuring views of the site from the castle grounds.

Just past the north west corner of the site is the Grade 1 listed Chirk Castle gates, these are again extremely well screened from the site by significant mature woodland

To the south is the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, The structure is Grade I listed and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, a designation which also extends to the north of the site. The canal tunnel linking the two areas runs under a field also owned by the Club. Due to the local topography and significant woodland there are no views of the caravan site from either the aqueduct or the northern section of the World Heritage Site.

The site currently operates with 101 touring caravan pitches and the proposals will result in 98 touring caravan pitches and 8 tent pitches



Aerial view of site

4.0 Proposal

The proposal is for a major refurbishment of the site to bring it up to the latest standards and expectations of the Club's membership. Works will include:

1. Demolition of existing toilet block and replacement with new building in the same location
2. Internal refurbishment of the existing reception building

3. Reconfiguration of reception compound and replacement of dilapidated timber tractor store
4. Installation of additional assistant site manager accommodation unit and construction of new compound
5. Relocation of information room and installation of assistant site manager utility pod and new compound
6. Replacement of 17 grass pitches with 14 new all-weather, serviced and premium pitches
7. Conversion of 19 existing all-weather touring pitches to serviced and premium pitches
8. Creation of a new camping area with 8 tents and associated car park, included electric vehicle charging points.
9. Replacement of existing motorvan waste point and service point with all-weather pitch and service point
10. Replacement of existing service point with new motorvan waste point and service point
11. New play area

It should be noted that CAMC has received an increasing number of negative comments from its membership stating that the quality of the park and its services are not commensurate with the quality of provision across the wider estate.

The refurbishment proposal has been developed by CAMC, as a very experienced tourism operator, and the changes have been brought about to ensure that the needs of its members, and other users who are not members, are met.

CAMC wishes to ensure that the site is as popular as possible with its members and the application is brought forward on that basis; the application can therefore be considered to deliver a redeveloped site that provides the optimum level of occupancy for the site and therefore the greatest economic benefits that can be realised from it.

5.0 World Heritage Site buffer zone

The proposals for the site will improve it to the current standards expected by the CAMC membership in order to secure its long term popularity. Without significant investment it is felt the site occupancy will begin to decrease rapidly.

The proposals will ensure the site continues to attract visitors to the area and the sympathetic scale and nature of the proposals balance the needs of protection and conservation of the World Heritage Site with the interests of the local community and continued sustainable growth.

As previously stated, the the development will not impact on views in or out of the World Heritage Site

6.0 Adopted Development Plan

Policy PS2

The proposals will not be detrimental to the countryside, character, or the quality of the natural environment as this is a refurbishment of an existing touring caravan site with all proposed features in keeping with the existing site; new all-weather pitches will match the existing gravel topped pitches and the new toilet block will match the building it is replacing, being brick built with a tiled pitched roof.

Policy PS12

Construction of a new toilet block affords the opportunity to incorporate renewable technologies which will include photovoltaic panels, an air source heat pump for the space heating and heat recovery ventilation system.

Policy GDP1

Part a)

The proposed works have been designed to fit sympathetically with the existing site both in terms of location of the new toilet block, materials and scale of the proposals. The site is also extremely well screened from the surrounding area.

Part c)

The new toilet block will meet all latest building regulations, including Part L. Lighting will be low energy LED throughout with individual zones controlled by passive infrared sensors. All showers and taps will have flow restrictors fitted and the main male and female WC's will have dual flush cisterns to reduce water consumption. Water heaters will be high efficiency instantaneous units replacing the existing older water storage heaters.

The refurbishment of the reception building will also include LED lighting and reduced water flow outlets.

The car park provided for the camping area will have 2 additional spaces with electrical vehicle charging points to cater for the growing popularity in this type of vehicle.

Part d)

The existing access to the site will remain unchanged although the internal corner of the right-angle turn into the reception area will be eased to assist larger units to safely negotiate the site entrance.

The security barriers will be relocated to outside the reception area allowing site wardens to monitor their usage with a second entrance barrier added to reduce queuing at peak times.

The main site spine road from the entrance past the toilet block will be widened to 5.5m making it suitable for two way traffic. This will prevent a large portion of site traffic having to drive right around the site when leaving, reducing traffic movements past a large number of pitches.

All roads will remain as tarmac as this is considered the best surface to afford safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians.

Part k)

The proposed works are intended to secure the long term future and popularity of the site particularly by increasing particularly serviced pitch provision (pitches with a dedicated water supply and grey waste connection), for which demand across the Club network is growing quickly, and by replacing the toilet block which was last refurbished and extended in 2004. The design, layout and condition of the toilet block is such that it is not economically viable to bring it up to current CAMC and regulatory standards. In its current state it will need to be closed with a detrimental effect on the number of visitors to the site and local area.

Policy EC5

Replacement of the toilet block in the same location as existing and using the same materials will minimise the visual impact of the new building. Refurbishing the reception within its existing footprint will have no detrimental visual impact. The site has significant mature woodland to its boundaries and the development does not constitute an increase in intensification of usage, merely a much needed refurbishment of existing facilities to bring them in line with the latest member expectations and relevant regulations.

Policy EC13

The all-weather touring pitches replacing existing grass pitches will be of porous construction, with a gravel top dressing and will not add to surface water run off.

Policy CLF10

The proposals do not constitute an extension to the existing touring caravan site.

The site is considered unobtrusive and well screened and additional perimeter landscaping is not required to screen the site from the surrounding area.

7.0 Conclusion

The proposed refurbishment of Lady Margarets Park CAMC Site is considered to comply with the policies of Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 2011 and Local Planning Guidance Note 33.