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Our ref: 24758
Date: 19 November 2026

For the attention of: Jennifer Wallis

Application ref:	25/01301/FUL
Location:	Riverside Lake And Leisure Mereside Drove Ramsey Mereside Huntingdon PE26 2UE
Proposal/Description:	Erection of Owner/site mangers dwelling to serve existing caravan site. The retention of 14 No. existing touring caravan pitches, toilet & shower block and 3No. holiday lodges along with the erection of two new timber holiday lodges and four new holiday pods

Thank you for consulting with Place Services on the above Full planning application. This letter sets out our consultation response on the landscape impact of the application and how the proposal relates and responds to the landscape setting and context of the site.

1.0. Site Context

1.1. The application site is located at Riverside Lake and Leisure, Mereside Drove, Ramsey Mereside and comprises an established fishing and leisure business centred around an existing lake within the Fenland landscape. The wider site consists of recreational fishing lakes, touring caravan pitches, holiday accommodation, access tracks, grassland and associated infrastructure. The surrounding landscape is predominantly characterised by the open, flat and expansive rural character typical of the Fenland landscape, with drainage channels, agricultural land and limited tree cover.

1.2. The site already accommodates a range of tourism and leisure uses, with elements of existing caravans, lodges and associated facilities established across the site. Existing vegetation is generally limited to scattered trees, hedgerow planting and vegetation associated with the lake margins and drainage features. The fishing lake forms the principal landscape feature within the site and contributes positively to local visual amenity and biodiversity.

2.0. Planning Policy Context

Huntingdonshire Local Plan (Adopted May 2019)

2.1. The following policies are considered relevant from a landscape perspective:

- LP 10 The Countryside
- LP 11 Design Context
- LP 12 Design Implementation
- LP 13 Placemaking
- LP 14 Amenity
- LP 15 Surface Water
- LP 31 Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows

3.0. Review of the proposal/submitted information:

3.1. The application seeks retrospective consent for the retention of three holiday lodges and fourteen touring caravan pitches together with the construction of a site manager's dwelling and associated facilities serving the established tourism business. The proposal also includes retention of the existing shower and toilet facilities and associated site infrastructure.

3.2. The proposed manager's dwelling is located within an area already influenced by tourism development and associated site activity. The scale and form of the dwelling are relatively modest and adopt a simple agricultural-inspired appearance through the use of timber-effect cladding and dark external materials. Given the existing leisure use and established development across the site, the proposed dwelling is not considered out of keeping with the wider site context.

3.3. The submitted layout generally consolidates development around the existing lake and leisure facilities, limiting the spread of built form across the wider holding. This approach assists in retaining the open character of the surrounding landscape and avoids unnecessary fragmentation of the wider rural setting.

Landscape Character and Visual Amenity

3.4. The principal landscape consideration is the relationship between the proposed development and the open character of the surrounding Fenland landscape.

3.5. Whilst the site is located within an open rural setting, it is noted that much of the development subject to this application is either existing or retrospective in nature and forms part of an established leisure and tourism operation. The fishing lake, lodges, touring caravans and associated infrastructure are therefore already features within the landscape.

3.6. The proposed manager's dwelling introduces an additional built element; however, its position within the developed portion of the site and its association with the existing tourism business reduces the likelihood of significant adverse landscape effects. The dwelling is viewed in the context of existing tourism infrastructure rather than as an isolated dwelling within the wider countryside.

3.7. Notwithstanding this, the open nature of the surrounding landscape means that landscape mitigation and establishment of planting will be important in assimilating development into its setting and reducing the visual prominence of built structures when viewed from the surrounding rural road network and adjacent agricultural landscapes.

Planting and Biodiversity Enhancements

3.8. The application is supported by ecological and Biodiversity Net Gain information which includes substantial habitat enhancement proposals across the site. These measures include new native hedgerow planting, additional tree planting and the establishment of species-rich grassland areas. The proposed habitat creation strategy seeks to deliver measurable biodiversity gains whilst strengthening the green infrastructure framework of the site.

3.9. The proposed 565m of new native hedgerow planting is particularly welcomed from a landscape perspective, as it will assist in reinforcing rural field boundary characteristics, strengthen landscape structure and provide additional visual filtering of development throughout the site. Additional tree planting will further assist in integrating built development into the landscape over time.

3.10. The creation and management of species-rich grassland alongside the strengthening of habitat corridors around the lake margins would provide further landscape and ecological benefits whilst enhancing the overall appearance of the site.

4.0. Summary

4.1. In summary, the application relates largely to an established leisure and tourism use where much of the development is already present on Site. Whilst the Site is located within the open Fenland landscape, the proposed manager's dwelling is associated with an existing business operation and is positioned within the developed portion of the Site. The scale, form and materiality of the proposed dwelling are considered appropriate within this context.

4.2. The proposed native hedgerow planting, additional tree planting and habitat enhancements are welcomed and will assist in strengthening landscape structure, improving biodiversity and integrating development into the wider landscape over time. Subject to securing the implementation and long-term management of the proposed planting and habitat enhancements, no landscape objection is raised.

5.0. Recommended Condition(s):

5.1. If minded for approval, we would recommend the following conditions for your consideration:

ACTION REQUIRED PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT: SUBMISSION OF LANDSCAPE DETAILS

Prior to commencement of landscape works hereby approved, details comprising plans and particulars shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority showing precise details of the hard and soft landscaping which shall form part of the development hereby permitted. Any scheme of landscaping details as may be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority shall show the existing trees, shrubs, and hedgerows on the site where to be retained, together with measures for their protection which shall comply with the recommendations set out in the British Standards Institute publication BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Plans should include details of:

- A specification of soft landscape works, include a schedule of species, size, density and spacing of all trees, shrubs and hedgerows to be planted.
- Areas to be grass seeded or turfed, including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment.
- Paved or otherwise hard surfaced areas including the extent and specification for footways and kerbing, together with the type and specification of all permeable paving and asphalt surfaces.
- Existing and finished levels shown as contours with cross-sections, if appropriate.
- Specification of all means of enclosure and all boundary treatments between individual plots, all boundary treatments around the perimeter of the site.

Such details as may be agreed, shall be implemented in their entirety during the first planting season (October to March inclusive) following approval, or in any other such phased arrangement as may be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

If any of the existing (shown for retention) or proposed landscaping shown in the approved details dies, is removed or becomes seriously damaged within 10 years of planting/approval then it shall be replaced in the next planting season (October to March) with others of a similar size and species unless a variance is otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area. This condition is required to be agreed prior to the commencement of any development to ensure matters of tree and hedgerow protection are secured early to ensure avoidance of damage or lost due to the development and/or its construction. If agreement was sought at any later stage, there is an unacceptable risk of lost and damage to important trees and hedgerow that would result in harm to amenity.

ACTION REQUIRED PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT: LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN (LMP)

No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority a landscape management plan for a minimum of 5 years. This should include:

a) Drawing/s showing the extent of the LMP i.e. only showing the areas to which the LMP applies, areas of private ownership should be excluded.

b) Written Specification detailing:

- All operation and procedures for soft landscape areas; inspection, watering, pruning, cutting, mowing, clearance and removal of arisings and litter, removal of temporary items (fencing, guards and stakes) and replacement of failed planting.
- All operations and procedures for hard landscape areas; inspection, sweeping, clearing of accumulated vegetative material and litter, maintaining edges, and painted or finished surfaces.
- Furniture (Bins, Benches and Signage) and Play Equipment.
- All operations and procedures for soft landscaping to SuDS features; inspection of linear drains, basins and swales, removal of unwanted vegetative material and litter, including inlets and outlets.

a) Maintenance task table which explains the maintenance duties across the site in both chronological and systematic order.

b) Mechanism for monitoring and review of the management plan and operations.

Reason - To support plant establishment and ensure appropriate management is carried out and to maintain functionality and visual aesthetic.

Please contact us if you have any queries in relation to this advice.

Place Services – Landscape Team
Email: landscape@essex.gov.uk

Place Services provide landscape advice on behalf of Huntingdonshire District Council.

Please note:

This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.

We are unable to respond directly to applicants/agents or other interested parties. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant/agent or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer at the relevant LPA, who will seek further advice from us where appropriate.

Place Services have a policy relating to the use of AI. Unless otherwise stipulated, any AI use will be limited to basic proof-reading, grammar, and spelling correction. This response has been reviewed by the author(s). If you have any queries, please contact us for information about our AI guidance.