

**APPEAL UNDER SECTION 43A (8) OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING
(SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCHEMES OF DELEGATION AND LOCAL REVIEW
PROCEDURE) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013**

Land North East Of Runningburn Farm Stichill - 22/00575/FUL and 22/00039/RREF

Comments of the Planning Officer in Respect of New Information

The Local Review Body determined to proceed with the review of the above application with further procedure. In this instance, the Local Review Body requires comments from the Council's Planning Officer in response to:

- Business Plan – Confidential
- Sequential Site Assessment with Photographs
- Visual Impact Study
- Alternative Access with Photographs

These were not before the Planning Officer at the time of decision.

The two reasons for refusal are as follows;

1. The development would be contrary to Policy ED7 of the Local Development Plan 2016 in that insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that the proposal is capable of being developed and operated as a viable holiday accommodation business in this location, potentially resulting in unsustainable development in an undeveloped rural landscape. The need to site the development in this particular rural location has not been adequately justified. Furthermore, the proposal has not fully assessed the requirement of Policy ED7 to reuse existing buildings, brownfield sites and/or to locate the proposal adjacent to existing buildings. The proposed development would appear divorced from the operation of Runningburn Farm and wedding venue, and within previously undeveloped land. As a result, the proposed development would represent a sporadic and unjustified form of development in the countryside, which would set an undesirable precedent for similar unjustified proposals.
2. The development would be contrary to Policy PMD2 of the Local Development Plan 2016 in that its siting and design would not respect and be compatible with the character of the surrounding area, and would result in a significantly adverse impact upon existing landscape character and rural visual amenity. The proposed private vehicular access to the site would pass through a working farm steading which would conflict with agricultural movements and would result in adverse impacts on road safety and design standards contrary to PMD2.

I acknowledge the Business Plan. The Plan proposes that this accommodation will increase use/ revenue of the wedding venue. Development is said to be necessary to "keep up with competitors" in as much as competitors have on-site accommodation. A growing financial surplus is demonstrated which will be supplemented by holiday rentals when the accommodation is not being used as part of the wedding business.

The Sequential Site Assessment with Photographs has been considered. The new pond (featuring an arched pedestrian bridge) located in Field 12 has not been considered. This would be within 100-200m of the wedding venue as oppose to this site at 800-900m from the venue.

The Visual Impact Study is acknowledged.

The Alternative Access with Photographs is acknowledged. The Roads Planning Officer has provided observations that the proposed alternative access would remove the need for visitors to drive through the working farm. This alternative would remove his objection however the precise width and make-up of the track would need to be secured by planning condition. A second observation made concerns road safety and sufficiency concerns. Junction visibility and the provision of passing places are both conditional of approval on 20/00123/FUL & 16/00336/FUL.

The junction visibility improvements and provision of three further passing places have not been implemented. This proposal would result in increased traffic movements and would need to be secured as suspensive conditions on any approval in this instance given the failure of the applicant to implement under these previous permissions.

Appeal Statement

My observation is that excessive weight is being placed on requiring views and the tranquil setting for future guests, over and above a basic spatial requirement to cluster development. Clustering development reduces dependency on transport and in this instance would reduce requirement for new roads.

It is not accepted that such an isolated and sporadic situation is necessary to achieve privacy and isolation for guests. This site does not respect the pattern of development locally and would diminish amenity and character of the local area long term.

There are no credible environmental benefits arising from changing the use of this greenfield site to residential use. An existing pattern of development is identified clustered around the wedding venue and positioning the proposal in close association with the existing road network and building clusters is the recommended approach in this instance, thereby preserving the ponds as undeveloped land.

It is considered that the proposed development would result in an unsustainable development in an undeveloped rural landscape; and constitute a sporadic and unjustified form of development within previously undeveloped land. The siting and design would not respect or be compatible with the character of the surrounding area or pattern of development locally resulting in erosion of the rural visual amenity of the surrounding area.

It is not considered that the Appellant has demonstrated any significant benefit to the local economy which would outweigh the deleterious impacts that the proposal would have upon the amenity and environment of the site and surrounding area, and by the unnecessary levels of greenhouse gas emissions that would be generated by the construction and operation of this development.

Conclusion

- The neighbouring development pattern is positioned in association with the local road network and/or building clusters. High amenity ponds have recently been created in Field 12 and locating this tourism development closer to the venue would ensure sustainability principles are met in both siting and layout, negating requirement for new roads.
- Excessive weight is placed in the Appeal Statement on achieving privacy and views for guests over and above sustainability principles.
- This is a greenfield and entirely car dependent site for all interactions, especially future servicing and security.
- This does not comply with requirement for efficient use of land and resources.

The information submitted by the applicant has not changed the reasons for objection and it is respectfully requested that the review is dismissed and the application refused.