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Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership

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Your Ref: 15/05466/FUL
Our Ref: ph_200116_15_05466_FUL

29 January 2016

Dear Trystan

15/05466/FUL Change of use from licensed campsite to site for provision of 5No luxury pods, plant shed, associated drainage and landscaping including provision of wildlife pond (revised scheme)

The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership objects to this application.

We have concerns that the development is in keeping with the character of the area and feel there is insufficient information in the design sketches provided. We are encouraged by the obvious ethos of the business towards sustainability but would recommend that more information is provided on the actual design of the buildings before a decision is made on the application. We would encourage design styles and materials that are appropriate to the vernacular character of the village. We are unsure that the term pods accurately describes the proposed buildings.

We understand that there is a history of flooding of nearby property and note the applicant has not described measures to mitigate surface run-off. This development should seek to resolve any existing issues and not increase the risk of flooding to surrounding properties.

With respect to waste water and nutrients we expect this new development to comply with Shropshire Council's latest guidelines for development in the Clun Catchment and thus the conservation targets for Fresh Water Pearl Mussel.

The following policies are relevant to this application:

Para 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that:

*115. **Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty** in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.*

(Emphasis added)

Policy 10 of the Shropshire Hills AONB Management Plan 2014-19 approved by Shropshire Council states:

*The siting, design and specification of new developments for tourism and recreation should be to **high standards of environmental sensitivity and sustainability**. The following guidelines are recommended:*

- *Single developments of more than around ten accommodation units are less likely to be supported in small settlements and open countryside.*

- *Large parks of static caravans, cabins or chalets are likely to be intrusive. Smaller sites with good landscaping are preferable, and facilities for touring caravans and camping generally have a low impact as there are fewer permanent structures.*
- *Built facilities for recreation should only be allowed where their location and the activities they support are compatible with the special qualities of the AONB.*

(Emphasis added)

The Strategy and Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism for the Shropshire Hills and Ludlow 2011-2016, approved by Shropshire Council, has as its primary aim:

To develop, manage and promote the Shropshire Hills and Ludlow as a high quality sustainable tourism destination, in keeping with its focus on a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The Strategy's six Guiding Principles include:

- ***Bringing out opportunities to enjoy the area's special qualities and distinctiveness***
- ***Being ambitious about the sustainable aspects of tourism***
- ***Providing a quality experience for all visitors***

Shropshire Core Strategy Policy CS16: Tourism, Culture and Leisure states: (extract)

To deliver high quality, sustainable tourism, and cultural and leisure development, which enhances the vital role that these sectors play for the local economy, benefits local communities and visitors, and is sensitive to Shropshire's intrinsic natural and built environment qualities, emphasis will be placed on:

- *Supporting new and extended tourism development, and cultural and leisure facilities, that are appropriate to their location, and enhance and protect the existing offer within Shropshire.*
- *Promoting connections between visitors and Shropshire's natural, cultural and historic environment, including through active recreation, access to heritage trails and parkland, and an enhanced value of local food, drink and crafts.*
- *Supporting development that promotes opportunities for accessing, understanding and engaging with Shropshire's landscape, cultural and historic assets including the Shropshire Hills AONB, rights-of-way network, canals, rivers and meres & mosses. Development must also meet the requirements of Policy CS17.*
- *Supporting schemes aimed at diversifying the rural economy for tourism, cultural and leisure uses that are appropriate in terms of their location, scale and nature, which retain and enhance existing natural features where possible, and do not harm Shropshire's tranquil nature.*

(Emphasis added)

Shropshire Core Strategy Policy CS17: Environmental Networks states:

Development will identify, protect, enhance, expand and connect Shropshire's environmental assets, to create a multifunctional network of natural and historic resources. This will be achieved by ensuring that all development:

- ***Protects and enhances the diversity, high quality and local character of Shropshire's natural, built and historic environment, and does not adversely affect the visual, ecological, heritage or recreational values and functions of these assets, their immediate surroundings or their connecting corridors. Further guidance will be provided in SPDs concerning the natural and built environment;***
- ***Contributes to local distinctiveness, having regard to the quality of Shropshire's environment, including landscape, biodiversity and heritage assets, such as the Shropshire Hills AONB, the Meres and Mosses and the World Heritage Sites at Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal and Ironbridge Gorge.***

(Emphasis added)

Yours sincerely,

Phil Holden
AONB Partnership Manager