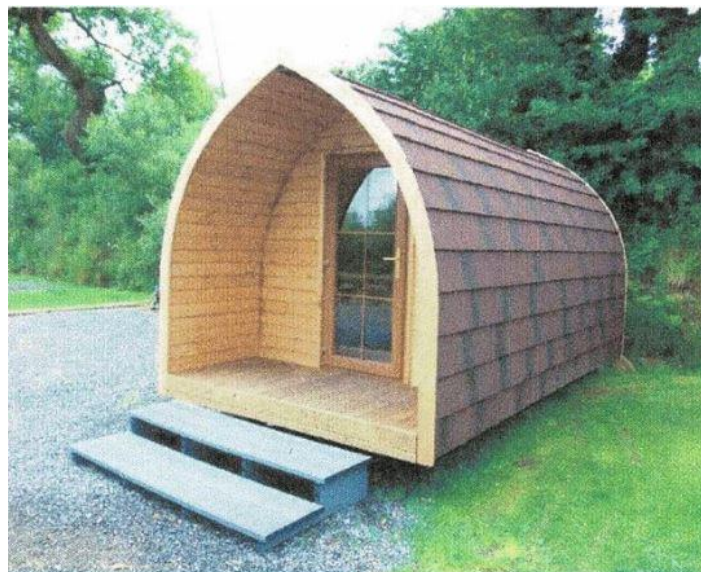


**CHANGE OF USE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND
TO PROVIDE
6 NO. CAMPING PODS AND MOBILE AMENITY BLOCK**

AT

**CROSSLEY FARM
CROSSLEY LANE
MIRFIELD
WF14 0NX**

PLANNING STATEMENT



1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.01 The proposal which is the subject of the accompanying planning application, is for the provision of 6no. camping pods and an associated amenity block on agricultural land in the ownership of Crossley Farm.
- 1.02 In October 2019, a pre-application enquiry was submitted for this proposal under application no. 2019/20429.
- 1.03 Following on from a meeting with the planning officer (Nia Thomas) to discuss the contents of the consultation responses and the subsequent officer's report dated 12th March 2020, it was decided that the responses were sufficiently positive to justify the full planning application accompanying this planning statement.
- 1.04 This statement is accompanied by and should be read in conjunction with:
- Full planning application form
 - Location Plan
 - Site Layout
 - Camping Pod drawing
 - Mobile Washroom Block drawing

2.0 THE APPLICATION SITE

- 2.01 The application site is situated in the corner of an open field which is designated as Green Belt on the Kirklees Local Plan.
- 2.02 The site will be enclosed on the west and south boundary by existing hedges which will be reinforced by additional native planting. Being three sided in shape, the north east boundary will be delineated by a new hedge curving round to meet the extremities of the other sides. The hedge will be planted with a mix of native hedgerow species and will form a visual barrier when viewed from the open fields beyond.
- 2.03 The site is located approximately 350 metres due east of Crossley Farm and its associated livery stables which front onto Crossley Lane directly to the west of the farm complex.



Access to the site from Crossley Farm



Farm track access looking back to Crossley Farm

- 2.04 Access to the site is gained for the majority of the way by the existing farm track which is currently used to service the fields either side and beyond the site to the east. Vehicle passing places are to be built at suitable intervals. For the final 90 metres to the site, a new gravel track is to be constructed to run from the existing track alongside an existing hedge, which is to be reinforced with additional planting to screen the track from the open fields to the east.



Application site looking towards the western boundary - hedgerow to be reinforced



Application site looking towards the southern boundary – hedgerow to be reinforced



*View across field where new track is to be formed in to site –
hedgerow to be reinforced*

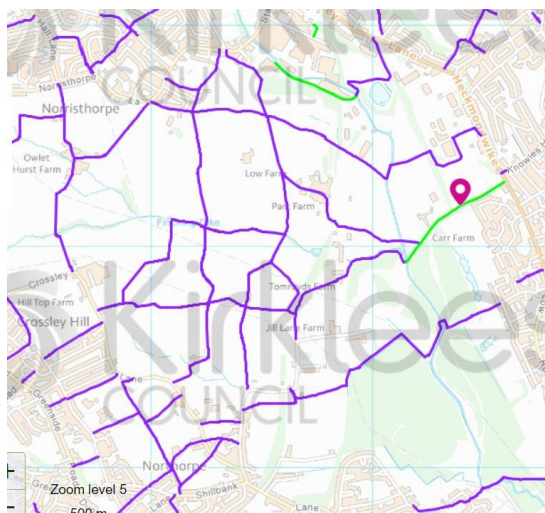
- 2.05 The camping pods are to be positioned so that they radiate out from the internal angle formed by the intersection of the existing two boundary hedges. In this position, facing outwards, greater privacy is afforded and advantage can be taken of the panoramic view across the valley.



Site plan showing the camping pod and amenity block arrangements

3.00 THE LOCALITY

- 3.01 Crossley Farm and its agricultural curtilage is situated to the north east of Mirfield in the Green Belt. It is situated along Crossley Lane which runs predominantly in the Green Belt around the north and east of the built up area of Mirfield.
- 3.02 The Green Belt area within the site and to the east offer various visitor attractions, all within walking distance accessed by the network of Public Rights of Way surrounding the site. (see extract below)



- 3.03 The farm itself will also provide visitors with an appreciation of farm life as there are a pedigree flock of sheep which visitors can feed and participate in the lambing season. The farm also has chickens, pigs, goats and cows which visitors can feed and pet to reinforce the farm life experience. The equine activities associated with the livery stables are a further attraction for visitors.
- 3.04 The farm also produces their own beef and lamb meat boxes along with eggs from the chickens and dairy produce from the cows, all of which will provide additional income for the farm.
- 3.05 The proposal for the Camping Pods as a diversification of the core farm business and the local visitor attractions which they offer, are in compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 83 Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy.

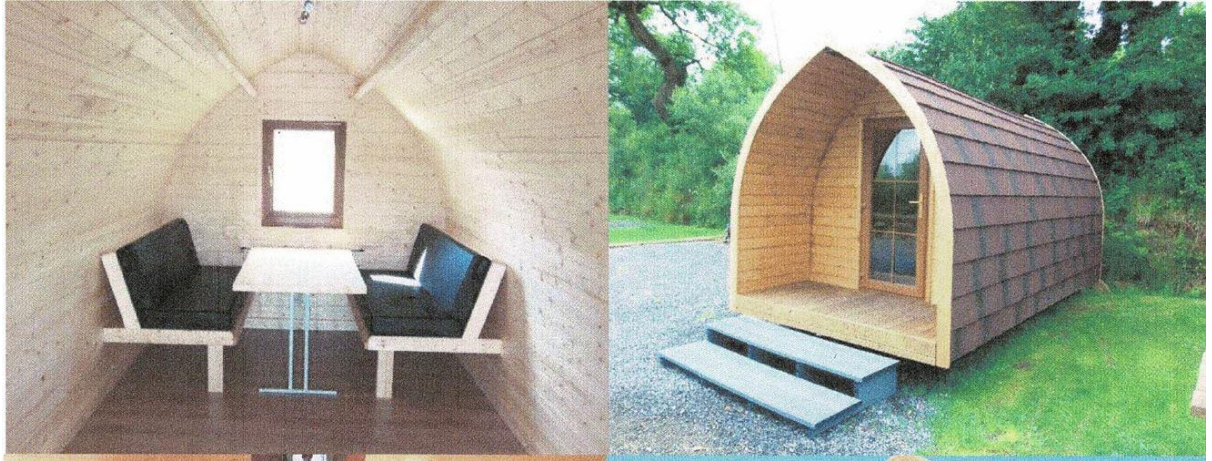
4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

- 4.01 The application is allocated as Green Belt on the Kirklees Local Plan.
- 4.02 Relevant policies from the National Planning Policy Framework in particular paragraphs 83 – Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy and 145,146 – Proposals affecting the Green Belt.
- 4.03 Relevant policies from Kirklees Local Plan, including:
 - LP1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development
 - LP2 – Place shaping
 - LP10 – Supporting the Rural Economy
 - LP23 – Core walking and cycling network
 - LP24 – Design
 - LP30 – Ecology
 - LP56 – Facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation

5.0 FEASIBILITY AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.01 The site will consist of 6no. luxury camping pods with a mobile amenity block which included male and female toilets, basins and showers.
- 5.02 The popularity of camping pods as a form of short term holiday has increased significantly in the past few years and is forecast to increase even more with an ever increasing number of people electing to holiday closer to home due to the current restrictions.

- 5.03 The applicant has researched that there will be sufficient demands for the camping pods from people interested in visiting the area for the local attractions, experiencing the farm life and equestrian activities which the farm and equestrian centre have to offer.
- 5.04 There is also the novelty value for people to experience this form of holiday accommodation for the first time. In addition, there will be additional bookings from visitors who have, already camped previously and want to repeat the experience again.



- 5.05 The camping pods are individually manufactured in a factory and are delivered to site in a completed state. They are constructed from renewably sourced timber for the framing and cladding and are highly insulated. The design of the pods is to a shape and size which has previously been approved by local authorities and national parts throughout the United Kingdom and has already been approved by Kirklees Council on previous planning applications.
- 5.06 Site preparation for the pods involves the construction of a levelled concrete base the same size as the pod with a small decked area in front of the door as sitting out space. Vehicular access and parking is constructed by a gravel track and single car parking space adjacent to the pod for unloading and loading. Campers will be encouraged to leave their vehicles at the existing farm parking area when not in use.



- 5.07 A mobile amenity block will be positioned as shown on the site layout to serve the pods with a mini treatment plant to treat the foul drainage, positioned in the open field beyond the application site. The treated water will be discharged under the field by a suitably designed soakaway system.

6.0 PRE-APPLICATION RESPONSE – COMMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.01 We have highlighted sections of the pre-application response in italics, followed by our comments and how we propose to implement them, set out below:

6.02 6.1 Principle of development

In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport).

Since the issue of the pre-application response, a new footpath and improved road surface has been laid along Crossley Lane affording improved access on foot, by bicycle and car. The nearest bus stop is situated at the junction of Crossley Lane and Sunny Bank Road giving access into Mirfield centre, Dewsbury and beyond. Also with the application site interlaced by a network of Public Rights of Way leading to local amenities and attractions, the site can be considered to be in a sustainable location.

6.03 6.1 Principle of development

Should a future planning application be submitted, the applicant would be required to provide evidence to demonstrate that the camping pods facility would benefit the rural economy and how the facility would interact with the activities within Crossley Farm.

Evidence has been supplied above regarding the local amenities and the interaction with the existing farm and livery business. The camping pods will

interact with the livery stables which can offer a 'bring your own horse' holiday. The horses can be stabled, the schooling fields can be used and there are miles of off-road hacking in the surrounding area. Visitors bringing their own horses would generate more income by providing feed and bedding and generate more rural work by farming the land to provide the hay and feed. Local shops, bakery and butchers are also within walking distance of the site, thereby providing additional income for local businesses.

6.04 6.2 Visual Amenity

Should a future planning application be submitted, regard should be given to Policies LP24 and LP56 of the Kirklees Local Plan which recognise the importance of ensuring that the design reflects the character of the Green Belt location in which the proposed development would be read in. Sensitive design, including an appropriate scale and the use of traditional materials should be considered when exploring the finer details of the proposal.

Mention has already been made above regarding how the site will be ecologically enhanced by the creation of a new hedgerow and reinforcement of existing hedges. The pods are to an already recognised and approved design and construction and are built on skids so they are fully removable by trailer.

6.05 6.2 Visual Amenity

Consideration should be given to moving the camping pods to be closer to Crossley Farm

This suggestion has now been taken on board with the site moved from the position shown on the pre-application site plan to a location closer to the farm. This new position will be less intrusive in the Green Belt and will provide a shorter access route and afford better screening provision.

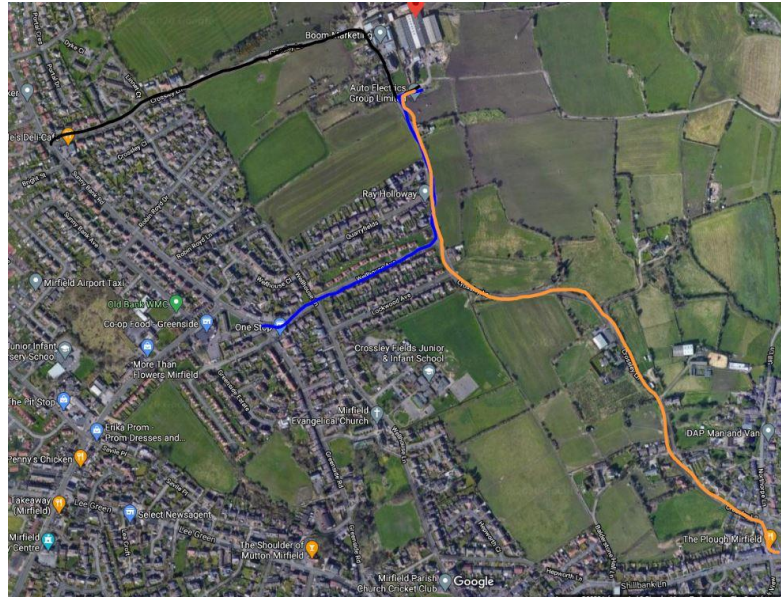
6.06 6.2 Visual Amenity

It is considered that no vehicular accesses should be created from Crossley Farm to the field.

Vehicular access will be required to the pods for unloading and loading. However, the shorter distance to the new site will minimise vehicular distance travelled. Visitors will be encouraged not to park next to the pods and to leave their cars at the farm. Electric charging points at this location will also encourage compliance.

6.07 6.4 Highway Safety

It has also been noted by KC Highways DM that visibility at the junction at Crossley Lane and Sunny Bank Road is also a concern and that there is an absence of footways along this part of the road.



See 6.02 above regarding the new footway. The map shown above highlights in black the route along Crossley Lane leading to its junction with Sunny Bank Road. However, alternative routes have been highlighted in orange and blue. The orange access is from Shillbank Lane, then onto Crossley Lane and the blue route is further down Sunny Bank Road. Both alternative accesses have better junction visibility.

6.08 6.5 Other matters

Serious concerns are raised in relation to the users of the footpaths and the increase in vehicular traffic.



The public right of way is highlighted in black. In areas, the right of way runs adjacent to the track, but there is a hedgerow separating the footpath to the vehicle track. In order areas there is a field separating the right of way and

the vehicle track highlighted in blue. At no point is the right of way situated on the farm track used as access to the application site.

6.09 *6.5 Other matters*

Electric Charging Points

See paragraph 6.06 above.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.01 Following on from the mainly positive feedback contained in the pre-application response, we believe we have demonstrated how the proposal will accommodate the points raised and how it complies with both national and local planning policy.

7.02 This type of short stay holiday accommodation is currently proving very popular, with a forecast for the sector to expand rapidly as a consequence of the current Covid climate, with people choosing to holiday closer to home.

7.03 The applicants have therefore identified providing this type of holiday accommodation as an additional income stream for Crossley Farm.

We would therefore hope that this venture can be realised by the granting of planning approval.