

Our ref: 784-A117626
Your ref: 21/01081/FUL

FAO Paul Duncan
Planning Services
Scottish Borders Council
Newtown St Boswells
Melrose
TD6 0SA

Date: 26th May 2022

Dear Paul,

APPLICATION REF: 21/01081/FUL CHANGE OF USE OF LAND AND PLOT LAYOUT TO FORM EXTENSION TO CARAVAN PARK. LAND WEST OF PEASE BAY HOLIDAY HOME PARK, COCKBURNSPATH

On behalf of our client, Verdant Leisure, I am writing to you with regards to the change of use application on the above site. We consider that, given the period of time which has passed since the applications submission, that it is beneficial to highlight the benefits of the scheme. We would also like to reiterate that tourism is recognised at the national level (in both the National Planning Framework 3 and Scottish Planning Policy) as one of the six key economic sectors which support Scotland's economy, a sector which has significant opportunities for growth and that it should be promoted and supported through local planning policy.

The emerging National Planning Framework 4 sets out that local development plans should support the resilience of the tourist sector and that new or extended tourist facilities should be extended (including caravan sites) in locations which can contribute to the viability, sustainability, and diversity of the economy. Tourism in 2019 was noted as being a major driver in the national economy, worth an estimated £11.6bn to the national economy and with record levels of overnight stays being recorded¹. The commitment to tourism as a key sector has also been reiterated as crucial in Scotland's post-Covid19 recovery. At the local level, tourism is noted as one of the main employment sectors in the area which should be supported and expanded, as noted in the Council's adopted Policy (ED7 and ED8).

Although outdated, the most recent Scottish Borders Tourism Action Plan (2017) noted that all new tourism developments should be assessed by the council's Economic Development Team, whilst no comments have been received by the team with regards to this application, we note they have supported the previous application which had a smaller quantum of development.

The proposal is to develop the site to contain an additional 19 pitches. These pitches will accommodate a mixture of privately owned lodges (12) and lodges which would be hired out for short term lets, or "hire fleet" lodges (7). The privately owned lodges can accommodate four people and the hire fleet lodges can accommodate a maximum of six people, therefore, the proposed development has potential to accommodate an additional 90 people at a time.

The bulk of the economic benefits would be realised through the hire fleet units. Figures and trends from our client's operation of these on the existing site (and other sites in their ownership) indicate that the proposed development could attract an additional 1,400-2,100 holiday makers to the area per year, which would result in increased spending within the immediate and wider area.

The expansion of the park will lead to an increase in employment opportunities in the area. The current site employs 20-30 people depending on the time of year. The proposed development would result in the creation of 3.5 full time positions being created, with potential scope for further employment on a seasonal basis.

¹ Visit Scotland Key facts on tourism 2019; Growth Sector Statistics 2021
(<https://www.gov.scot/publications/growth-sector-statistics/>)



Alongside this direct boost, the proposals will also help support employment within the locality via supply chains and through increased spending from holiday makers utilising local services, shops and facilities.

Summary

We consider the key benefits of the proposals can be summarised as follows

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| Creation of 3.5 jobs | Maximum 90 additional holiday makers at any given time | 1,400-2,100 additional holiday makers per annum |
|----------------------|--|---|

I trust this information is sufficient, however if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



Chris Bradshaw
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For and on behalf of Tetra Tech Limited