

20/01966/FUL Coates Farm camping pods

The AONB Partnership does not object to the principle of a small scale tourism development on the farm, but we would urge that this is done to a high quality and design standard to be compatible with the special qualities of the AONB. We don't feel that the application currently meets this standard. I am aware that pre-application discussions have focussed on finding the most suitable location with regard to landscape impact. The lie of the land here tends to make most of the options quite visible. It is difficult also to find a suitable location in relation to the farm buildings where the indoor pig rearing creates strong smells. The roadside location applied for is not ideal, but better than the western edge of the same field. Many people walk up or down the ridge of Adstone Hill to or from Bridges, and the view down to the site from here should be considered as well as from the road, which is also well used by walkers and cyclists as a route onto the Long Mynd. The location is right in a transition zone where you are coming up out of the narrow lanes towards the more open hill land, and therefore quite sensitive.



View of the site from the ridge of Adstone Hill to the west

The space allocated to the pods in the proposed layout is very small and they are therefore close together with minimal space around. We feel there is a correlation between the quality of environment and experience offered to visitors and how well the development would fit into the AONB, and as proposed both are fairly poor. A slightly larger site taken from the pasture field, perhaps a diagonal field corner, with group planting of some native broadleaved trees as well as a hedge would add to the existing trees in the boundaries at that corner of the field, enhancing both the landscape and the experience for visitors, as well as better hiding the pods.

Visitors come to the Shropshire Hills for the high quality landscape and many are interested in sustainability. Tourism enterprises based on a farm can gain best advantage of this synergy where the farm is actively engaged in environmental management and enhancement and can integrate this with the tourism enterprise, showing it is part of a

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consistent ethos. The relatively remote location also means that active support by the business to encourage visitors to sustainable practices (e.g. by assisting with sourcing of local food to improve return to the local economy and reduce need for travel) would be very worthwhile.

I hope these comments are helpful.

Best wishes

Phil Holden

Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Manager

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