



**LAND AT FINESHAE WOOD, TOP  
LODGE, FINESHAE,  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, NN17 3BB**

**CHANGE OF USE TO TIMBER LODGE  
HOLIDAY PARK AND ASSOCIATED  
WORKS**

**PLANNING SUPPORTING STATEMENT**

**Date: December 2018**

**Our Ref: PPS1217**

**RPS**

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# QUALITY MANAGEMENT

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# CONTENTS

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<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
	Application Site & Surrounding Area .....	1
<b>2</b>	<b>BACKGROUND AND APPLICATION PROPOSALS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
	Planning History.....	3
	Pre-application Advice .....	3
<b>3</b>	<b>THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT .....</b>	<b>5</b>
	Development Plan.....	5
	Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance.....	8
	Other Material Considerations .....	9
<b>5</b>	<b>MAIN CONSIDERATIONS .....</b>	<b>11</b>
	Principle of Development.....	11
	Sustainability.....	12
	Highway Safety and Accessibility .....	13
	Impact on Local Landscape .....	13
	Residential Amenity .....	13
	Ecology .....	13
	Noise .....	14
	Flood Risk.....	14
<b>6</b>	<b>SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.....</b>	<b>15</b>

# INTRODUCTION

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- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared by RPS on behalf of Countrywide Parks Limited in support of a full planning application for the change of use to timber lodge holiday park and the development of ancillary infrastructure and landscaping at Fineshade Wood, Top Lodge, Fineshade, Northamptonshire, NN17 3BB ('the application site').
- 1.2 This Statement seeks to demonstrate that the proposal is acceptable having regard to key planning policy and other material considerations.
- 1.3 In addition to this Planning Statement, the other supporting documents accompanying the application submission comprise:
- Site Location Plan
  - Illustrative Site Layout Plan
  - Heritage Statement
  - Landscape and Visual Assessment
  - Transport Note
  - Flood Risk Assessment
  - Preliminary Ecological Assessment
  - Noise Impact Assessment
- 1.4 The remainder of this section describes the application site and its surroundings. Section 2 of this Statement describes the planning history of the site, and provides an overview of an informal phone-call conversation held with Cornwall Council. Section 3 describes the application proposals whilst Section 4 briefly reviews the Development Plan and other relevant policies. Section 5 assesses the overall proposal against relevant planning policies and other considerations. Section 6 is a conclusion to this Statement.

## **Application Site & Surrounding Area**

- 1.5 The site is located within the countryside and sits approximately 650m east of the A43, opposite the Forestry Commission Offices. The site has an area of 1.202 hectares and covers a section of currently open grassland. It is situated approximately 11km north east of Corby, 18km west of Peterborough, and 10km south of Stamford.
- 1.6 The site is currently greenfield, which is fenced off and contained by trees on the southern and western edges. The north and eastern edges remain open. The Stamford Caravan and Motorhome Club Site can be found approximately 70m to the north of the site. The wider site surroundings mainly occupy the Fineshade Wood.
- 1.7 Vehicular access to the site is via an unnamed road off the A43. There are no bus stops near the site.

- 1.8 East Northamptonshire's Local Plan interactive policy map indicates that the site is situated within the countryside and is washed over by the following designations: Area of Tranquillity; Rockingham Forest for Life; and, Community Services and Facilities. The Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning indicates the site is fully located within Flood Zone 1, meaning the site suffers from the lowest probability of flooding. Immediately to the north of the site is the Grade II listed Top Lodge with attached barn and granary, outbuildings and shelter sheds.
- 1.9 There are no other known designations within close proximity of the site.

# BACKGROUND AND APPLICATION PROPOSALS

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## Planning History

- 1.10 A desk based examination of the Council's public access planning search facility reveals no approved planning decisions for the site. As such, we believe the site is virgin greenfield land.
- 1.11 Nevertheless, the site does have a short planning history by way of refused and withdrawn planning applications. Planning reference 12/00990/FUL proposing the "Erection of building for agricultural storage" was refused in August 2012. In September 2014, planning reference 14/01195/FUL was refused which proposed "Change of use to lodge camping facility including 30 'glamping' pods, car park, wardens residence, reception, welfare building and associated works". Lastly, planning reference 15/00584/FUL proposing "Change of use to tented camping including associated car parking and a welfare building" was withdrawn in May 2015.

## Pre-application Advice

- 1.12 Formal pre-application advice from the Council has not been sought however we did speak with the case officer for application reference 15/00584/FUL while searching for the applications consultations. The case officer advised the previous application would be refused as consultees recognised the application did not comprise a detailed assessment of the site and its specific constraints. On this, the application was withdrawn.
- 1.13 The case officer set out the Council was not against the principle of tourism development on the site, but would require a detailed planning application with supporting documents which assess the impact and implications of such a proposal. The case officer explained the consultation comments for application reference 15/00584/FUL were no longer available as unnecessary documents are destroyed after a certain time period. The Council considers such comments unnecessary.
- 1.14 As the application was withdrawn, there are no officer's reports or decision notices which would guide this application, however the case officer set out what supporting documentation would be required, and these can be found accompanying this application.

## THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

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- 1.15 It is proposed to develop up to 32 high quality timber lodges at the site, under the definition of a 'caravan' in Section 29 (1) of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960. Each caravan would be accompanied with decking and the provision of two parking spaces.
- 1.16 Access would be taken from the unnamed road which would continue to be shared with The Forestry Commission Offices and Stamford Caravan and Motorhome Club Site. No other structure, including toilet blocks are proposed, as they would not be required.
- 1.17 The lodges would utilise materials that are sympathetic and complementary to the existing site, and will be installed on site to meet the requirements of the definition of a caravan. Internally, bitmac surfaced roads will be provided throughout the site and the site will be enhanced by additional native hedgerows and trees to improve its appearance in the wider countryside, particularly along the northern and eastern boundaries where limited screening currently exists. Timber lodges would be sited in the areas where the screening is enhanced, helping to soften the appearance of the site in the landscape.

# PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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## Development Plan

- 1.18 Any proposed development must be judged against the relevant development plan and other government planning policy and guidance. Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the purposes of this application, the relevant development plan comprises the Joint Core Strategy 2011 – 2031 (adopted 2016), and the saved policies of the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan 2011.

## Joint Core Strategy 2011 – 2031 (Adopted 2016)

- 1.19 The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy is the strategic Part 1 Local Plan for Corby, East Northamptonshire, Kettering, and Wellingborough. It sets the strategic policies and a vision to be developed in more detail through the Part 2 Local Plans prepared by District and Borough Councils. The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) Part 1 was adopted in 2016, and sets out the Council's main strategic planning approach and policies how development will be managed up to 2030.
- 1.20 One of the Council's main objectives identified in the Plan is to provide "*A strong focus on growing investment in tourism [and] leisure*". Indeed, the support for the rural economy, and the key part that tourism can play in that, is a strong theme throughout the JCS.
- 1.21 There are a number of specific policies in the Plan that are relevant to this proposal, and these shall now be looked at in turn.
- 1.22 Policy 1 of the JCS, titled 'Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development', states that the Council will take a positive approach to development that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). To be regarded as sustainable within the context of North Northamptonshire, development should contribute to delivering the Plan Vision and Outcomes through compliance with the relevant policies of the plan.
- 1.23 Policy 2 on 'Historic Environment' sets out the distinctive historic environment will be protected, preserved and enhanced where appropriate. Where development would impact upon a heritage asset and/or its setting, proposals should complement their historic environment through form, scale, design and materials. Proposals should protect and enhance key views and vistas of heritage assets, and demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the impact of development on these assets.
- 1.24 Policy 3 on 'Landscape Character' explains development should be located and designed in a way that is sensitive to its landscape setting, retaining and where possible enhancing the distinctive qualities of the landscape character area. Development should safeguard and enhance important views and vistas, contribute to maintaining the individual and distinct character, and provide appropriate landscape mitigation.



- 1.25 Policy 4 on 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity' sets out a net gain in biodiversity and geodiversity will be sought. Biodiversity and geodiversity assets will be protected by refusing development proposals where significant harm to an asset cannot be avoided, mitigated or compensated. Key assets for wildlife and geology will be protected from unacceptable levels of access, and pressures for access will be managed to address the disturbance of sensitive habitats. The natural environment will be protected against adverse effects from noise, air and light pollution.
- 1.26 Ecological networks will be enhanced by managing development and investment to reverse habitat fragmentation and increase connectivity of habitats where possible. Development will preserve, restore and creation priority and other natural and semi-natural habitats within and adjacent to development schemes.
- 1.27 Through developer contributions or development design, the protection and recovery of priority habitats and species will be supported. Such measures could include the retention of, and provision of areas of open green space, and hard and soft landscaping to address habitat and visitor management.
- 1.28 Development proposals will need to take account of the Northamptonshire Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document.
- 1.29 Policy 5 on 'Water Environment, Resources and Flood Risk Management' explains development should contribute towards reducing the risk of flooding and to the protection and improvement of the quality of the water environment. Development should be avoided in high and medium flood risk areas, and should meet a minimum 1% annual probability standard of flood protection with allowances for climate change – unless local studies indicate a higher annual probability.
- 1.30 Policy 8 on 'North Northamptonshire Place Shaping Principles' sets out a number of criteria to assist in creating connected places which are safe, pleasant, adaptable, diverse, flexible, distinctive and ensure the quality of life and healthier communities.
- 1.31 Policy 10 on 'Provision of Infrastructure' sets development must be supported by the timely delivery of infrastructure, services and facilities necessary to meet the needs arising from the development and to support the development of North Northamptonshire. To achieve this, developers will make provision of infrastructure required by the development.
- 1.32 In addition, development should seek to minimise increases in the demand for infrastructure and services, including through measures to encourage a reduction in car use, and to create safe, healthy environments. Planning permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated there is, or will be sufficient infrastructure capacity provided with an agreed timescale to support and meet all the requirements arising from the proposed development.
- 1.33 Policy 11 on 'The Network of Urban and Rural Areas' sets out development criteria for the rural areas. Section 2 explains development in the rural areas will be limited to that required to support a prosperous rural economy, or to meet a locally arising need which cannot be met more sustainably at a nearby larger settlement. Rural diversification will be supported in accordance with Policy 25. Other forms of development will be resisted in the open countryside unless there are special circumstances as set out in policy 13, or national policy.

- 1.34 Policy 21 on 'Rockingham Forest' sets out the forest will be regenerated to increase carbon storage, strengthen biodiversity, landscape character and green infrastructure, support a prosperous rural economy and provide appropriate leisure and recreational opportunities. This will be achieved by 40 hectares a year of new tree planting, linking fragmented habitats and protecting ancient woodland. Rural economic development will be supported in accordance with Policy 25, with a focus on woodland based activities including sustainable food and fuel production.
- 1.35 The council will support protection or enhancement of tourism and recreation attractions and the supporting of new green infrastructure and heritage attractions of a type and scale that can be accommodated by existing or new infrastructure, which strikes an appropriate balance between visitor numbers and biodiversity, landscape, local amenity and heritage interests.
- 1.36 Policy 22 on 'Delivering Economic Prosperity' explains a stronger, more sustainable economy will deliver a net increase of 31,100 jobs. Such jobs will be sought through a number of means, including the safeguarding and enhancement of North Northamptonshire's tourism and cultural assets. Proposals will be supported where they expand the tourism industry in sustainable ways.
- 1.37 Policy 23 on 'Distribution of New Jobs' sets out that to achieve a sustainable balance between local workers and a more diverse economy, 7,200 jobs are sought in East Northamptonshire. Within rural areas, new employment of an appropriate scale and type will be supported where it is consistent with Policy 25.
- 1.38 Policy 25 on 'Rural Economic Development and Diversification' sets out that sustainable opportunities to develop and diversify the rural economy will be supported where they are of an appropriate scale for their location and respect the environmental quality and character of the rural area.
- 1.39 Encouragement will be given towards the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities, recognising that locations with access to local services and facilities by foot, cycle or public transport provide the greatest opportunity for sustainable rural development. Additionally, commercial opportunities related to ecotourism will be encouraged, as will development which enhances local supply networks by linking businesses and consumers that support the shift to a low carbon economy and support local producers and businesses.
- 1.40 Sustainable rural diversification activities should seek to complement and support the ongoing viability of existing businesses.
- 1.41 The proposal is therefore considered to be in compliance with the policies of the JCS.

### **Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan – July 2011**

- 1.42 The Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Development Plan Document was adopted in July 2011. The Plan is a site specific proposals document based on the framework set by the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy. The Plan sets out the vision and detailed policies for the development, regeneration and planned growth, and the sustainable development of communities in the rural north of East Northamptonshire.
- 1.43 The Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan will be replaced by the District-wide Local Plan Part 2. Preparation of the Plan started in January 2017 and the Local Development Scheme

confirms adoption of the Plan is anticipated for December 2019. Until the replacement Plan is adopted, the existing Plan policies carry full weight. There are a number of specific policies in the Plan that are relevant to this proposal, and these shall now be looked at in turn.

- 1.44 Policy 4 on 'Green Infrastructure' sets out development within the Plan area will contribute and link into the wider green infrastructure network. Routes utilising and enhancing the existing rights of way network will be established in order to promote and diversify green infrastructure in the Plan area. Employment development should improve connectivity through the provision of foot and cycle routes, create space for nature conservation, green education, green economic uses and imaginative recreational facilities.
- 1.45 Policy 5 on – 'Transport Network' explains improvements to the bus and community transport network should be concentrated upon providing "feeder services" from rural areas to service centres in Plan area. New development of over 0.5 hectares of commercial uses will be required to include attractive and direct walking and cycling routes, connecting into the existing planned network.
- 1.46 Policy 7 on 'Flood Risk' illustrates that planning permission for new development will not be granted on sites that are at a risk of flooding, and fail sequential and exception tests. A 200 year standard of flood protection is applicable throughout the Plan area both in relation to development and the measures required to reduce the impact of any additional run off generated by that development.
- 1.47 Policy 9 on 'Buildings of Local Architectural or Historic Interest' asserts that proposals which affect a building of local architectural or historic interest, or its setting, will only be acceptable where the character, appearance and historic interest and integrity of the building is safeguarded, and the setting of the building is preserved or enhanced.
- 1.48 Policy 11 on 'Enhancing Biodiversity' states new development that is linked or has an effect upon priority habitats will be required to contribute towards habitat creation and restoration. Wherever possible, stepping stones and corridor links for the migration and dispersal of wildlife should be provided.

## **Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance**

- 1.49 The Planning Out Crime in Northamptonshire Supplementary Planning Guidance adopted in February 2004 sets out Northamptonshire's intent to guide developers in achieving best design that mitigates crime, antisocial behaviour, and fear of crime in both urban and rural parts of the Council area. The guidance establishes principles for the design, layout and landscaping of the built and natural environment which creates a safer and more secure space, increases the risk of detection of criminal activity, and makes crime more difficult to commit.
- 1.50 The Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document adopted in March 2009 explains a key objective of the Council is for the area to become a beacon of best practice and a benchmark for green living and safe, healthy communities through using the highest standards of design, sustainable construction methods and green technology. The SPD provides guidance for development proposal to meet the requirements of the Council.

- 1.51 The Trees and Landscape Supplementary Planning Document adopted in June 2013 promotes high quality, well maintained landscapes and open spaces with respect to new development and landscape design and tree matters.
- 1.52 The Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document adopted in August 2015 asserts biodiversity is a key aspect of sustainable development and explains how biodiversity shall be integrated into the development process. It offers a standardised approach that is expanded on the main principles set out in the NPPF and should be used together with expert ecological assessment of the details of each specific case.

## Other Material Considerations

### National Planning Policy Framework

- 1.53 The revised NPPF was published in July 2018 and sets out the Governments planning policies for England. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF, which should be seen as a 'golden thread' running through both plan-making and decision-making. For decision-making this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, or specific policies in the NPPF indicate that development should be restricted (Paragraph 11).
- 1.54 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. This includes an economic objective to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy; a social objective to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities and an environmental objective to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment. As referenced above, it is considered that the proposed development will be economically, socially and environmentally sustainable, taking account of the economic benefits, opportunities created for tourism and leisure, and by causing minimum harm to the countryside.
- 1.55 The NPPF contains policy guidance for achieving sustainable development for a number of themes and topics, including: building a strong, competitive economy; supporting a prosperous rural economy; conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- 1.56 In terms of a strong, competitive economy, the NPPF states that the Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity, building on the country's inherent strengths, and to meeting the twin challenges of global competition and of a low carbon future. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth, with Paragraph 80 stating "*significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity.*"
- 1.57 In terms of supporting a prosperous rural economy, Paragraph 83 states that planning policies and decisions should enable:
- (a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings; and

(c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside

- 1.58 Paragraph 84 sets out planning decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business needs in rural areas may have to be found beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads, and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable. Such means may include improving the scope for access on foot or by cycling.
- 1.59 The NPPF also states that the planning system should pay regard to the natural and local environment. Paragraph 170 states the planning system should contribute to and enhance both such environments, for example by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, by preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution.

### **Draft East Northamptonshire Local Plan**

- 1.60 The Draft East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 is being prepared with an expected adoption date of December 2018. The Plan will provide detailed planning policies to manage and guide development across the borough. The Draft Plan consultation window is open from 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2018 to 17<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and provides an opportunity to consult on the draft policies and text. A pre-submission draft Plan and consultation are expected between February and March of 2019. While the policies in their current form are not adopted, they show the vision and context of the Council's planning ambition, and as the plan progresses, will increasingly carry weight in the decision-making process.
- 1.61 Policy EN12 on 'Design of Buildings' sets out development proposals must relate well and enhance the surrounding environment. Development will be supported where it integrates positively with the surrounding area, does not detract from the character of existing buildings, creates visual interest, is locally inspired where appropriate, and incorporates amenity space to serve the needs of end users.
- 1.62 Policy EN13 on 'Designated Heritage Assets' sets out great weight will be given to an assets conservation. Development proposals will be supported where they sustain and enhance the character, appearance and significance of designated heritage assets. Proposals will be refused where harm to the significance of an asset occurs, unless a justification of public benefit exists, outweighing the importance of the asset, and the scale of harm.
- 1.63 Policy EN15 on 'Tourist and Cultural Development' sets out that in the Rockingham Forest area, new tourist assets will be supported where there are no unacceptable highways or sensitive receptor (e.g. SSSI and SPA) issues. Developments will be expected to deliver enhanced connectivity to the Greenway, and not adversely impact the surrounding countryside.

## MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

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1.64 The main considerations in this case are:

- Whether the proposed development is acceptable in principle, taking account of its countryside location;
- The sustainability of the development;
- The effects of the development on highway safety and accessibility;
- The effects of the development on the character and appearance of the local landscape;
- The effects of the development on the amenities currently enjoyed by local residents, including heritage assets;
- The effects on the ecology and biodiversity of the surrounding area; and
- The risk of surface water flooding arising from the development.

1.65 Each of these considerations is addressed below.

### **Principle of Development**

1.66 The proposal seeks to invest in, improve on and raise the standard and quality of the tourism offer at the site's location. The development will result in a new site for tourism use, which would provide a significant contributor to the local economy. An existing tourism facility can be found approximately 50m north of the site at the Stamford Caravan and Motorhome Club Site.

1.67 As noted above, Policies 11, 21, 22 and 23 seek to deliver rural economic prosperity through expansion to industries including tourism if they accord with Policy 25. Policy 25 sets out that opportunities to develop and diversify the rural economy will be supported, where it is of an appropriate scale and respects the rural character.

1.68 In conjunction, the NPPF supports sustainable rural tourism and expansion to tourist and visitor facilities in rural areas as a means of promoting a strong rural economy, and states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system. Policy 10 sets out development should seek to minimise increases in the demand for infrastructure and services, including through measures to encourage a reduction in car use.

1.69 The development proposal is felt to fully accord with the development plan and NPPF by providing a tourism asset of limited scale in an area which benefits from high quality greenspace and is close to an existing touring caravan site. The modest proposal strikes a balance between visitor numbers and biodiversity, landscape, and amenity, while taking care to avoid heritage impacts. While users would likely travel to the site by car, it is expected that users would utilise the sites remote location and woodland position to explore the countryside on foot or by bicycle.

## Sustainability

- 1.70 In terms of the strands of sustainable development identified under Paragraph 8 of the NPPF firstly, economically, the proposed development will help secure the delivery and long term success of the site as well as secure related economic benefits for jobs and the local economy. These include:
- The impact of any construction activity, including direct employment arising on and off site, and indirectly in suppliers of materials and services.
  - The impact of the project during its operational phase. The operation will employ people directly on site, but it will also generate indirect employment in suppliers of goods and services used by the establishment during its operation.
  - External impacts arising from the activities of visitors to the project when they are away from the site itself. These activities will have direct impacts in other establishments benefiting from visitor expenditure, and also indirect impacts as those establishments in turn purchase goods and services from suppliers.
  - Additional income impacts also arise as employees whose jobs are directly or indirectly supported by visitor spending themselves spend money on leisure and other activities.
- 1.71 In addition to the above, The British Holiday Home & Park Association 'UK Holiday Parks – Economic Impact Summary (2012)' sets out the total turnover and visitor expenditure as a result of the UK holiday park industry is approximately £4 billion per annum. Its total economic impact to the UK has been calculated as a Gross Value Added (GVA) contribution of £1.4 billion per annum, supporting a total of 53,000 direct and indirect jobs in the UK. On average, the total GVA per unit per annum for a rented static caravan unit is £6,900 into the local economy.
- 1.72 In terms of the social role, this extends to supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities. In this respect, the proposed development will enhance the infrastructure available to support and enhance people's enjoyment of the outdoors and the health benefits associated with that.
- 1.73 Environmentally, its location would avoid intrusion into any more remote or environmentally sensitive areas, thus causing the minimum harm to the countryside. The Fineshade Wood and nearby public rights of way provide immediate access into the natural environment and active transport opportunities to settlements such as King's Cliffe, minimising unnecessary travel and emissions.
- 1.74 Furthermore, the units will incorporate energy saving measures where possible. As largely pre-fabricated units, they will be delivered to the site ready for siting, which will help to reduce vehicle movements as part of the construction process, leading to less environmental pollution due to reduced vehicle mileage.
- 1.75 For all these reasons, the proposal contributes to the dimensions of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.

## **Highway Safety and Accessibility**

- 1.76 The application is accompanied by a Transport Statement which explored the accessibility and local transport options for the site, and found the site has access to a number of different local sustainable travel options. Personal Injury Accident data shows there are no road safety issues within the vicinity of the site, and the proposals will not create any. Trip generation of the proposed development has been calculated and is found to be low.
- 1.77 The site and proposals have been thoroughly assessed on Transport grounds and it is considered that there are no transport or highways issues which should result in planning permission not being granted.

## **Impact on Local Landscape**

- 1.78 The application is accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVA) which examines the likely landscape and visual effects of the project. The report sets out the caravan park scheme would not result in significant harm to the value of the landscape as there would be no loss of important landscape features or elements, and only minimal loss of the sites open characteristics. The well contained nature of the proposal within a landscape structure provided by trees, extensive tracts of mature woodland, and supplemented by new landscape planting, would limit the effects on the wider King's Cliffe Hills and Valleys character area.
- 1.79 The assessment concludes there would be very limited visibility of the proposed development from the publicly accessible locations within the nearby arable farmland, plantation woodland and leisure facilities at Fineshade Wood. Significant adverse effects on visual receptors within the study area would be limited to walkers using a footpath which lies adjacent to the north and western boundaries of the application site. In the long term, planting will provide an attractive and well screened location for the proposed development.

## **Residential Amenity**

- 1.80 There are no residential properties close to the site. There is no impact therefore on residential amenity in respect of loss of privacy, overshadowing, noise or disturbance. Further, the proposed planting will soften the impact of the development for residents who have views of the site. It is therefore considered that the levels of amenity currently enjoyed by existing residents in the area will not be unduly harmed by this proposal.

## **Ecology**

- 1.81 As noted above, the application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. The PEA found that the proposed lodge site comprised an area most characteristic of poor semi-improved grassland, but with the potential to support a more diverse flora. It is therefore recommended that a more detailed National Vegetation Classification survey is undertaken in late spring/summer to gain a clearer understanding of the species-diversity.
- 1.82 A desk study identified five statutory designated sites within 5km of the site, and the majority of these were far enough away that the development of the site would have no effect upon them. They are sufficiently screened and buffered from the site by the surrounding landscape



that it is unlikely that any air- or water- borne pollutant would reach them during development of the site.

## **Noise**

- 1.83 The application is accompanied by a Noise Impact Assessment which involved undertaking a baseline noise survey to establish the prevailing noise climate in the locality of the site. The measured levels have been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework and currently available standards and guidance documents including World Health Organisation Guideline for Community Noise (1999) and BS8233:2014 Guidance on sound Insulation and noise.
- 1.84 The report concludes that appropriate external and internal noise criteria have been considered to minimise adverse impacts on health and quality of life as a result of the new development. The proposed scheme is not expected to experience a significant adverse noise impact and the site is considered acceptable for the proposed holiday use.

## **Heritage**

- 1.85 A Grade II listed building can be found immediately to the north of the site. Paragraph 189 directs local planning authorities to 'require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' significance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance'.
- 1.86 The accompanying Heritage Statement identified the legislation, planning policy and guidance that is relevant to heritage issues regarding the proposal site. The report finds that no designated heritage assets would be physically impacted by any part of the proposed development, and any potential effects would be in the form of loss of significance as a result of change within the setting of the asset.
- 1.87 The assessment found the proposed development would result in 'less than substantial' harm to the significance of a Grade II listed building, where the assessed level of harm is 'negligible'. As such, the application should be assessed against the balancing process of public benefit. The result means there would be no loss of significance of any Historic Landscape Character type.

## **Flood Risk**

- 1.88 The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment. The Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning indicates that the site is located within Flood Zone 1 therefore the proposed development is considered to have a low risk of fluvial and tidal flooding. In addition, the site is also considered to have a low risk of flooding from all other sources.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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- 1.89 RPS Planning and Development has been instructed to act on behalf of the Applicant, Countrywide Parks Limited, the owners of the site. Planning permission is sought for the development of up to 32 high quality timber lodges on an area of 1.202 hectares. The preceding sections of this Statement establish the planning policy and history relevant to the proposed development
- 1.90 The principle of the type of development proposed, seeking to invest in the rural economy and to provide quality holiday accommodation for the tourism sector upon which East Northamptonshire relies, is supported by the development plan and the NPPF. The benefits to the local economy through tourism are significant and long term. The proposal, through its economic as well as environmental and social benefits, contributes to and accords with the Government's key objective of delivering sustainable development. The proposal is policy compliant, and is in accordance with the development plan.
- 1.91 The supporting documentation provided with the application demonstrate that no other material considerations exist that cause such harm to outweigh the benefits of the proposal. Appropriate mitigation is proposed where necessary.
- 1.92 For all these reasons, the proposal is considered to have significant merit and should receive the support of the local planning authority.

## FIGURES

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## FIGURE 1 – SITE LOCATION PLAN

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**Notes**  
 1. This drawing has been prepared in accordance with the scope of RPS's appointment with its client and is subject to the terms and conditions of that appointment. It is not to be used for any other purpose without the written consent of RPS. RPS shall not be responsible for any errors or omissions in this drawing or any consequences arising therefrom, whether or not such errors or omissions are caused in whole or in part by the client and only for the purposes for which it was prepared and provided.  
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**Legend**  
 Application Boundary

Rev	Description	Date	Initial	Checked



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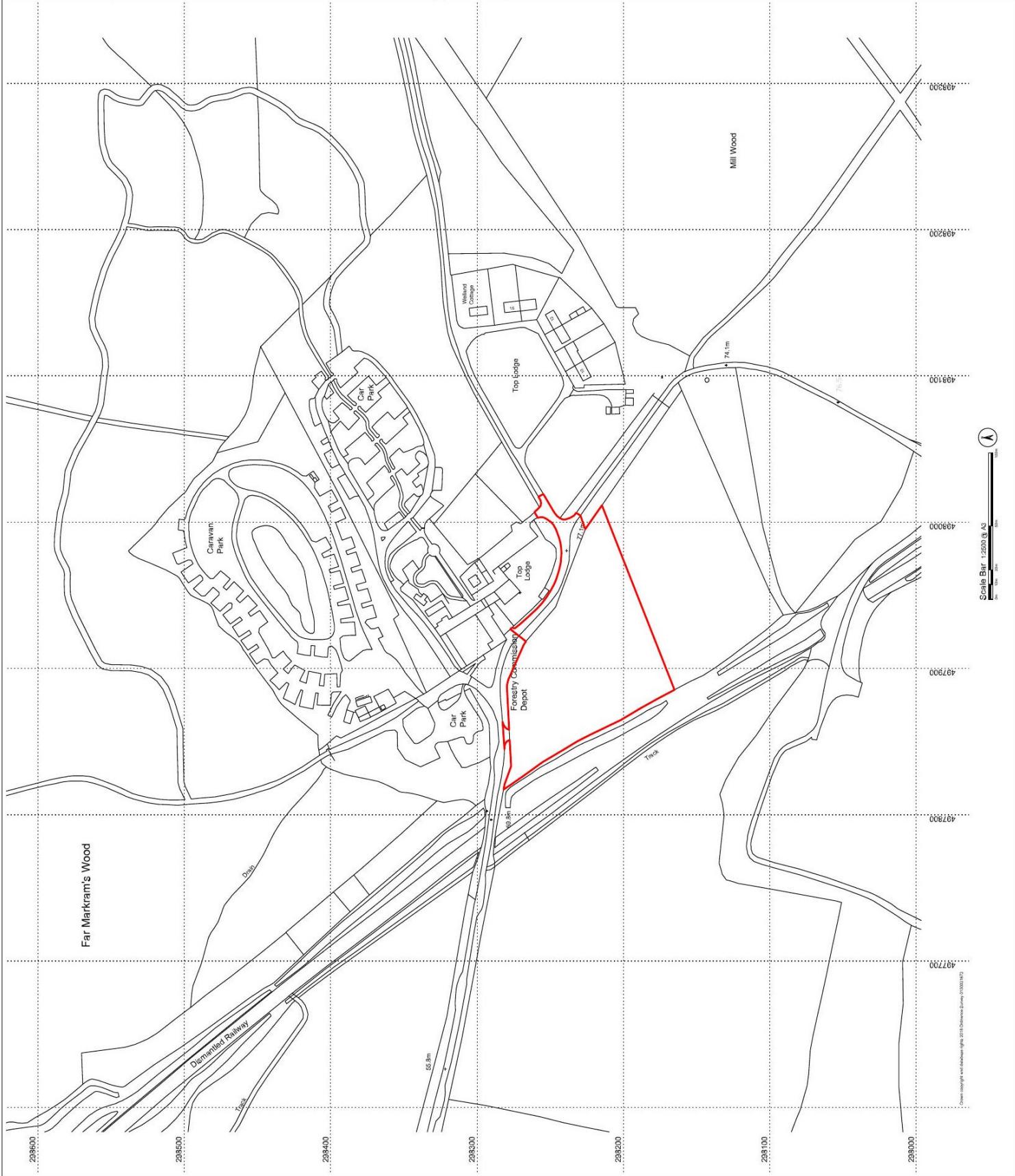
**Client** Countrywide Park Homes

**Project** Land south of top lodge, Fineshade, Corby, NN17 3BB

**Title** Site Location Plan

**Status** DRAFT  
**Drawn By** AJC  
**Scale @ A3** 1:2500  
**Job Ref** PPS1217  
**Date Created** Nov-18

**Drawing Number** 1217-0001-02  
**Rev** -



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**FIGURE 2 – SITE LAYOUT PLAN**

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**Legend**

- Application Boundary
- Single static unit and associated parking bay
- New bitmac access track around site
- Existing tree planting adjacent to and within site boundary
- New tree planting
- Native hedgerow mix
- Native shrub mixed

Rev	Description	Date	Initial	Checked



20 Western Avenue, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX14 4SH  
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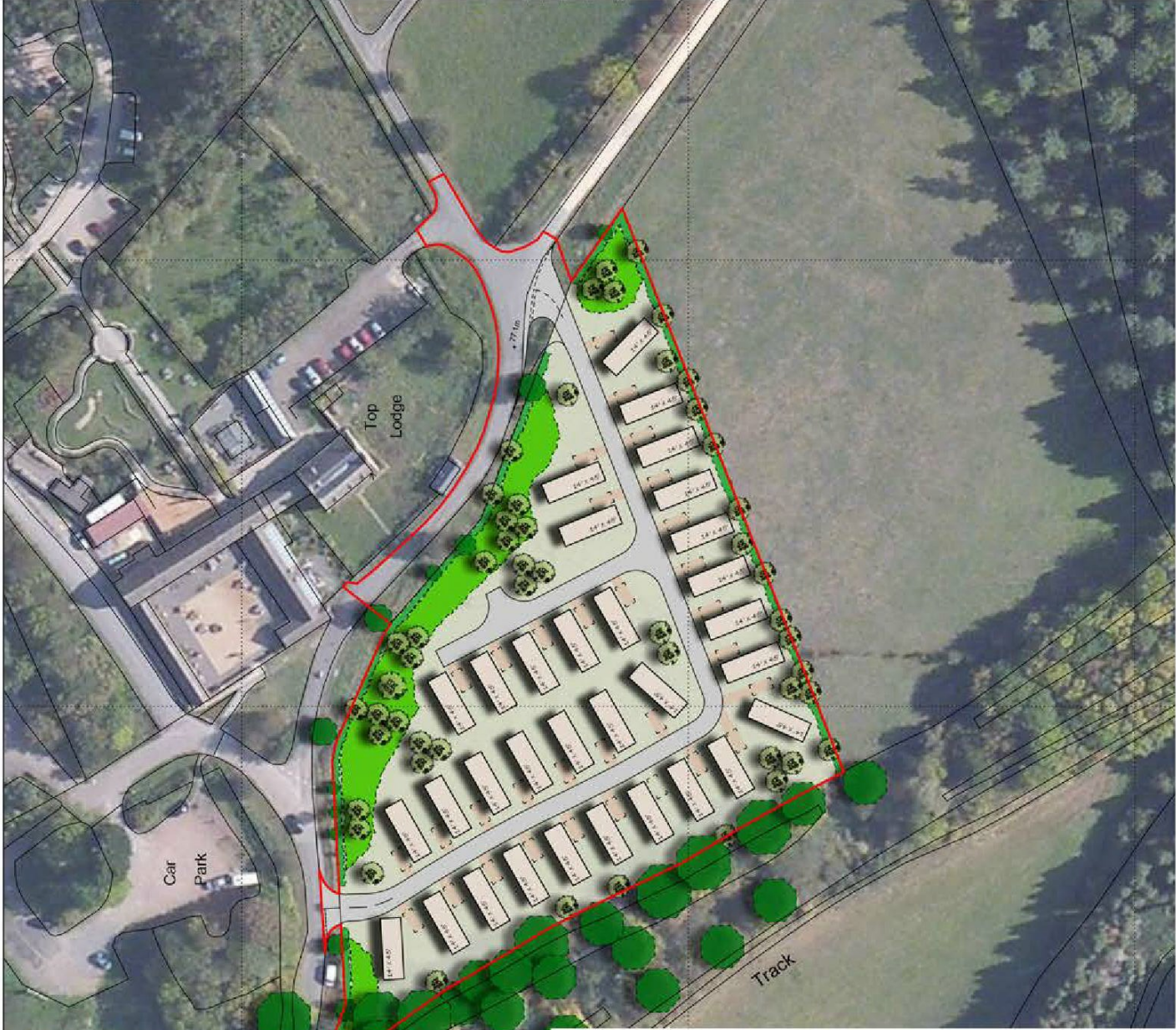
Client Countrywide Park Homes

Project Land south of top lodge, Fineshade, Corby, NN17 3BB

Title Illustrative Site Layout Plan

Status DRAFT  
 Drawn By AJC  
 Scale @ A3 1:1000  
 PM/Checked by PGDH  
 Date Created 11-Nov-18

Drawing Number 1217-0002-04



**Schedule of Plant Species**

Grassland Seed Mix	
E11 Flowering Lawn Mixture	
Latin Name	Common Name
Galium verum	Lady's Mantle
Leucanthemum vulgare	Rough Hawkbit
Lotus corniculatus	Bladder Tick
Festuca ovina	Cynodon
Ranunculus acris	Maadame
Ajuga reptans	Common Sorrel
Trifolium pratense	Wild Red Clover
Grass	
Agrostis capillaris	Common Bent
Cynodon dactylon	Crested Dogtail
Festuca ovina	Sheep's Fescue
Phleum pratense	Timothy

Native Hedgerow Mix	
Individual shrubs to be planted in pits, 300mm diameter and 300mm deep. Mulch with 80% clean topsoil well mixed with 20% Planting and Mulching Compost and 50g granular fertilizer.	
Latin Name	Common Name
Cornus sanguinea	Dogwood
Corylus avellana	Hazel
Elaeagnus angustifolia	Silver Cholla
Fraxinus excelsior	Common Ash
Ulmus glabra	Field Elm
Rosa canina	Wild Rose
Malus sylvestris	Domestic Apple

Native Hedgerow Mix	
Individual shrubs to be planted in pits, 300mm diameter and 300mm deep. Mulch with 80% clean topsoil well mixed with 20% Planting and Mulching Compost and 100g granular fertilizer. The base of the pit is to be broken up to a depth of 200mm to aid drainage. Barkchips material well mixed to avoid settlement. Trees supported with a single stake to a depth of 200mm at a 30 degree angle. Tree attached to stake with two ties.	
Latin Name	Common Name
Acer campestre	Field Maple
Cornus sanguinea	Dogwood
Crataegus monogyna	Common Hawthorn
Malus sylvestris	Domestic Apple
Malus domestica	Apple
Viburnum opulus	Wayfaring Tree

Native Trees	
Individual trees to be planted in pits, 1m diameter and 450mm deep. Backfilled with 80% clean topsoil well mixed with 20% Tree Planting and Mulching Compost and 100g granular fertilizer. The base of the pit is to be broken up to a depth of 200mm to aid drainage. Barkchips material well mixed to avoid settlement. Trees supported with a single stake to a depth of 200mm at a 30 degree angle. Tree attached to stake with two ties.	
Latin Name	Common Name
Alnus pendula	Downy Alder
Alnus incana	Common Alder
Salix caprea	Crab Apple
Salix alba	White Willow

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