

APPLICATION NUMBER:	LW/07/0243	ITEM NUMBER:	5
APPLICANTS NAME(S):	Mr & Mrs A Slater	PARISH / WARD:	Barcombe / Barcombe & Hamsey
PROPOSAL:	Planning Application for Change of use of residential curtilage to holiday accommodation for the siting of five tents during the summer period		
SITE ADDRESS:	Barcombe Mills Station, Barcombe Mills Road, Barcombe, East Sussex, BN8 5BL		
GRID REF:	TQ 4214		

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1. SITE DESCRIPTION / PROPOSAL

1.1 Barcombe Mills Station is located to the south of Barcombe Mills Road in Barcombe Mills. The River Ouse runs to the south and east of the site and at its closest point is approximately 11 metres to the east. The site was previously the Barcombe Mills train station which was closed in 1969. Since then there have been a number of other activities on site including: a local shop, restaurant and floral business.

1.2 The site has a wide east-west road frontage of approximately 95 metres and has a north-south depth of approximately 195 metres. Station House is a private residential property which has been split into three separate dwellings. To the east of the property are two holiday-let cabins which were granted consent with Planning Permission LW/01/1038. To the east of the existing holiday-lets is a large gravel car park.

1.3 The proposed new holiday let tents would be located in the southernmost part of the site on an area measuring approximately 25 metres wide by 50 metres deep. The amenity space of Barcombe Mills Station is raised above the surrounding area by approximately 1.5-2 metres; consequently the tents would have an elevated position. The closest neighbouring property would be Anglers Rest. The proposed siting of the new tents would be approximately 78 metres south east of the neighbouring amenity space and approximately 105 metres south east of the property itself.

1.4 Each of the five tents would be constructed on a concrete base, approximately 4 metres wide by 7.5 metres deep. They would be collapsible and comprise of a bathroom, double bedroom, single bedroom and veranda. The tents would be approximately 2.4 metres high and constructed from canvass. Each tent would have an electricity and hot water supply and will each one will be connected to a group septic tank. The applicant has suggested in a supporting document that initially three will be erected with a further two added if the existing three are successful. The applicant has requested that the tents are given consent from April to September, inclusive.

2. RELEVANT POLICIES

LDLP: – ST03 – Design, Form and Setting of Development

LDLP: – E17 – New Camping/Touring Caravan Sites

LDLP: – CT01 – Planning Boundary and Countryside Policy

LDLP: – CT03 – Landscape Conservation and Enhancement

LDLP: – T04 – The Lewes/Uckfield Railway

LDLP: – E10 – Tourism General Strategy

3. PLANNING HISTORY

LW/04/0604 - Single storey side extension and division of property into three dwelling. - **Approved**

LW/01/0610 - Change of use and conversion of restaurant to residential use and single-storey extension with attached garage - **Approved**

LW/92/1246 - Renewal of temporary permission LW/89/542 for the continued use of station building as a retail outlet on a permanent basis - **Approved**

LW/90/0422 - Renewal of temporary permission LW/88/1953 for change of use of three station rooms to restaurant. - **Approved**

LW/89/0542 - Change of use of station building to retail shop. Restrictive Planning Condition No.1. Temp. Exp. 11.07.92 - **Approved**

LW/85/1214 - Use of part premises for restaurant, function rooms and shop with associated car parking. Restrictive Planning Conditions Nos 1, 2 & 4. Temporary Permission Expires 30/09/1987. - **Approved**

4. REPRESENTATIONS FROM STANDARD CONSULTEES

Main Town Or Parish Council – The Parish Council feels this application should be refused as it is contrary to Lewes Local Plan T4 and the Country Structure Plan TR14A which protect the Lewes-Uckfield Track Bed from development. We have received four objections from local residents. The Parish Council also received sufficient comments on the overall development of the site for the Parish Council to strongly recommend a review by the District Council of all development carried out on the site in relation to planning applications already granted.

Environment Agency – No objection. Having reviewed these maps against more detailed survey data it would appear that they are incorrect at this location and do not recognise the high thin strip of land previously associated with the railway line, which is clearly outside the flood risk area.

The site should only be used between the months of May - September inclusive.

5. REPRESENTATIONS FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS

5.1 Four letters of objections received from local residents objecting to the proposal. Objections raised regarding: overdevelopment of the site, which has been considerably developed in the past; will not improve the outlook to the countryside; will increase traffic hazards on the hill which are already a problem; the proposal will increase traffic noise and parking congestion outside neighbouring properties; there is the potential for littering on the site and for it to become untidy; there will be an invasion of privacy; potential for further development should planning be granted; the proposal is too close to other residential buildings and will spoil the quiet tranquil nature of the

countryside and the development will overlook neighbours amenity space and properties. A number of other non-planning matters were also raised.

5.2 One letter received from the applicants, countering objections from neighbouring residents and providing additional information: It is not envisaged that the car park will ever be full to its 25 car capacity. The existing holiday lets rarely have more than one car per unit. Each tent only has two bedrooms and is intended for couples or small families so it is not expected that there will be more than one car per tent; the access was constructed three years ago on advice given by the Highway Authority; the site provides waste facilities and will not lead to extra rubbish on site; there have been no noise complaints with regards to the existing holiday lets and it is not considered that the proposal will create any more noise; The development will be landscaped and will not destroy the natural beauty of the area; and a number of non-planning related matters.

6. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 It is considered that the principle issues to be considered in the determination of this application are: highway safety, impact on residential amenities, impact on the Uckfield/Lewes railway line, impact on the surrounding countryside and consideration against relevant Local Plan policies.

6.2 It is considered that the proposed new holiday let tents will have no detrimental impact on residential amenities. The site is located 78 metres from the closest neighbouring amenity space and over 100 metres to the closest dwelling. It is considered that at this distance there would be no undue overlooking or loss of privacy. It is also considered that at this distance neighbouring residents will not be affected by any noise from the site. The site is well screened to the east by continuous boundary trees and there is some boundary cover to the west, which can be reinforced by means of a planning condition. This would result in the site being well screened on both wide frontages.

6.3 It is considered that the proposal adheres with Local Plan Policy E17, in terms of criteria (b), (c), (d) & (e). The new holiday lets would involve minimal permanent structures, essentially the low rise concrete bases, and provide only basic facilities. The site is adequately screened to the east and conditions could be imposed to add screening to the west. The application is only proposing that the site be used over the summer months and again this could be controlled through an appropriate condition. Policy E10 suggests that applications which make the most of the District's natural assets will also be supported, and in this instance the application will afford tourist access to an attractive part of the district.

6.4 Policy T4 states that planning permission would not be granted where a proposal would prejudice the re-opening of the railway line between Uckfield and Lewes. The Parish Council have raised an objection on this basis. The tents are temporary structures, with only the concrete bases and septic tanks

permanent features. The land is already infilled above the level of the old railway line and the addition of these easily removable features is not considered to prejudice the reopening of the railway line.

6.5 It is not considered that the proposed tents will have any detrimental impact on the surrounding open countryside. As already stated the site is screened and this can be supplemented. The site is located, at the closest point, approximately 170 metres from Barcombe Mills Road. The tents are low profile and it is not considered that they will cause any detrimental visual impact in this open rural location.

6.6 Other objections raised by local residents regarding: increased litter, potential for future developments at the site and an increase in parking congestion could not be used to sustain a reason for refusal. Were littering of the site to become a problem in the future this would be an Environmental Health issue. Each planning application is determined on its own merits and this application would not mean future developments would be permitted. The site provides adequate parking space for all uses at the site and should not result into overspill on the highway.

6.7 However, the application has attracted a strong objection from East Sussex County Council Highway Authority on grounds of insufficient visibility splays, resulting in an increased traffic hazard on to the C677, Barcombe Mills Road. The Highway Authority has estimated that the current entrance exhibits visibility splays to the east of approximately 90 metres and to the west approximately 20 metres. In a supporting letter received from the applicant, it is suggested that the access was originally constructed in accordance with the Highway requirements. The site is already used as access to the existing holiday lets, but the Highway Authority have indicated that an intensification of the use of this access as currently laid out would not be supported.

6.8 Therefore the application attracts a reason for refusal on highway safety grounds.

7. RECOMMENDATION

The application is refused.

Reason(s) for Refusal:

1. The proposal would lead to increased traffic hazards on the C677 by reason of the inadequate visibility splays at the existing access contrary to Policies ST3 & E17 of the Lewes District Local Plan.

This decision is based on the following submitted plans/documents:

<u>PLAN TYPE</u>	<u>DATE RECEIVED</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
Other	6 March 2007	SEPTIC TANK DETAILS

Location Plan	6 March 2007	1:1250
Planning Layout	6 March 2007	TENT AREA PLAN
Proposed Floor Plans	6 March 2007	PLAN OF TENT
Design & Access Statement	6 March 2007	
Location Plan	6 March 2007	1:625
Design & Access Statement	20 February 2007	
Proposed Elevations	20 February 2007	
Proposed Floor Plans	20 February 2007	
Location Plan	20 February 2007	