

**20/00284/FUL
NON-MAJOR**

Rowe

**HILTON
Councillor Frank Beardsmore
Councillor Bob Cope**

Hill Farm Bognop Road Essington WOLVERHAMPTON WV11 2AZ

The retention of the caravan compound (22 maximum) for a period up to 2 years accommodating motorway workmen Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights.

1. SITE DESCRIPTION AND PLANNING HISTORY

1.1 Site Description

1.1.1 The application site is approximately 0.4ha and is located at Hill Farm which is located off Bognop Road outside of Essington. Hill Farm is a farmhouse located at the end of a private track. The house has large fishing pools to the front and has a large area of hardstanding to the rear. The site slopes towards the M54 which is to the north of the site. The site offers leisure activities including clay pigeon shooting and trout fishing, and there is an existing caravan compound for workers' accommodation.

1.2 Relevant Planning History

1986, Retention of earthworks and use of land and building for clay pigeon shooting including office and changing facilities, Approved, 86/00951

1986, Change of use of land and buildings to outdoor and indoor recreational use including fishing, archery, air rifle shooting and ancillary facilities, Approved 86/00991

1986, Erection of radio mast, Approved, 86/01023

1987, Conversion of farm building to indoor recreational use, Approved, 87/01031

1991, Use of field for car boot sales, Approved, 91/00848

1993, Use of land for car boot sales for 26 weeks from July to December, Approved, 93/01060

1995, Variation to condition 8 of planning permission SS1108/89/SS70/92 for the rerouting of the internal haul road, Approved, 95/00480

2013, The retention of the caravan compound (22 maximum) for up to a period of two years, accommodating motorway workmen on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights, Approved 13/00106/FUL

2015, The retention of the caravan compound (22 maximum) for a period up to 2 years accommodating motorway workmen Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights, Approved 15/00989/FUL

2. APPLICATION DETAILS

2.1 The Proposal

2.1.1 The application is for the retention of the caravan compound for further temporary period of two years. This would be for a maximum of 22 caravans for motorway workmen for their accommodation on Monday to Thursday evenings. The original temporary consent for this use (13/00106/FUL) lapsed on the 31/03/15 and was renewed in 2015 for a further two years (15/00989/FUL). This application is retrospective as a number of caravans are presently on the site.

2.1.2 The caravans are individually owned by the workmen who travel from around the country. The men are employed on a variety of projects including smart motorway construction and preliminary works in preparation for the M54/M6 link.

2.1.3 The caravans do not have a fixed position as they move on and off the site, with no more than 22 allowed at any time. Sanitary facilities for the workmen are provided in the existing building.

2.2 Agent Submission

2.2.1 A design and access statement has been submitted.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

The site is within the West Midlands Green Belt.

Core Strategy

GB1: Development in the Green Belt.

EQ4: Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape

EQ9: Protecting Residential Amenity

EQ11: Wider Design Considerations

EQ12: Landscaping

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Supplementary Planning Document

Green Belt and Open Countryside SPD

4. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Councillors: No comments received [expired 20/05/2020]

Parish Council: No comments received [expired 20/05/2020]

County Highways: *No objections* [received 13/05/2020]

Highways England: No comments received [expired 20/05/2020]

Environmental Health: No comments received [expired 20/05/2020]

Neighbours: No comments received [expired 20/05/2020]

A site notice was posted on the 29/04/2020.

5. APPRAISAL

5.1 The application is being presented to Planning Committee because it is contrary to Policy GB1.

5.2 Key Issues

- Principle of development
- Very special circumstances
- Impact on the Green Belt and Visual amenity
- Impact on neighbouring amenity
- Highways

5.3 Principle of development

5.3.1 The site is within the Green Belt where policy GB1 states that a material change in use of land should have no material effect upon the openness of the Green Belt, or the fulfilment of its purposes.

5.3.2 The stationing of up to 22 caravans would have a material effect upon the openness of the Green Belt and as such the proposal would represent inappropriate development within the green Belt.

5.3.3 Paragraph 132 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

5.4 Very special circumstances

5.4.1 Paragraph 144 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special

circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

5.4.2 The caravans are used by workers currently involved on a variety of highway projects including smart motorway construction and preliminary works in preparation for the M54/M6 link. Therefore, the need for the base to be located with good access to motorway links is justified. The project was set up by the Highways Agency and the temporary planning permission gives the opportunity for the need to be reviewed in the future.

5.4.3 The caravans are tourers, not statics and are owned individually by the workmen and therefore are easily mobile.

5.4.4 The temporary nature of the proposal and the temporary nature of the structures which can easily be removed when the planning permission lapses, combined with providing a facility to accommodate workmen who are conducting works on the motorway, benefiting not only the District but the national highway network, in my view amount to very special circumstances required to justify inappropriate development within the Green Belt.

5.5 Impact on the Green Belt and visual amenity

5.5.1 Openness is an essential characteristic of the Green Belt. Openness has both a visual and spatial aspect. The latter can be taken to mean the absence of built form.

5.5.2 Although collectively 22 caravans is a relatively large amount of development in the Green Belt, individually they are fairly small in size and temporary in nature. Although they undoubtedly have an impact on openness, in this instance, given the very special circumstances, it is not considered to be significant.

5.3.3 Policy EQ11 of the Core Strategy requires that in terms of scale, volume, massing and materials, developments should contribute positively to the street scene and surrounding buildings, whilst respecting the scale of spaces and buildings in the local area.

5.5.4 There is extensive vegetation binding the site adjacent to the motorway that screens views from passing traffic. The site is at a considerable distance from Bognop Road therefore views cannot be achieved from here. It is therefore considered that the visual amenity of the landscape and street scene would not be compromised and additional planting is not required.

5.5.5 The design of the caravans cannot be controlled through the planning process because they are designed through the specification of the manufacturer. As there is limited visibility of the site from the surrounding area there are no detrimental wider design considerations; complying with Policy EQ11.

5.6 Impact on neighbouring amenity

5.6.1 In accordance with Local Plan Policy EQ9, all development proposals should take into account the amenity of any nearby residents, particularly with regard to privacy, security, noise and disturbance, pollution, odours and daylight.

5.6.2 There are no dwellings within close proximity to the site; therefore, the proposal will not have an impact on any existing residents, complying with Policy EQ9. The caravans are currently parked in random positions on the site and to ensure they comply with site licensing regulations a condition has been imposed to this effect.

5.7 Highways

5.7.1 Policy EV11 seeks measures commensurate with developments to provide sustainable forms of transport. The site serves a purpose for workmen who need to be at this location because they are conducting works on the motorway. It is therefore unlikely they can get to work via public transport or via bicycle.

5.7.2 Policy EV12 requires appropriate parking and the site is of appropriate size to provide parking provision.

5.7.3 The scheme has been approved before, and no concerns have been received over highway safety. It is considered the proposal complies with policies EV11 and EV12.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 The site is within the Green Belt where there is a presumption against inappropriate development unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there are very special circumstances to outweigh the harm caused to the openness of the Green Belt.

6.2 On balance, I consider very special circumstances to exist to justify the departure from Green Belt policy, due to the temporary nature of the proposal and the temporary nature of the structures which can easily be removed when the planning permission lapses. The proposal provides a facility to accommodate workmen who are conducting works on the motorway which not only benefits the District but also the national highway network. I therefore recommend the application for approval.

7. RECOMMENDATION - APPROVE Subject to Conditions

Subject to the following condition(s):

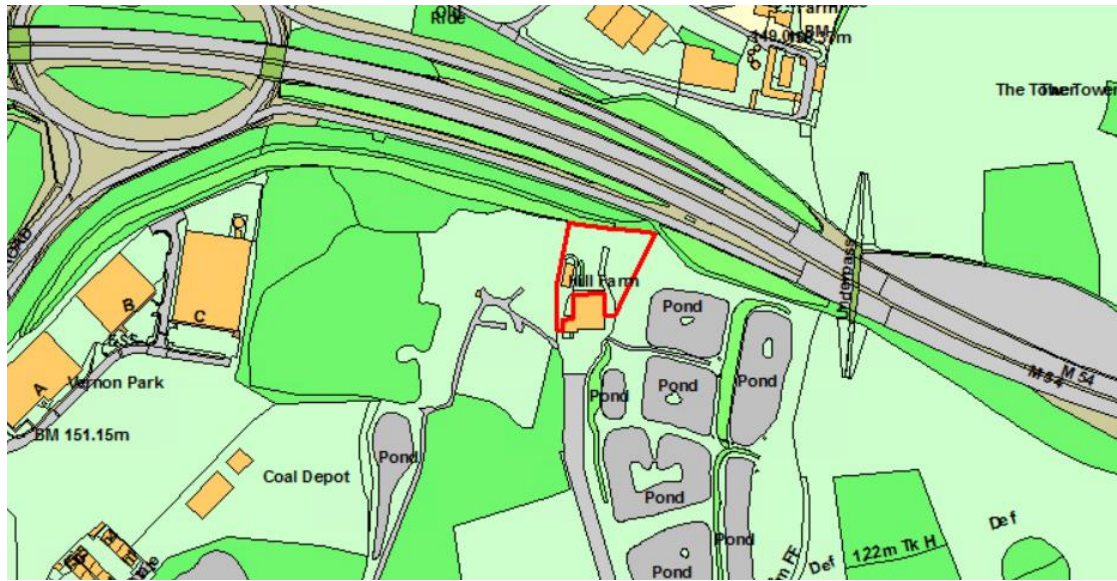
1. The use of the land for the stationing of caravans shall cease and all caravans shall be permanently removed from the site on or before 31st May 2022

2. The development shall be carried out within the redline as shown on the approved plans: 5000/1 and 1250/1 received 02/04/2020
3. Notwithstanding what is shown on the approved plans this permission does not grant or imply consent for the layout of the caravans which should conform with the most current Caravan Regulations.
4. There shall be no more than 22 caravans located on the application site at any time.

Reasons

1. The site is within the Green Belt within which, in accordance with the planning policies in the adopted Core Strategy, there is a presumption against inappropriate development.
2. In order to define the permission and to avoid doubt.
3. In order to define the permission and to avoid doubt.
4. In order to define the permission and to avoid doubt.

Proactive Statement - In dealing with the application, the Local Planning Authority has approached decision making in a positive and creative way, seeking to approve sustainable development where possible, in accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2019.



Hill Farm, Bognop Road, Essington WV11 2AZ