

- We ask Powys County Council to refuse this Planning Application and encourage The Camping & Caravan Club to engage in dialogue with the local population of Rhayader and discuss the possibility of promoting the current camping arrangements with not only their members but seasonal visitors to Rhayader.

Councillor David Evans

Received 25th October 2017

I refer to the above Planning Application which is to be considered tomorrow Thursday 26th October 2017 by the Powys Planning Committee.

As a local Powys County Councillor I write to inform you that I wish to again convey my opposition to this Planning Application and would like to re-iterate the valid planning reasons for doing so as outlined in my previous email dated 23rd August 2017.

In addition I would like to make the following comments :-

To recommend granting approval for further development in a highly vulnerable flood zone cannot be acceptable. As you will know the camping field lies entirely within a Flood Zone C 2 which is the most extreme zone of the floodplain. The application must therefore be refused - to do otherwise would be irresponsible and negligent and could have serious consequences for the County Council and indeed the tenants of the site in the future. To deliberately expose persons to additional dangers which the Planning Authority are fully aware cannot be the way forward. Everyone knows that this site floods on a regular basis and you have been presented with recent photographic evidence which proves this fact. Please remember that YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

The site is situated in a particularly beautiful area adjoining the upper River Wye in a cherished landscape. To agree to cover this lovely green field with gravel and tarmac would destroy the landscape and would be an act of vandalism.

To plant a hedge alongside the River Wye to hide the gorgeous views over the river which people come to enjoy would be crazy and demonstrate what little respect the applicants have for our countryside.

I cannot see how this application can be considered tomorrow because there is no indication of the exact location of the 30 tented pitches. The existing plan shows no provision for tented pitches. You will be aware that I emailed you recently requesting this information but I, and indeed others who have asked for the same information, have received neither a reply nor an acknowledgement. This is very disappointing.

There are no caravan pitches on the site at present and there never have been so the description on the application could be considered to be misleading for the NRW and others.

The Flood Management and Evacuation Plan should be produced before consideration of the application. It is also interesting to note that this has to be approved by Powys CC who owns the land!

I am very concerned that Powys County Council should be deciding a major application for development on land owned by the Council and leased out to the Council's tenants, who are the applicants, on very favourable terms. There has to be a conflict of interest there somewhere which needs to be investigated.

I have doubts about the way the application has been processed in that the Rhayader Town Council, as a statutory consultee, has not been consulted on the revised/amended application and given the normal 21 day period to respond.

The proposal to extend the season is a big issue that has been buried within the present application and should be the subject of a separate application.

I am fast coming to the view that the procedure adopted in this case should be a matter for a special scrutiny review.

In conclusion I wish to support entirely the representations made to you and members of the Planning Committee by the Rhayader Town Council in their email dated 25th October 2017.

Please ensure that members of the Planning Committee receive a copy of this email today so that they have sufficient time to consider the issues raised.

Rhayader Town Council

Received 25th October 2017

Please see Appendix 1. for Rhayader Town Council letter of objection.

Received 13th November 2017

Please see Appendix 2. for Rhayader Town Council letter of objection.

Officer Appraisal

An update report was taken to the Planning, Taxi Licensing and Rights of Way Committee Report on the 26th October 2017. It was advised that the Committee was not quorate and therefore could not consider the application. The application is now to be considered in full at the 16th November 2017 meeting.

Recommendation

Whilst this report forms an update to the original report and the update report prepared for the 26th October 2017 meeting, it is considered that the recommendation remains the same.

It is recommended that an amendment is made to Condition 3 to state "*Within a month of the implementation of this consent, a Flood Management and Evacuation Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and to be fully implemented thereafter*".

In addition, the former Condition 11 has been removed which read:

11. Notwithstanding the approved drawings, full details (including design and materials) of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any works:-

- (a) The proposed hardstanding areas**
- (b) The new road**

The proposed hardstanding areas and new road details have already been submitted as part of the full application and are therefore approved under Condition 2.

As outlined in the previous update report (dated 26th October 2017), Officers consider that the proposal broadly complies with planning policy and therefore recommendation is one of conditional approval subject to the inclusion of appropriately worded conditions.

Conditions

- 1. The development to which this permission relates shall be begun no later than the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.**
- 2. The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the plans and supporting documents stamped as approved on **XXXX**, Amended Layout Plan Drawing No. WYE/000/17 Rev C (received 13th October 2017), Hardstanding detail STD.15, Tarmacadam Road / Pathway Detail STAND/0009, Bin Store STAND/010, Site manager pitch STAND/016/CED, Service Area STD.04, Motorhome service point combined with service area STAND/030, Hook up bollard and plinth detail STAND/028, Construction Method Statement (May 2017), Information to support an Assessment of Likely Significant Effects under the Habitat Regulations (June 2017), Flood Procedure and Policy (as amended) received 14th March 2017, Biodiversity Enhancement Report (June 2017), Flood Risk Consequences Assessment (January 2017), Clarification Statement (received on 12th September 2017).**
- 3. Within a month of the implementation of this consent, a Flood Management and Evacuation Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and to be fully implemented thereafter.**
- 4. The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the measures identified regarding Pollution Prevention within the Construction Method Statement produced by Camping and Caravanning Club date May 2017 and maintained thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**
- 5. The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the measures identified in Section 4.0 - Retention and Enhancement: Habitats and Section 5.0 - Mitigation and Enhancement: Protected Species of the Biodiversity Enhancement Report produced by WYG dated June 2017 and maintained thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA.**
- 6. Prior to the occupation of the development a detailed Landscaping and Management Plan shall be submitted to and agreed with the Local Planning Authority and shall be implemented in the first planting season following occupation of the development. The Plan shall include the use of native species, details of the planting specification – the species, sizes and**

planting densities – and a timetable for implementation and future management to ensure good establishment and long-term retention

7. No external lighting, with the exception of electric hook-up bollards, shall be installed unless a detailed external lighting design scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The external lighting scheme shall identify measures to avoid impacts on nocturnal wildlife. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

8. The site manager's pitch is to be a temporary residential pitch for a time period of three years from the implementation of this planning permission. Upon the expiry of temporary time period, the pitch shall cease to be occupied and the land shall be restored to its former condition.

9. The development shall be occupied as holiday accommodation only and shall not be occupied as a person's sole or main place of residence or by any persons exceeding a period of 28 days in any calendar year. An up to date register shall be kept at the Wyeside Caravan Park as shown on site layout plan drawing No. WYE/000/17 Rev C. and be made available for inspection by the local planning authority upon request. The register shall contain details of the names of all of the occupiers of the tourers, tented camping and motorhome accommodation, their main home addresses and their date of arrival and departure from the site.

10. Prior to the commencement of development contoured plans of the site and immediately adjoining land and cross sections through the site itself sufficient to demonstrate the existing and proposed levels including finished levels of the proposed road shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and to be fully implemented thereafter.

Reasons

1. Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. To ensure adherence to the plans stamped as approved in the interests of clarity and a satisfactory development.

3. To ensure all occupants of the park are aware and informed of the measures to take prior to a possible flood event.

4. To comply with Powys County Council's UDP Policies SP3, ENV2, ENV3, ENV4, ENV5, ENV6 and ENV7 in relation to The Natural Environment and to meet the requirements of Planning Policy Wales (Edition 9, November 2016), TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning and Part 1 Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

5. To comply with Powys County Council's UDP Policies SP3, ENV2, ENV3, ENV4, ENV5, ENV6 and ENV7 in relation to The Natural Environment and to meet the requirements of Planning Policy Wales (Edition 9, November 2016), TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning and Part 1 Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

6. To comply with Powys County Council's UDP Policies SP3 and ENV2 in relation to The Natural Environment and to meet the requirements of Planning Policy Wales (Edition 9,

November 2016), TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning and Part 1 Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

7. To comply with Powys County Council's UDP Policies SP3, ENV3, ENV4, ENV5 and ENV7 in relation to The Natural Environment and to meet the requirements of Planning Policy Wales (Edition 9, November 2016), TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning and Part 1 Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

8. In order to ensure that residential development in the open countryside is justified, in accordance with policy HP4 of the Powys Unitary Development Plan (2010).

9. In order to ensure proper control of the use of the site and to prevent the establishment of permanent residency, in accordance with policy TR7 of the Powys Unitary development Plan (2010).

10. In order to ensure the tarmac access road does not involve land raising, in accordance with policies DC13 and DC14 of the Powys Unitary Development Plan (2010).

Informative Notes

Recreation and Countryside Services:

- The public access 'on foot' granted by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 must not be impeded or prevented at any time.
- There is no encroachment onto the common during the construction phase of the improvements i.e. building materials must not be stored on the common.
- Any inadvertent damage caused is made good as soon as possible.

Countryside Services – Rights of Way

The applicant must be advised that at no time during the development phase should any public right of way be obstructed. No materials should be placed or stored on the line of any public right of way and any damage caused to the surface of any public right of way must be made good to at least its current condition or better. Any unlawful disturbance, damage or obstruction to any public right of way could have legal repercussions.

Dwr Cymru / Welsh Water

The proposed development site is crossed by a public sewer with the approximate position being marked on the attached record plan. No development (including the raising or lowering of ground levels) will be permitted within the safety zone which is measured either side of the centre line. For details of the safety zone please contact Developer Services 0800 917 2652. The developer must contact us if a sewer connection is required under Section 106 of the Water Industry Act 1991 or any alteration to our apparatus is proposed prior to any development being undertaken.

If you have any queries please contact the undersigned on 0800 917 2652 or via email at developer.services@dwrcymru.com

Wales and West

The applicant's attention is drawn to the comments of Wales and West Utilities which are attached to this decision notice for attention.

Appendix 1 - Rhayader Town Council (Received 25th October 2017)
Appendix 2 – Rhayader Town Council (Received 13th November 2017)

Case Officer: Karen Probert- Planning Officer
Tel: 01597827372 E-mail:karen.probert1@powys.gov.uk

RHAYADER TOWN COUNCIL

Glennydd, South Street, Rhayader, LD6 5BH Clerk: Mr C Baker 01597 810405



25th October 2017

Ms K Probert,
Planning Officer,
The Gwalia,
Ithon Road,
Llandrindod Wells,
Powys, LD1 6AA

Dear Ms Probert,

P/2017/0119 for Full: Wyeseide Caravan Park Rhayader Powys

Rhayader Town Council writes to formally register its objection to the above planning application which has been determined for decision by Powys County Council's Planning Committee on Thursday 26th October 2017.

The Town Council is disappointed not to have been advised of the revised application form and additional documents. It is further surprised that its comments have not been sought by PCC to inform the planning officer's Update Report. Without explanation, the Town Council has not been afforded the usual 21 day notice period for it to undertake its role as a statutory consultee on the revised application form submitted by the Caravan and Camping Club (C&CC). In the same vein the comments of the local County Councillor have also not been sought. The report therefore fails to reflect the real level of **objection** and **local concern** raised by this planning application.

Much confusion surrounds this application. Local people have felt unable to formally register their objections with Powys County Council (PCC) as the information available on the PCC website is at best incorrect and at worst misleading:

Application details			
Reference number	P/2017/0119	Received Date	26/01/2017
Site address	Wyeseide Caravan Park Rhayader Powys LD6 5LB	Proposed Development	Full: Upgrade of existing pitches to gravel hardstandings, replacement of site access road and stone car park and other associated works.
Eastings	296834.02	Northings	268416.04
Valid date	07/02/2017	Community Council	No description.
Decision		Decision date	
Committee Type	Delegated	Committee Date	
Handling officer	Karen Probert	Agent name	Miss Sarah Butterfield

Source: <http://planning.powys.gov.uk/portal/servlets/ApplicationSearchServlet?PKID=147472>

As can be seen from the above screenshot, the information provided is inaccurate. It

- 1) **Fails** to advise the reader of the local Council in which the application falls;
- 2) **Incorrectly advises** that the application is 'delegated'; and
- 3) **Omits** to supply a Committee date for a decision.

Rhayader Town Council Objections, Comments and Questions

The revised planning application should be **rejected** for several material considerations such as the negative effect the development will have on the special character and amenity value of the Upper Wye Valley, the adjoining the River Wye SAC (Special Area of Conservation) and River Wye (Upper Wye) SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). It lies below Rhayader's Conservation Area, is located at the northern entrance to the town, and is the gateway to the spectacular Wye side Waun Capel Park, one of the jewels in Rhayader's crown. There is huge opposition to the inevitable consequential change of use and appearance of the open green field campsite to a formal caravan park/caravan car park covered by permanent gravelled hardstandings.

Following considerable public concern, Rhayader Town Council wishes to highlight the following reasons for objection to the Planning Committee:

1. The Application mis-represents the current and future proposed situation at the Wyeside Campsite

This is a about a **conversion** of an informal grass field to regimented hardstandings that will swallow up the usual grass camp site. There are NOT 31 existing pitches that are 'simply' being 'upgraded' or 'formalised'. The current campsite is a 2.9 acre level camping field with no designated pitches whatsoever. The River Wye lies on its Western boundary and its beauty is that camping pitch arrangements can taper to suit the needs of the visitors dependent on group size, privacy requirements or desired location (eg option to pitch near to the river or away from the river).

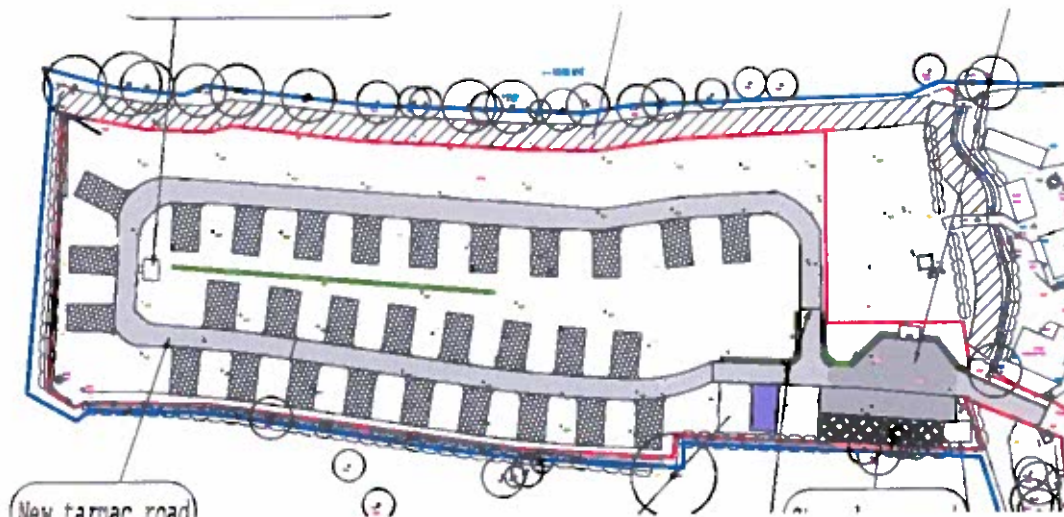
2. The proposed application will result in a change of EXISTING use FROM 'camping' TO 'caravanning' and as such will lead to the preclusion of traditional tented camping on the Wyeside Campsite

There is no doubt that the application will change the existing use from 'camping' to 'caravanning'. It only needs a glance at the plans to see that, if approved, the proposed 'car park' layout (see figure below) will stop low cost, camping on-grass and under-canvas available to all and for which Rhayader is well known.

3. The supposed 30 grass pitches in addition to the 30 hardstandings CANNOT BE IDENTIFIED on the revised plan

The proposed layout (below) advises that revised proposals are for 30 hardstanding pitches and 30 grass pitches yet the grass pitches cannot be seen or identified on the revised site plan:

Source: PCC



The 30 hardstanding pitches are easily identifiable by their top coating of 14m angular stone chippings, yet the grass pitches appear virtually non-existent, except for the undulating area alongside the fast flowing River Wye, the area most liable to flood.

When asked, the Planning Department were unable to advise of the location of the 30 grass pitches within the revised plans. Information has since been sought on multiple occasions but neither the Town Council, nor the two county councillors have received any acknowledgement, answer or further information in this regard. **If the Planning Department do not even know where the grass pitches are, then how can they recommend this application for approval?**

4. Caravan Parks in the most highly vulnerable flood zones (such as Wyeside Campsite) 'Should NOT be permitted' (TAN 15 Guidance)

The site lies entirely within Flood Zone C2, the most extreme zone of the floodplain. Planning guidance note TAN 15 states that: **'new development should be directed away from zone C ...highly vulnerable development such as caravan parks in zone C2 should NOT be permitted.'** **Why is Powys's advice going against the national planning guidance? No rationale is provided.**



5. Overt lack of flooding awareness and of flooding history of the site

The lack of awareness of, and research in to, the flooding history of the site by the applicant is hugely concerning. It is a FACT that the site floods to some extent EVERY year. Some of these floods can be very serious and attracting further use and extending the season for more vulnerable caravans cannot be justified. **Local knowledge** must be acknowledged and the subsequent risks properly recognised/addressed by both the applicant and the authority.

6. Flood Consequence Assessment (FCA) and Flooding Evacuation Policy is factually incorrect and not fit-for-purpose

The FCA was written for 43 pitches yet 60 are now proposed. It continually refers to the Environment Agency for getting flood warning information, flood alerts yet the Environment Agency DOES NOT OPERATE IN WALES! The Report even fails to mention Powys County Council which is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for the area. The FCA goes on to cite the upper area of the holiday home site as the Flood Evacuation Point. It fails to recognise that this area is ALSO a HIGHLY VULNERABLE ZONE for flooding and adjoins a major trunk road (A470).

NRW advise **"We consider that the FCA does not appropriately address the issues with this application in a flood plain"**. Despite all the references to the need for a Flood Evacuation Procedure (not least by the NRW), Powys County Council has not even been consulted as the Flood Authority. **Why has the Planning Department not picked up this major error?**

As NRW have confirmed that the area should be deemed a Highly Vulnerable Area, why has the local authority not requested a renewed FCA to take account of this?

If an Emergency Evacuation Plan is seen as being so important by NRW, the Applicant and the Local Authority, why has one not been prepared for consideration by the local community and Planning Committee now?

7. Allowing residential accommodation in a C2 Flood Zone is CONTRARY to National Policy

The suggested temporary permission for a Warden's Accommodation is not understood. There is nothing temporary about flood risk, nor is it clear how a temporary provision would be overcome after the initial three year period. Town Councillors cannot agree with the Planning Officer's assertion that

'Officers consider that the proposal broadly complies with planning policy' when national planning guidance note TAN 15 clearly states that: 'new development should be directed away from zone C ...highly vulnerable development in zone C2 should NOT be permitted.'

8. Fishing Rights

The Rhayader Angling Club owns the fishing rights along the River Wye and yet has not been contacted by the applicant about the proposals. The Angling Club **objects** to the application. The application states that a new hedge will be grown along the 'western boundary' which, to use the compass correctly, is along the River Wye.

How can this be acceptable in an area of such high amenity value?

9. The C&CC is already ALREADY advertising 'Wyeside Ready Camp' which comprises of semi-permanent camping pods and tents, yet the application makes no mention of this additional, planned further intensification of the site.

The current C&CC website advertises:

"Our Glamping Tents

The ultimate in glamping – Ready Camp tents offer a great balance between contemporary and outdoor living. With stylish features, full beds, sofa and dining



READY Camp

ACCOMMODATION LOCATIONS INSPIRE

Our Glamping Tents

The ultimate in glamping - Ready Camp tents offer a great balance between contemporary and outdoor living. With stylish features, full beds, sofa and dining facilities, you will find all that you need whether you choose to stay with us for a short break or longer holiday. There is plenty of storage in the living area and bedroom, giving you space to enjoy your stay - and a fully stocked crockery cupboard with all you will need to produce some lovely meals in your tent. The pretty decked terrace is perfectly lit for night time relaxation too. Just bring your bedding and essentials to get your holiday started! (Please note that pets are NOT permitted in our Ready Camp tents)

View layout

facilities, you will find all that you need whether you choose to stay with us for a short break or longer holiday. There is plenty of storage in the living area and bedroom, giving you space to enjoy your stay – and a fully stocked crockery cupboard with all you will need to produce some lovely meals in your tent. The pretty decked terrace is perfectly lit for night time relaxation too. Just bring your bedding and essentials to get your holiday started"

Source: <https://campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk/readycamp/locations/glamping-wales/south-wales/wyeside/#our-tents>

Is it any wonder that the local population predicts the preclusion of traditional tented camping on grass?

10. Open Municipal Use to Restricted Membership Access?

The C&CC operate as a Club. There are minimum stay requirements and booking in restrictions (between 1pm and 8pm only). It is virtually impossible to get access information/prices for non members. This is at odds with the spirit in which the campsite was LEFT to PCC by a LOCAL RESIDENT for the BENEFIT of LOCAL PEOPLE. Several local people will swear affidavits to this effect. Tax payers money has been invested in to the site over a great many years and now access will effectively be restricted to those in a Club. Town Councillors are aware of a number of potential users of the site (and not in insignificant numbers) who have been refused entry/booking, much to the detriment to the local economy as a whole. This must not be allowed to continue. **As a local authority asset, the campsite should be for the many, not for the few.**

Season Dates & Price Guide

See details below of minimum booking periods on Club Sites and the latest season dates in our downloadable price insert cards.

Please note that arrival and pitching times are between 1pm and 8pm

UK Club Site Standard Minimum Booking Periods		
Dates/Periods	Pitch Types	Minimum Stay
High Season	All pitch types	2 nights
Fridays and Saturdays	All service pitches	2 nights

Source: C&CC website

11. Clarification of the non-planning nature of the covenant on the Wyeside Camping Field

The Town Council recognises that the covenant placed on the Camping Field by the local Resident (Miss Evans) when she left it to the local authority, is NOT a planning consideration. It will, however, be an issue for the Local Authority to consider should any implementation of any planning permission emanating from this application occur. County Councillors should be aware of correspondence between PCC Legal Services and Cllr K Curry which states that **'if the Caravan and Camping Club implemented the permission** (which is sought within the revised application) they **"would be in contravention with the permitted used contained within the lease'**.

(The Town Council is aware of discussions between the applicant and the County Council concerning the use of the site which did not refer to the existing covenant. The 'Site Works' document annexed to the Lease has not had ANY member scrutiny or involvement whatsoever and as such will be challenged if seen as a form of blueprint for development. The Town Council wishes to affirm its view that implementation of any permission arising from this revised application would be a material breach of the covenant and as such must not be allowed to happen. The Town Council is considering the preparation of sworn affidavits and intend to seek legal advice on this issue. We will look for County Councillors to support our stance should this situation arise.)

The risk to occupants of all touring caravans and motorhomes encouraged to use the flood plain should not, and must not, be underestimated. Converting grass to gravel, and restricting grass pitches to the most vulnerable part of the flood plain will preclude the use of the site by campers, a pastime much favoured by families and groups (often on a budget) visiting Rhayader, and, if approved, we will not only lose sight of the river, we will no doubt see the eventual demise of tented camping in the centre of Rhayader altogether.

In summary, the Town Council and Community of Rhayader want a successful Caravan and Camping Site, but not at any cost. Not at a cost to the community or to the good intentions of a previous owner who left the land to benefit the local people, nor to the safety of those we welcome and who we encourage to holiday with us. We want a continuation of a site available to and used by ALL types of tourist, not one where you may need to book before arrival and where a minimum stay of five nights in high season is required.

We want a site that is accessible to all and which endangers no-one.

In view of all the above, Councillors were unanimous in their decision to recommend that the application be refused. At the very least the failure of the relevant parties to provide the Town Council with the necessary and requested information, and not to have followed the usual 21 day consultation protocol causes our members great concern and casts grave doubt on the decision making process.

Yours sincerely,



Carl Baker
Clerk to Rhayader Town Council

Cc
Powys County Council Planning Committee Members
Cllr P Davies, Portfolio Members for Property
Cllr M Weale, Portfolio Member for Regeneration and Planning
Cllr K Curry, County Councillor for Rhayader

RHAYADER TOWN COUNCIL

Glennydd, South Street, Rhayader, LD6 5BH Clerk: Mr C Baker 01597 810405



13 November 2017

Ms K Probert,
 Planning Officer,
 The Gwalla,
 Ithon Road,
 Llandrindod Wells,
 Powys, LD1 6AA

Dear Ms Probert,

P/2017/0119 for Full: Wyeside Caravan Park Rhayader Powys

Rhayader Town Council writes to formally register its objection to the above planning application which is to be considered by Powys County Council's Planning Committee on Thursday 16th November 2017.

The Town Council is disappointed at the procedure adopted throughout this process with information requested by ourselves and via local County Councillors not having been forthcoming. The Council is further surprised that its comments have not been formally sought again – via the usual 21 day notice procedure - after the application was revised, in to inform the planning officer's Update Report. We understand that the comments of the local County Councillor were also not sought when the matter came to last month's planning committee. The PCC website information regarding this application remains incorrect (further details below) despite the planning department being advised several weeks ago so the report therefore fails to reflect the real level of **objection** and **local concern** raised by this planning application.

Much confusion surrounds this application. Local people have felt unable to formally register their objections with Powys County Council (PCC) as the information available on the PCC website is at best incorrect and at worst misleading:

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- 2) **Incorrectly advises** that the application is 'delegated';
- 3) **Omits** to supply a Committee date for a decision; and
- 4) This application is not about 'upgrading pitches'. It is about **conversion** of a grass field to hardstandings.

Despite being advised of the above three weeks ago, nothing has yet been updated by PCC.

Rhayader Town Council Objections, Comments and Questions

The revised planning application should be **rejected** for several material planning considerations such as the **negative effect on the special character and amenity value of the Upper Wye Valley**, adjoining the River Wye SAC (Special Area of Conservation) and River Wye SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). It lies below Rhayader's Conservation Area, is overlooked by the site of Rhayader Castle a scheduled monument (ref SAMRadnor132), is located at the northern entrance to the town, and is the gateway to the spectacular river side Waun Capel Park, one of the jewels in Rhayader's crown. There is huge opposition to the inevitable consequential change of use and change in appearance of the open green field campsite to a formal caravan park/caravan car park covered by permanent gravelled hardstandings and dissected by tarmac roads.

Following considerable public concern, Rhayader Town Council wishes to highlight the following reasons for objection to the Planning Committee:

1. The Application mis-represents the current and future proposed situation at the Wyeside Campsite

This is not an application to upgrade existing pitches. Rather, it seeks the **conversion** of an informal grass field to regimented hardstandings that will swallow up the usual grass camp site. There are NOT 31 existing pitches that are 'simply' being 'upgraded' or 'formalised'. The current campsite is a 2.9 acre level camping **field** with no designated pitches whatsoever.

The River Wye lies on its Western boundary and its beauty is that camping pitch arrangements can taper to suit the needs of the visitors dependent on group size, privacy requirements or desired location (eg option to pitch near to the river or away from the river).

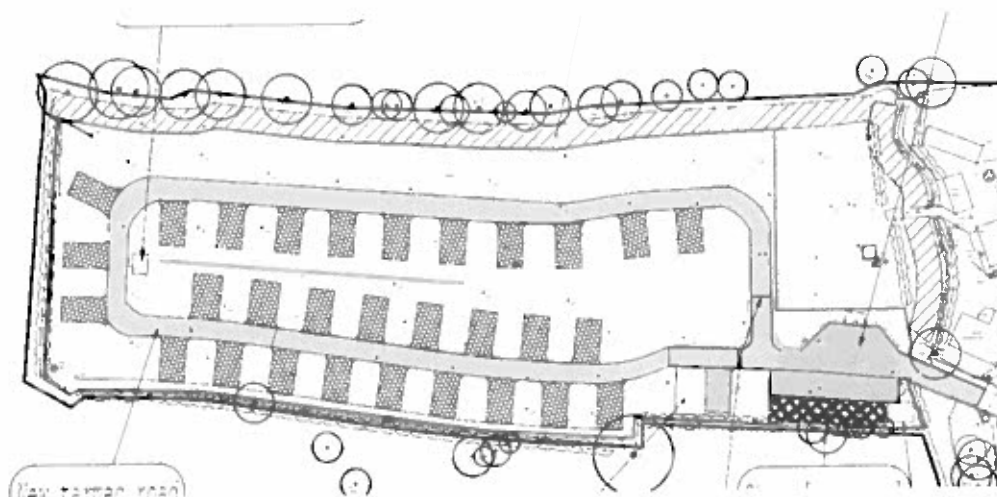
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There is no doubt that the application will change the existing use from 'camping' to 'caravanning'. It only needs a glance at the plans to see that, if approved, the proposed 'car park' layout (see figure below) will stop low cost, camping on-grass and under-canvas available to all and for which Rhayader is well known.

3. The supposed 30 grass pitches in addition to the 30 hardstandings CANNOT BE IDENTIFIED on the revised plan despite repeated requests to PCC.

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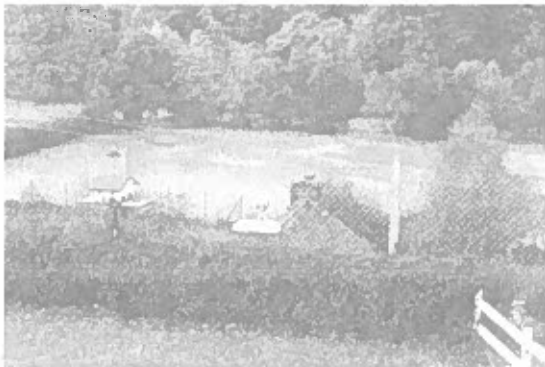


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When asked, the Planning Department were unable to advise of the location of the 30 grass pitches within the revised plans. Information been sought on multiple occasions but neither the Town Council, nor the two county councillors have received any acknowledgement, answer or further information in this regard. *If the Planning Department does not even know where the grass pitches are, then how can they recommend this application for approval? If the applicant takes months to work out where the grass pitches are, we can be sure they are unimportant to them.*

4. Caravan Parks in the most highly vulnerable flood zones (such as Wyese Campsite) 'Should NOT be permitted' (TAN 15 Guidance)

The site lies entirely within Flood Zone C2, the most extreme zone of the floodplain. Planning guidance note TAN 15 states that: **'new development should be directed away from zone C ...highly vulnerable development such as caravan parks in zone C2 should NOT be permitted.'** *Why is Powys's advice going against the national planning guidance? No rationale is provided.*



5. Overt lack of flooding awareness and of flooding history of the site by applicant

The lack of awareness of, and research in to, the flooding history of the site by the applicant is hugely concerning. It is a FACT that the site floods to some extent EVERY year. Some of these floods can be very serious and attracting further use and extending the season for more vulnerable caravans cannot be justified. **Local knowledge** must be acknowledged and the subsequent risks properly recognised/addressed by both the applicant and the authority.

6. Flood Consequence Assessment (FCA) and Flooding Evacuation Policy is factually incorrect and not fit-for-purpose

The FCA was written for 43 pitches yet 60 are now proposed. It continually refers to the Environment Agency for getting flood warning/alert information yet the Environment Agency DOES NOT OPERATE IN WALES! The Report even fails to mention Powys County Council which is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for the area.

Worryingly, the FCA goes on to cite the upper area of the holiday home site as the Flood Evacuation Point. It fails to recognise that this area is ALSO a HIGHLY VULNERABLE ZONE (C2) for flooding and also adjoins a major trunk road (A470).

NRW advise **"We consider that the FCA does not appropriately address the issues with this application in a flood plain"**. Despite all the references to the need for a Flood Evacuation

Procedure (not least by the NRW), Powys County Council has not even been consulted as the Flood Authority. *Why has the Planning Department not picked up this major error?*

As NRW have confirmed that the area should be deemed a Highly Vulnerable Area, why has the local authority not requested a renewed FCA to take account of this?

If an Emergency Evacuation Plan is seen as being so important by NRW, the Applicant and the Local Authority, why has one not been prepared for consideration by the local community and Planning Committee now?

The Local Authority's Emergency Planning Department has not even commented greatly on this application, unlike others of a very similar nature. Why?

7. Allowing residential accommodation in a C2 Flood Zone is CONTRARY to National Policy

There is already a Warden's Cabin on site. The suggested temporary permission for a (nother) Warden's Accommodation is not understood. There is nothing temporary about flood risk, nor is it clear how a temporary permission would be overcome after the initial three year period. Town Councillors cannot agree with the Planning Officer's assertion that

'Officers consider that the proposal broadly complies with planning policy' when national planning guidance note **TAN 15** clearly states that: **'new development should be directed away from zone C ...highly vulnerable development in zone C2 should NOT be permitted.'**

Given the very real flood risk why has the local authority as the Lead Local Flood Authority (Powys) nor provided comments in that capacity?

Why has emergency planning not given careful consideration to this application as it has with a similar application that was recently rejected by the Planning Committee on 26 October 2017?

8. Fishing Rights

The Rhayader Angling Club owns the fishing rights along the River Wye and yet has not been contacted by the applicant or the Planning Department about the proposals. The Angling Club **objects** to the application. The application states that a new hedge will be grown along the 'western boundary' which, to use the compass correctly, is along the River Wye.

How can this be acceptable in an area of such high amenity value?

9. The site has received no amended Planning Permission to allow for year round use

The Site has always operated on a restricted year basis – as advised in the Council's particulars for the site, 'Wyeside Caravan Park is an established holiday park with an **operating season of 1 February to 31 November**'. This application assumes year round use. No planning permission has been sought or approved by Powys County Council for an extension to the season.

We are concerned that the roles of the local authority as a landlord and as a planning authority are not be clear and transparent.

Can the Planning Department advise the Planning Committee how the site now seems able to operate on a year round basis **WITHOUT** any planning application for the extension of the season having being submitted?

10. The C&CC is already **ALREADY** advertising 'Wyeside Ready Camp' which comprises of semi-permanent camping pods and tents, yet the application makes no mention of this additional, planned further intensification of the site.

With reference to the Wyeside Site in Rhayader, the applicant's website advertises the availability of:



"Our Glamping Tents - The ultimate in glamping – Ready Camp tents offer a great balance between contemporary and outdoor living. With stylish features, full beds, sofa and dining facilities, you will find all that you need [...] There is plenty of storage in the living area and bedroom, giving you space to enjoy your stay – and a fully stocked crockery cupboard with all you will need to produce some lovely meals in your tent. The pretty decked terrace is perfectly lit for night time relaxation too. Just bring your bedding and essentials to get your holiday started"

Source:

<https://campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk/readycamp/locations/glamping-wales/south-wales/wyeside/#our-tents> 24/10/11

Is it any wonder that the local population predicts the preclusion of traditional tented camping on grass?

11. From Open Municipal Use to Restricted Membership Access?

The C&CC operate as a Club. There are minimum stay requirements and booking in restrictions (between 1pm and 8pm only). It is virtually impossible to get access information/prices for non members. This is at odds with the spirit in which the campsite was LEFT to PCC by a LOCAL RESIDENT for the BENEFIT of LOCAL PEOPLE. Several local people will **swear affidavits** to this effect to arrest any development. Council tax payers' money has been invested in to the site over a great many years and now access will effectively be restricted to those in a Club. Town Councillors are aware of a number of potential users of the site (and not in insignificant numbers) who have been refused entry/booking, much to the detriment to the local economy as a whole. This must not be allowed to continue. **As a local authority asset, the campsite should be for the many, not for the few.**

Season Dates & Price Guide

See details below of minimum booking periods on Club Sites and the latest season dates in our downloadable price insert cards.

Please note that arrival and pitching times are between 1pm and 8pm

UK Club Site Standard Minimum Booking Periods		
Dates/Periods	Pitch Types	Minimum Stay
High Season	All pitch types	2 nights
Fr days and Saturdays	All service pitches	2 nights

Source: C&CC website

12. Similar application rejected by PCC's Planning Committee at its last Planning Meeting on 26 October 2017

An application for the 'Siting of 40 touring caravans and 13 static caravans for holiday use between 1st March through to 3rd January of the following year and the winter storage of 42 caravans Riverside Caravan Park Llangammarch Wells' was recently refused permission by PCC as **'The proposal will lead to an increase of the occupation period of highly vulnerable development within Zone C2 as defined by the development advice maps referred to under TAN15 Development and Flood Risk (2004). The development is contrary to policy SP14 of the Powys Unitary Development Plan (adopted 2010), Technical Advice Note 15 TAN 15 Development and Flood Risk (2004) and Planning Policy Wales (2016).'**

Given the similarities between the two applications why is the officer's treatment of the Wyeside application significantly different?

13. Clarification of the non-planning nature of the covenant on the Wyeside Camping Field

The Town Council recognises that the covenant placed on the Camping Field by the local Resident (Miss Evans) when she left it to the local authority, is NOT a planning consideration. It will, however, be an issue for the Local Authority to consider should the implementation of any planning permission emanating from this application occur. County Councillors should be aware of correspondence between PCC Legal Services and Cllr K Curry which states that **'if the Caravan and Camping Club implemented the permission (which is sought within the revised application) they "would be in contravention with the permitted used contained within the lease'.**

(The Town Council is aware of discussions between the applicant and the County Council concerning the use of the site which did not refer to the existing covenant. The 'Site Works' document annexed to the Lease has not had ANY member scrutiny or involvement whatsoever and as such will be challenged if seen as a form of blueprint for development. The Town Council wishes to affirm its view that implementation of any permission arising from this revised application would be a material breach of the covenant and as such must not be allowed to

happen. The Town Council is considering the preparation of sworn affidavits and intends to seek legal advice on this issue. We will look for County Councillors to support our stance should this situation arise.)

The risk to occupants of all touring caravans and motorhomes encouraged to use the flood plain should not, and must not, be underestimated. Converting grass to gravel, and restricting grass pitches to the most vulnerable part of the flood plain will preclude the use of the site by campers, a pastime much favoured by families and groups (often on a budget) visiting Rhayader, and, if approved, we will not only lose sight of the river, we will no doubt see the eventual demise of tented camping in the centre of Rhayader altogether.

In summary, the Town Council and Community of Rhayader want a successful Caravan and Camping Site, but not at any cost. Not at a cost to the community or to the good intentions of a previous owner who left the land to benefit the local people, nor to the safety of those we welcome and who we encourage to holiday with us. We want a continuation of a site available to and used by ALL types of tourist, not one where you may need to book before arrival and where a minimum stay of five nights in high season is required.

We want a site that is accessible to all and which endangers no-one.

On sound planning grounds and in view of all the above, Councillors are unanimous in their decision to recommend that the application be refused. At the very least the failure of the relevant parties to provide the Town Council with the necessary and requested information causes our members great concern and casts grave doubt on the decision making process.

Yours sincerely,



Carl Baker
Clerk to Rhayader Town Council

Cc
Powys County Council Planning Committee Members
Cllr P Davies, Portfolio Members for Property
Cllr M Weale, Portfolio Member for Regeneration and Planning
Cllr K Curry, County Councillor for Rhayader