From:
To: DCAdmin
Subject: planning application 2019/90988
Date: 08 March 2020 18:24:26

Reference: Planning application 2019/90988

Proposal: Use of land for camping provision

Location: Land adjacent Lock 38, Marsden lane, Marsden HD7 6AF

I am writing to register my objection to the latest version of the proposal. I continue to follow Kirklees Council guidance (2018) that 'off the shelf wooden pods are classed as alien in a green belt woodland environment'. The situation is now further exacerbated by the erection of a residential building which according to the proposal will be occupied all year round. While this may help address the issue of site management, it represents an even more substantial invasion of Greenbelt land. Moreover, the dimensions of this building are not specified nor how heating, lighting, water supply and waste management facilities will all be provided.

The redrafted plan does not satisfactorily make the required case for why business concerns should constitute the special circumstances that might justify such a breach. Indeed it is evident that it does not meet the criteria for sustainable development. Even before the additional costs associated with the latest proposed changes are taken into account, as the applicant himself stated at the last planning meeting, it is unlikely to be a profitable concern. Moreover if, as the applicant argues, the benefit to the Marsden economy constitutes the special circumstances required, the case is not made effectively. There are no details re proposed opening dates for the site or the type of licence that will be applied for. There are no attempts to estimate number of visitors, length of stay, potential economic boost to the local area, and the precise employment opportunities that will be made open to the wider community. The claim of a 'great boost to the local economy' linked to 'creating a local business and employment' is neither quantified nor convincing.

Further questions can be raised over its claim that tourism will be significantly boosted. Information freely available from Kirklees council is selectively used to back this. As the website says, day visitors predominate in the area, although the Colne Valley does attract some overnight visitors, mainly in summer. Although in the minority, overnight visitors spend more on average and therefore are to be encouraged. It is by providing accommodation for overnight stays, that the applicant argues, tourism and the local economy will be boosted. However, what the applicant fails to point to is the existing availability of accommodation in the area. A short search on the web brings up a range of properties of different sizes and differing costs that would cater for the couples and families that according to Kirklees council are the typical overnight visitors. In fact the proposed campsite would be in direct competition with a number of established small-scale businesses for what is a very limited market. This could work against the potential profitability of both the proposed campsite and other businesses in the area.