



Colton Parish Council

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The Planning Inspectorate,
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16th May 2010

Ref: APP/Q9495/A/10/2126121/NWF

Dear Sir/Madam,

Appication APP/Q9495/A/10/2126121/NWF Stricely Fell Caravan Site, Lake District National Park: use of land for 2 additional caravans

Colton Parish Council understands that you are considering an appeal from Spedding Brothers for the above application. We would like to draw your attention to the main reasons for our strong objection to this application (and indeed to a former application for 6 additional caravans, also refused).

1. Lake District National Park Local Plan: The application is in our view clearly contrary to at least three distinct National Park Local Plan policies, as follows:

- T9 (Static Caravan Sites) - This policy permits new static caravans only as part of a farm diversification scheme or where they are "within approved boundaries of established and well-screened static caravan sites" and "provided that the preservation of the natural beauty of the National Park is not compromised". This site cannot be said to be well screened. For example, one footpath runs right through the middle of the site and another on the edge of the site. In addition, the existing large chalet-style caravans (*please see attached photographs*) have high visual impact, appearing like modern bungalows in the middle of an area of natural beauty; any more of the same would, in our view, constitute unacceptable over-development of the site.

- NE5 (Quieter Areas) - The site is within a designated 'quieter area' of the Park. The policy clearly states that "*development will not be permitted where it would cause material increase in the level of recreational use*". Any further development of the site would undoubtedly lead to additional noise, disturbance and traffic which this policy is designed to restrict.

- S5 (Public Rights of Way) - Any further development would be contrary to this policy which states that: "Development which would adversely affect the amenity or the special qualities afforded by public rights of way will not normally be permitted." The Council considers that both the landscape and ecological/biodiversity impact of this proposed development would be very high, being an area of semi-natural mixed open woodland and scrub with open glades and rocky outcrops, accessible to the public via two footpaths for quiet enjoyment (Note these are footpaths only, not routes for vehicular traffic). This type

of landscape is characteristic of this south lakeland area, but is under increasing threat. The Council feels that it is exactly the sort of landscape that should be conserved in this quieter area of the National Park. Given how the existing site has resulted in extensive scrub clearance, tree felling and conversion of the footpath to a shiller track for vehicles, the proposed development is likely to cause more damage to the natural beauty and ecology of the area.

2. Existing Section 52 agreement: The site is subject to a Section 52 agreement made in 1981, which restricts the number of caravans to 4. This agreement followed an appeal against an enforcement notice to remove the existing 4 caravans. The authority eventually agreed to allow the caravans subject to this Section 52 agreement. We strongly support this agreement, and can see no reason to review it, nor has any reason been given for its review. To allow further caravans would effectively make such agreements worthless.

3. Definition of a Caravan: Colton Parish Council urged the National Park to fully test whether the existing chalet-style caravans (see photographs attached) conformed to the legal definition. The National Park's compliance team considered the matter and felt that they did. However, we believe this should be legally tested. The 'caravans' are constructed on site, with footings, wooden structures and slate roofs, and have the size and appearance of a modern bungalow.

Overall, the Parish Council, our local community and indeed the National Park members (according to the Development Control meeting that considered this application) have strong concerns about the steady pressure on this 'quieter' area of the Park for chalet-style development of this kind. It is totally incongruous in our view, and threatens the Sandford Principle to leave the natural beauty unimpaired for future generations.

Yours faithfully,

Mandy Lane
Clerk, Colton Parish Council