

Planning Application 7/2009/5452 - Stricely Fell Caravan Site: 2 Additional Caravans

REFUSED

(summary below is from Clerk's notes on the LDNPA Development Control Committee meeting on 2nd December 2009 - attending as an observer)

- Recommendation from Officers to the Committee had been: 'Delegate to Head of Development Management to APPROVE' .
- The Officer explained that although the large size and chalet-style form of the existing caravans was 'regrettable', unfortunately they did fall within the legal definition of a caravan. He explained that Approval of 2 additional caravans (sited within the curtilage of the existing 4) in his view would not cause significant further harm to the site as it exists at present. Approval would allow the Park to apply a useful additional 'Section 106' agreement to determine the exact placement of all 6 caravans within the existing Section 42 site.
- Members comments:
 - They referred to the helpful site visit (attended by Chairs of both Satterthwaite and Colton Parish Councils) and their 'deep shock' at the scale of the chalet-style caravans and the harm that had already been done to this 'beautiful, quiet corner of the Park'. The existing caravans were 'utterly inappropriate' and they could see no reason to allow more.
 - They noted the large number of objectors and that both Parish Councils had both objected on a range of policy grounds.
 - They referred to the Section 42 agreement (reached in 1981) that no more than 4 caravans shall be allowed on this site.
 - They could see little advantage in introducing the Section 106 agreement to fix the location of the existing 4 caravans within the Section 42 site boundary, as the scale of them and the fact that they had been constructed on site meant that moving them would be a large expense and this was unlikely to happen.
 - They expressed concern about falling into the trap of approving an application because a site had already been spoiled by existing development.
 - They asked why the scale and size of these caravans had not been queried before the first application for 6 more (7/2009/5668).
 - They proposed a motion to REFUSE the application.
- The application was REFUSED on the following grounds:
 - Quiet Area policy (NE5). 2 additional caravans represented a 50% increase that would cause an 'increase in traffic and material increase in the level of recreational use, visual intrusion, noise and other forms of disturbance'.
 - Policy T9 (Caravan Sites). The site was not well screened. The 2 additional caravans would make the whole site more prominent.
 - Existing Section 42 agreement that allows 4 caravans only.
 - Access to the site was poor.
- Definition of 'Caravan': Members asked the officers to take up again the legal definition of a caravan at government level, as they were concerned that other caravan sites in the Park could be similarly affected. Officers proposed that their Director of Planning be asked to take it up with the Heads of National Parks Committee (*not sure of its exact title*).