

New-Build Tourism Accommodation, Static Holiday Caravans & Holiday Lodges

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that new-build tourist accommodation, static holiday caravans and holiday lodges are located in appropriate locations and to allow flexibility for existing businesses within the countryside the opportunity to expand where appropriate.

10.51 Across North Norfolk, there is a broad range of tourist accommodation available including self-catering cottages, guest houses and hotels as well as static holiday caravans and holiday lodges. Collectively, they create a diverse choice of places for tourists to stay. The provision of a diverse range of tourist accommodation is desirable: tourists visiting the area can have positive impact on the economy.

10.52 The preferred locations for new-build tourist accommodation, static holiday caravans and holiday lodges is within the boundaries boundary of a designated settlements. This is to enable visitors to access a range of services by a choice of travel modes (including on foot). Such development will not normally be permitted in the Countryside in order to protect the area from new-build accommodation, static holiday caravans and holiday lodges being built across the District. This would not prevent the expansion of existing businesses, or the re-use of existing buildings.

New Para: The presumption is that new proposals should not be located within the Coastal Change Management Plan. However, where new build tourist accommodation is proposed within a designated Coastal Change Management Area the application is expected to be supported by evidence to demonstrate adequate warning and evacuation arrangements. This is to be demonstrate through a Coastal Erosion Vulnerability Assessment.

10.53 Static caravan sites can have a significant impact on the landscape and this is particularly felt in the main resort areas of Cromer, Mundesley and Sheringham where a series of adjoining sites are prominent in an otherwise largely undeveloped coast. The Council has an aspiration to relocate these sites away from the cliff-tops, and therefore, as an exception to the general presumption against new static caravan sites, they may be permitted where they directly result in the removal of an existing cliff-top caravan site to a site with a lesser landscape impact or away from an area at risk of erosion or flooding. On occasion, it may be appropriate for an existing site within the North Norfolk Coast AONB to relocate to another site in the AONB that has less impact than the current site. In these cases the direct and indirect impact of the proposal must be carefully considered (the AONB Tourism Impact Analysis report found that tourism growth must be sufficiently controlled and managed to mitigate any negative impacts).

10.54 The replacement of static caravan sites with lodge-style developments will be permitted where it improves the appearance and landscaping of the site or relocates a prominent or at-risk static caravan site. However, within the cliff-top zone the priority is to relocate these existing sites rather than consolidate their use. As with all development, proposals for any accommodation will only be allowed after it has been demonstrated that no adverse impact on the integrity of Natura 2000 Sites will result.

10.55 Hotel accommodation is defined as a Main Town Centre use and will usually need to comply with Policy ECN 4 'Retail & Town Centres'. Hotel accommodation may be permitted within employment areas, in line with Policy ECN 2 'Employment Areas, Enterprise Zones & Former Airbases'. However, this will not permit ancillary development such as self-catering units.

New Para: The extension to existing tourist accommodation section relates purely to extensions to these specific types of tourist accommodation. Expansions to tourist attractions and expansions to employment generating uses are set out within other policies within the plan.

Policy ECN 6: ~~New-Build~~ Proposals for Tourist Accommodation, Static Holiday Caravans & Holiday Lodges & Extensions to existing sites

~~New-build~~ Proposals for tourist Accommodation

~~New-build~~ proposals for tourist accommodation, static holiday caravans and holiday lodges¹ will be supported where:

1. the site is within the settlement boundary of a selected settlement; or
- ~~2. the proposal is for the expansion of an existing business; or~~
3. the proposal is for a replacement static caravan site or holiday lodge accommodation which would result in the removal of an existing clifftop static caravan site or the relocation of existing provision which is within the Coastal Change Management Area or Environment Agency Flood Risk Zone 3;²; and
4. the proposal demonstrates measurable biodiversity net-gains on site; and
5. The proposal would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon: the defined special qualities of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; the key characteristics and valued features of the defined Landscape Type (as set out in the North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment SPD); residential amenity; and the safety and operation of the local highway network.

~~in the case of business expansions and replacement developments, it is clearly demonstrated that the proposal would result in net benefit in terms of landscape and ecology when compared to the existing development and would not have a significantly detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring land uses, nor on the character of the area by virtue of increased noise and also impacts on light and highway safety and the operation of the highway network.~~

Where the development is for a hotel, this should demonstrate compliance with the sequential approach in accordance with national and local retail policies.

Extensions to existing tourist accommodation

Business expansion and extensions to existing tourist accommodation, static caravans and holiday lodges will be supported where:

1. the proposal demonstrates measurable biodiversity net-gains on site; and
2. The proposal would not have an adverse impact upon: the defined special qualities of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; the key characteristics and valued features of the defined Landscape Type (as set out in the North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment SPD); residential amenity; and the safety and operation of the local highway network.

All proposals within a designated Coastal Change Management Area shall demonstrate through a Coastal Erosion Vulnerability Assessment that the proposal will not result in an increased risk to life.

¹ Including buildings such as cabins and guest houses.

² Taking into account the equivalent risk from all sources of flooding

Use of Land for Touring Caravan & Camping Sites

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the use of land for touring caravan and camping sites is located in appropriate locations.

10.56 Across North Norfolk, there is a wide variety of accommodation available to tourists including (but not limited to) touring caravan sites, camp sites and glamping sites for all year round and seasonal uses. These sites can provide a range of seasonal, temporary tourist accommodation, differing in size and location. Such accommodation types are valuable in adding to the diverse choice of places for tourists to stay.

10.57 The use of land for touring caravan and camp sites has a lower impact than new-build accommodation as they are not permanently occupied and in winter months there may be little evidence of activity. However in summer months they can be intrusive in the landscape and may add to visitor pressure on particular areas if not controlled. As far as seasonal or temporary tourist accommodation is concerned, therefore, the policy approach taken will very much reflect the degree of protection of the area of land on which the proposal is being made, landscape character and visual impact, as well as the effects on infrastructure and communities are key considerations.

Proposals which do not require permanent structures to remain on site are likely to be considered to be more acceptable.

New Para: Proposals must have regard to national guidance and relevant policies within this Local Plan in relation to the sequential approach to flood risk

New Para: Where proposals for touring caravans and camping sites are proposed within a designated Coastal Change Management Area the application is expected to be supported by evidence to demonstrate adequate warning and evacuation arrangements. This is to be demonstrate through a Coastal Erosion Vulnerability Assessment.

Policy ECN 7: Use of Land for Touring Caravan & Camping Sites

The use of land³ for touring caravan and camping sites⁴ will be supported where:

1. the site lies within the settlement boundary of a selected settlement; or
2. the proposal is for the expansion of an existing business; or
3. the site lies outside of the boundary of a selected settlement but does not lie within the AONB, Heritage Coast, Undeveloped Coast or Environment Agency Flood Risk Zone⁵; and
4. **the proposal does not result in an increased risk of flooding**

³ The making of any material change to the use of land or the use of buildings (adapted from Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990)

⁴ Including (but not limited to) sites used for touring caravan and camping sites, glamping, yurts, tepees and shepherd's huts.

⁵ ~~Taking into account the equivalent risk from all scores of flooding.~~

All proposals within a designated Coastal Change Management Area shall demonstrate through a Coastal Erosion Vulnerability Assessment that the proposal will not result in an increased risk to life

~~in all cases there is no significantly detrimental impacts on the area's landscape, ecology, amenity of neighbouring land uses, and the character of the area by virtue of increased noise and impacts on light or highway safety and the operation of the highway network.~~

In all cases proposals must demonstrate measurable biodiversity net-gains on site; and that the proposal would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon: The key characteristics and valued features of the defined Landscape Type (as set out in the North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment SPD); residential amenity; and the safety and operation of the local highway network.

New-Build & Extensions to Tourist Attractions

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that tourist attractions that broaden the tourism opportunities across the District and extend the tourist season are encouraged in appropriate locations.

10.58 It is recognised that tourism development differs from other forms of economic development in that it is sometimes preferable for attractions to be located outside of settlement boundaries.

Therefore, whilst being within the boundaries of designated settlements is the preferred location for new build tourist attractions, attractions that broaden the tourist opportunities across the District and extend the tourist season will be welcomed in some instances.

10.59 Those tourist attractions defined as Main Town Centre uses (includes theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls and conference facilities) will need to comply with Policy ECN 4 'Retail & Town Centres'.

10.60 In the case of proposals in designated Countryside which do not involve the re-use of existing buildings, additional evidence will be required to demonstrate that there are no suitable existing buildings for re-use within the ~~vicinity~~ locality. This will be determined upon the basis of the type of application being made and pre-application advice should be sought to agree the scope of the sequential approach with the Local Planning Authority.

10.61 As with the use of land for accommodation, the policy approach taken will very much reflect the degree of protection of the area of land on which the proposal is being made, with landscape character and visual impact, as well as the effects on infrastructure and communities being key considerations.

New Para: The extension to existing tourist attractions section relates purely to extensions to these specific types of tourist attractions. Expansions to tourist accommodation and expansions to employment generating uses are set out within other policies within the plan.

Policy ECN 8: ~~New-Build & Extensions to Tourist Attractions~~ Tourist Attractions and Extensions to Existing Tourist Attractions

The Council will support proposals for new ~~build~~ tourist attractions⁶ and **extensions to existing attractions** across the District. Proposals will be supported where:

- ~~1. the site lies within the settlement boundary of a selected settlement; or~~
- ~~2. the proposal comprises an extension to an existing attraction;~~
3. the site does not lie within the AONB, Heritage Coast, or Undeveloped Coast⁷;
4. it has been demonstrated that there are no suitable buildings for re-use in the locality;

In all cases, **proposals must demonstrate measurable biodiversity net-gains on site; and that the proposal would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon: The key characteristics and valued features of the defined Landscape Type (as set out in the North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment SPD); residential amenity; and the safety and operation of the local highway network.**

Retaining an Adequate Supply and Mix of Tourist Accommodation

The purpose of this policy is to retain a mix of all types of tourist accommodation.

10.62 The existing stock of hotels, guest houses, bed and breakfasts and self-catering accommodation can provide an important role in support of the District's economy. However, this diverse range of accommodation can sometimes come under pressure for conversion, often to residential properties, particularly in locations where new residential properties are more strictly controlled.

10.63 The Council recognises the importance of maintaining vibrant and active local communities during off-peak tourism months and of striking a balance between providing permanent housing for local people and providing tourist accommodation to support the local community.

10.64 The policy therefore sets out an approach to protecting existing tourist accommodation from conversion to residential use where it may still be required for tourism. The policy resists the change of use, apart from in exceptional cases where it is clearly and satisfactorily demonstrated that there is sufficient local supply of accommodation.

10.65 The purpose of the policy is to retain a mix of all types of tourist accommodation. The requirement for a viability test prevents premature closure of facilities where demand still exists. However, it would allow for redevelopment if the use is no longer viable. A threshold has been applied for caravan /**camping** sites to reflect the Caravan Club and Caravan and Camping Club allowance for up to ~~5~~ **five (5)** units on certificated location sites.

Policy ECN 9: Retaining an Adequate Supply & Mix of Tourist Accommodation

Development proposals that would result in the loss of sites or premises currently, or last used, for tourist accommodation⁸ will be supported subject to:

1. alternative provision of equivalent or better quality and scale is available in the area or will be provided and made available prior to commencement of redevelopment; **or**

⁶ For recreational, cultural and leisure uses.

⁷ unless it can be demonstrated that the location is integral to the development

⁸ All hotels and other serviced establishments, all self-catering units, and touring/static **holiday** caravans/camping sites which provide more than 5 units.

2. the facility does not provide an important local facility or service⁹ to the community; and in all cases;
3. it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of retention at its current site.

An independent viability test must demonstrate that the use is no longer viable and that all reasonable efforts have been made to sell or let the property at a realistic price for a period of at least 12 months

⁹ ~~Public house / bar, restaurant or leisure facility where this is within the Countryside or is the last of its kind within a Large or Small Growth Town or a Large or Small Growth Village. As defined within Policy SD 6.~~