

Application:	2020/1480/MAF	ITEM 1	
Proposal:	Erection of 60 leisure lodges for occupation on a non-continuous basis, renovation and conversion of existing barns to form a leisure suite including gym, swimming pool and ancillary spaces including staff accommodation, renovation and alteration of the existing Clubhouse, erection of a new maintenance facility, alterations to the grounds including changes to the golf course and construction of lakes for leisure and ecological purposes, and ancillary works including alterations to the access drive, provision of a visitor check-in kiosk, alterations to car parking, creation of a circular walk, alteration and extension of the noise bund, and consequential landscape works.		
Address:	Woolfox Golf And Country Club (Formerly Rutland County Golf Club), Hardwick Farm Lane, Empingham, Rutland, PE9 4NJ		
Applicant:	Mr C Riddle	Parish	Empingham
Agent:	DLP Planning, Bedford	Ward	Normanton
Reason for presenting to Committee:	Major development in the countryside		
Date of Committee:	27 July 2021		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The re-development of the former golf course to form a holiday complex is in a relatively isolated location but with good access directly off the A1, not impacting on local villages. There are policies in the Development Plan that support the scheme and some that may suggest otherwise. The scheme has been amended to reduce impact on local residents and would ensure the continued use of the site for a tourism/recreation facility whilst benefitting the wider local economy. Taking all issues into account it is recommended that permission be granted.

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVAL, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
Reason – To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details (including building materials) shown on the submitted plans, numbers 20-843(00)002P2, 20-843(00)005P2, 20-843(00)006P2, 20-843(00)007P1, 20-843(00)008P1, 20-843(00)009P2, 20-843(00)010P2, 20-843(00)012P1, 20-843(00)020P1, 20-843(00)030P1, 20-843(00)040P1, 20-843(00)041P1, 20-843(00)050P2, 20-843(00)051P2, 20-843(00)070, 20-843(00)071, 20-843(00)072, 20-843(00)073, 20-843(00)074, 20-843(00)075, 20-843(00)0100P1, 05-953-301F, The Design & access Rev B, The Arboricultural Report dated 10 December 2020 (Revised March 2021) by John Wilcockson, and the Staff Travel Plan prepared by DLP Bristol, dated December 2020.

Reason – For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. No development above ground level shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of hard and soft landscaping works for the site, which shall include all species of trees, hedgerows and any other shrubs, any proposed changes in ground levels and also accurately identify spread, girth and species of all existing trees, shrubs and hedgerows on the site and indicate any 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 Construction."
Reason – To ensure that the landscaping is designed in a manner appropriate to the locality and to enhance the appearance of the development.

4. All changes in ground levels, hard landscaping, planting, seeding or turfing shown on the approved landscaping details shall be carried out during the first planting and seeding season (October - March inclusive) following the commencement of the development or in such other phased arrangement as may be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or shrubs which, within a period of 5 years of being planted die are removed or seriously damaged or seriously diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.
Reason – To ensure that the landscaping is carried out at the appropriate time and is properly maintained.

5. A landscape management plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas, other than small, privately owned, domestic gardens, shall be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the local planning authority prior to the first occupation of the development. The landscape management plan shall be carried out as approved in accordance with the details and timescales in the plan.
Reason – To ensure the proper management and maintenance of the approved landscaping in the interests of amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

6. No development shall take place until the existing trees on the site, agreed with the Local Planning Authority for inclusion in the scheme of landscaping / shown to be retained on the approved plan, have been protected by the erection of temporary protective fences in accordance with BS5837:2012 and of a height, size and in positions which shall previously have been agreed, in writing, with the Local Planning Authority. The protective fences shall be retained throughout the duration of building and engineering works in the vicinity of the trees to be protected. Within the areas agreed to be protected, the existing ground level shall be neither raised nor lowered, and no materials or temporary building or surplus soil shall be placed or stored there. If any trenches for services are required in the protected areas, they shall be excavated and back-filled by hand and any tree roots encountered with a diameter of 5cm or more shall be left unsevered.
Reason – The trees are important features in the area and this condition is imposed to make sure that they are properly protected while building works take place on the site.

7. No demolition/development shall take place/commence until a staged programme of archaeological work has been undertaken. Each stage will be completed in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI), which has been

[submitted to and] approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI, which shall include the statement of significance and research objectives, and

- The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works
- The programme for post-investigation assessment and subsequent analysis, publication & dissemination and deposition of resulting material. This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI.

Reason – To ensure satisfactory archaeological investigation, recording, dissemination and archiving

8. The development hereby approved shall only be used for holiday accommodation purposes and not for any other residential use falling within Class C3 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), or any Statutory Instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification. For the avoidance of doubt 'any other residential use' includes a person's or persons' main residence, or a permanent residential unit of accommodation.

Reason – This permission is granted in accordance with tourism and rural economy policies. The site is in an open countryside location where normal unfettered use of the units as C3 dwellings would not be appropriate.

9. A register of guests for each lodge shall be kept, to include the main home addresses of the occupiers, for a rolling period of 3 years and shall be made available for the inspection of the LPA upon request.

Reason: To ensure that no lodges are occupied as main home in a rural countryside location where permanent dwellings are prohibited.

10. Prior to the construction of the parking areas shown on the approved plans, details of the amount, location and design of electric charging points shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved facility shall be provided prior to occupation of any part of the development in accordance with the approved details and retained for that purpose at all times.

Reason – To ensure an appropriate level of charging for electric vehicles is provided in the interest of highway safety and provision of alternative fuels for sustainable means of travel.

11. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:

- the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors
- loading and unloading of plant and materials
- hours of working on site
- storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development

- the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate
- wheel washing facilities
- measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction
- a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works.

Reason –To ensure that the works do not unacceptable impact on adjacent residents or the local highway network.

12. No external lighting shall be installed until details of the lighting type and illumination scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason - In the interests of amenity to reduce the impact of night time illumination on the character of the area and adjacent residents.

13. Before any lodge is occupied, the proposals in the approved Travel Plan shall be implemented in full.

Reason: To encourage use of sustainable methods of travel for staff.

14. Before any lodge is occupied the following shall be provided on site:

- Provision of bat/bird boxes in line with the ecological appraisal (section 6.1.6)
- Mitigation for impacts on bats in accordance with ecology report (section 6.1.6)

In accordance with details that shall have been submitted to and approved by the LPA.

Reason – In the interest of providing continued bio-diversity on the site in accordance with Policies CS21 and SP19.

15. Before any development commences on site in the existing buildings, an updated Bat survey shall be carried out and any bats found in the buildings shall be dealt with in accordance with a scheme of mitigation that shall be submitted to and approved by the LPA in accordance with the condition above.

Reason – To ensure that no protected species are harmed by the development in accordance with the requirements of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1980.

Notes to Applicant:

1. The applicant should note that a European Protected Species licence from Natural England will be required prior to commencement of works.
2. Other mitigation measures specified in section 6 of the ecological appraisal must be followed.
3. The Environment Agency advises:

Package treatment plant

The development involves the use of a non-mains foul drainage system. This is acceptable based on the number of units and the distance to the main sewerage network. Should the applicant wish to further expand the number of lodges on site in the future, there may be a requirement for them to connect to mains.

In addition to planning permission the applicant may also require an environmental permit from the environment agency. Please note that the granting of planning permission does not guarantee the granting of an environmental permit. Upon receipt of a correctly filled in application form we will carry out an assessment. It can take up to 4 months before we are in a position to decide whether to grant a permit or not. Further advice is available at septic tank and treatment plants; permits and general binding rules.

Lakes

If you intend to fill and/or maintain a proposed lake with water from a surface source E. G. A stream or from underground strata (via borehole or well) then you are likely to need an abstraction licence. There is no guarantee that a licence will be granted. A licence is not required if you intend to excavate and allow the lakes to fill naturally to existing groundwater levels. Further information is available at apply for a water abstraction or impoundment licence.

4. The Public Rights of Way Officer notes that:
 - a) There is no diminution in the width of the right of way available for use by members of the public
 - b) No building materials are stored on the right of way
 - c) No damage or substantial alteration, either temporary or permanent, is caused to the surface of the right of way
 - d) Vehicle movements are arranged so as not to interfere with the public's use of the way
 - e) No additional barriers (e.g. gates) are placed across the right of way, of either a temporary or permanent nature
 - f) No wildlife fencing or other ecological protection features associated with wildlife mitigation measures are placed across the right of way or allowed to interfere with the right of way; and
 - g) The safety of members of the public is ensured at all times

Site & Surroundings

1. Woolfox Golf and Country Club (formerly known as Rutland County Golf Club, built in 1993), is a site of 65.4 hectares, of which the development site (red line area) is 38.9 hectares. The site lies to the north of the A1 and the Old Great North Road, approximately 5km North West of Stamford, and 20km south of Grantham. The villages of Pickworth, Stretton and Clipsham lie within 4km of the site.
2. To the west is the Woolfox Depot site, which has been the subject of a planning enquiry to create the village of Woolfox Garden Village, which, if constructed, would bound the development site to its western boundary along the driving range and beyond.
3. The site is accessed off the Old Great North Road, at a point between the driving range and the southern part of the golf football course. The access track/road passes north-eastwards towards the clubhouse buildings, with the driving range to the north-west and the golf football to the southeast.

4. The access road splits into two just south of the clubhouse, with the north-western fork routing to the main carpark, and the continuation of the access road passing by the clubhouse and converted farm buildings to again split into two, with the north-eastern track accessing the hedged water tank area to the north of the development site, and the left-hand fork passing by the Hardwick Cottages. The track to the hedged area continues northwards beyond the development site along the west boundary of the applicant site.
5. There is a public footpath partly routing through the site
6. The site is linear in form, with a relatively narrow frontage to the Old Great North Road of only 614m, with the overall site projecting north/north west for (as the crow flies) almost 2km.
7. A bund is located to the south of the site, about 230m in length, 15m wide and maximum 2.5m high. This bund is planted with grass.
8. Levels vary across the site by approximately 11 metres.
9. The site is bounded on its north, part-south, east and part-western boundaries by mature hedges interplanted with larger mature trees. These hedges serve to mask the site from its surroundings with the clubhouse and golf course only really being visible from the Old Great North Road and A1 along the southern edge of the driving range.
10. To the south-west of the clubhouse building is the driving range building, which is in a curved, single-storey form, with driving range bays facing south towards the driving range, and a central bar/seating area. There is a swing studio to the west. The building is timber framed, with diagonal timber cladding to all elements, with a powder coated aluminium roof to the single-storey bay areas, and a blue slate roof to the central double-height bar/seating area. The driving range building has a gross external area of 572sqm.
11. There is an existing clubhouse and associated golf facilities on site. Immediately adjoining the golf facilities is a separate farm with a farm bungalow sited close to the existing golf club buildings. Beyond the bungalow are 3 other privately owned residential dwellings which share access with the golf course and farm.

Proposal

12. The proposal is for the re-use and re-configuration of the existing former Rutland County Golf Course to provide for the development described above.
13. The layout plan has been revised during the course of the application to meet concerns of the local residents who are concerned about proximity amongst other issues.
14. The application states that existing employment levels at the site are 16 full time and 3 part time employees (17 full time equivalents). The proposal would generate 52 full time jobs and 22 part time jobs (63 FTE).

15. In terms of precise uses, the application contains the following:

The scheme to regenerate the Site reflects the increasing demand for leisure accommodation providing a range of facilities for the use of resident guests over weekend and extended vacations. The Woolfox Golf and Country Club will provide a range of very high-quality lodges offering a range of accommodation suitable for single or multi-family use set in an enhanced landscape with an emphasis on its ecological value and offering access to a range of leisure pursuits including golf, swimming and fitness with access to the countryside within the site and the wider area. Guests will be able to enjoy the communal facilities in the Clubhouse including meal service and will have access to the existing Driving Range that will continue to be available to members of the public on a casual basis.

16. The Driving range was to be the only facility on site for the general public to use but the applicant has now stated:

Whilst we had originally planned for the remaining golf holes to be used exclusively by the users of the lodges. We have now decided, following consultation with the Parish Council and the current Members of the Golf Club, the wider public benefits of permitting the casual use of the remaining holes for the public and lodge users along with use of the driving range.

17. The Lodges would be set around 2 of 4 interlinked lakes with extensive landscaping between. Materials for the lodges would be local stone, timber cladding, glazing, grass, sedum and cedar shingle roofs and sloping grass banks.
18. Charging for electric vehicles is proposed on site
19. The revised layout is shown at Appendix 1.

Relevant Planning History

Application	Description	Decision
90/0546	Use of land as pay and play golf course, use of farmhouse as clubhouse	Approved Nov 90
91/0155	36 bedroom overnight accommodation with 150 parking spaces	Approved April 95
91/0593	Construction of Golf Course	Approved Feb 92
2000/0166	Renewal of 91/0155 above	Approved March 01
2006/0047	Renewal of 2000/0166 above	Approved March 06

Planning Guidance and Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019

Chapter 9 Promoting Sustainable Transport
Chapter 12 – Achieving well designed places
Chapter 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Site Allocations and Policies DPD (2014)

SP1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SP7 – Non-residential Development in the countryside
SP15 - Design and Amenity
SP23 - Landscape Character in the Countryside
SP25 – Lodges, Log Cabins, Chalets and self-serviced holiday accommodation

Core Strategy DPD (2011)

CS1 – Sustainable Development Principles
CS04 - The Location of Development
CS16 – The Rural Economy
CS19 - Promoting Good Design
CS23 – Green Infrastructure, open space, sport and recreation.

Neighbourhood Plan

There is no NP for Empingham at present.

Consultations

20. Empingham Parish Council

EPC is reasonably familiar with the situation with the former Rutland County Golf Club and appreciates this bold proposal to diversify by creating leisure accommodation and facilities whilst retaining golf facilities and professional golf staff.

The situation in respect of demand for golf facilities has changed over the last year. As stated in the application there are several golf courses in the area but all now have waiting lists for membership indicating demand exceeds supply. The golf facility is a community resource currently appreciated and enjoyed by Rutlanders as well as other local residents. There seems no reason, commercial or otherwise, to withdraw public access to the reduced golf course as indicated in the application. This might be (mis)construed as discrimination.

EPC therefore suggests that RCC and the owners might wish to clarify that the golf course, reduced course, and golf facilities would continue to be available to local residents.

There are dwellings adjacent to the site at Hardwick Farm and Hardwick Cottages. The residents enjoy the relative isolated, quiet, rural location and outlook to farmland or green countryside. Approving the application as submitted would have a significant adverse affect on the outlook from their properties and the ambience of the vicinity. Since submission of the application the owners have had informal discussions by Zoom with the residents.

EPC supports the residents reasonable representations about the application and suggests that it should be possible to reach an appropriate accommodation with conditions (eg minimum distance of any lodge to Hardwick dwellings) written into any approval to safeguard the residents rights to a peaceful quiet existence.

Security of the site should be as great a concern to the owners as is the increased risk to residents at Hardwick. The owners recognise the importance of site security and have already introduced additional security at the current clubhouse area. It would be helpful to clarify how the improved security already installed, or planned, would affect the Hardwick dwellings.

Hardwick residents emphasise their concern about safe, secure and ease of access to the site, the lodges and existing properties. The site owners have made some improvements to their original drawings eg by including the reception/security control located in a layby, with parking spaces, adjacent to the access road about 220 metres from the entrance from the old Great North Road (paras 4.28-4.30 of the Planning Statement refer). EPC shares residents concern about access to the site and the risks inherent in a long single lane driveway to the site. The matter has been highlighted and examined by consultants who produced the Transport Statement supporting the application. Bearing in mind the uncertainties about use of the 60 lodges, with a minimum of a one night stay, the projected number of trips seemed little more than a best guess albeit informed by the limited information available (paras 6.5 and 7.39 of the Planning Statement refer). Clearly the Hardwick residents are not convinced. In fairness to them it is difficult for a lay person to accept that with up to 450 additional people (tourists/visitors) on site there would not be a significant increase in trips at various time the day and in the hours of darkness as well as a potential demand for attendance by the emergency services.

As this is essentially a safety issue RCC might clarify whether the proposals are acceptable.

EPC assumes RCC is aware of any restrictions that may still apply to the use of this previously agricultural land and will consider need or otherwise for contingency planning.

Finally EPC assumes that if the application is approved a construction implementation plan will take into account Hardwick residents' concerns.

Disabled access - I am sure this is a material planning consideration in that current regulations have to be met.

This proposed development might well be attractive to a disadvantaged person, or a family with a disadvantaged member, since the lodges would facilitate family gatherings.

My point is it costs very little to design in and build to take account of the needs for disadvantaged people. But it is usually a significant cost to adapt later.

21. **Highways England**

Initially required a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit but revised comments are:

Notice is hereby given that Highways England's formal recommendation is that we:
a) offer no objection;

22. **RCC Highways**

The LHA cant or shouldn't be raising issues about pedestrian movements internally. In reality the vehicle speeds around sites such as these should be very slow and they usually have a set speed limit of 10 or 15mph. The lack of pedestrian footpaths does tend to make vehicles drive slower with more caution.

The applicant is proposing to widen the existing internal carriageway to 7.3m at the junction with the adopted highway for a distance of 55m. It then narrows down to 3.7m with 3 separate passing places which can each accommodate 3 vehicles. This would help with traffic calming into and out of the site as vehicles need to wait for an approaching vehicle to pass.

The applicant has provided a suitable TA which the LHA supports in terms of vehicle movements to and from the site. With this type of development you will have a change over time between visitors leaving and entering the site and once the visitors are on the site they are unlikely to leave as most facilities are provided.

With regards to the sign we could request that this is added as part of the S278 and conditioned within the planning condition.

One thing that we have picked up from the TA conclusion is that the applicant refers to staff and customers cycling locally to shops. Please could the applicant advise where these shops are? The only shops known locally is Empingham village shop and maybe one in Pickworth?

Please could the applicant confirm, and also advise which route the cyclists would take?

Further comment 29 April 2021

Further to my comments on the 27th April I have spoken with the applicant about the shop and cycling and it relates to Empingham. Highways previous no objections still stands.

23. **Stretton Parish Council**

Stretton Parish Council support the development on the basis of ecological development, employment opportunities and leisure facilities

Public Protection

Thank you for consulting with the Public Protection Section. We have no objection subject to suitable ground contamination assessment being provided.

Further comment

The applicant has shown the separation is unlikely to significantly harm the amenity of the adjacent residents. On contamination, I have seen the revised plan and find the proposal acceptable.

24. Ecology

I note that my colleague made the following comments to pre-application 2020/0367/PRE on 14th April 2020:

I have no objections in principle to this. A habitat survey and badger survey are needed, plus bat surveys of any buildings to be demolished, converted or re-roofed, etc. A GCN survey of ponds also needed if changes to the northern part of the course - one of the off-site ponds in the woodland to west has GCNs, and they may be in ponds on the golf-course.

There are opportunities for biodiversity net-gain, which should be taken - on this site, planting to buffer the existing off-site woodlands and creation of species-rich calcareous grassland would be desirable. The lakes/ponds should also contribute to net-gain. There may already be some species-rich grassland on the golf-course - in which case, the opportunity for net-gain through improved management of existing habitat should be taken. A survey should therefore cover all the golf-course, as well as the areas to the south which will be directly affected, as it will be needed to inform the netgain strategy.

The Ecological Appraisal (Aspect Ecology, December 2020) is satisfactory. The recommendations in the report should be followed and made a condition of any planning permission should it be granted.

The Local Wildlife Site hedgerows and grass verges on site will be buffered and this is illustrated on the landscape masterplan.

It appears from the plans that opportunities for biodiversity net gain have been considered as specified in the comments above for the pre-application; the landscape masterplan shows proposed native tree planting and wildflower planting. It isn't clear from the plan whether species-rich calcareous grassland has been considered, although it is specified in section 6.2.4 of the ecological appraisal? The lakes and SUDS should be planned and managed with wildlife in mind, this will contribute to biodiversity net gain on the site. Further details of biodiversity net gains are provided in section 6.2 of the ecological appraisal.

The above should be provided in/on a LEMP (Landscape and Ecology Management Plan).

Bat roosts have been identified in most of the buildings on the site. Recommendations for mitigating disturbance to the roost has been submitted, which I agree with. I recommend planning conditions as follows:

1. Provision of bat/bird boxes in line with the ecological appraisal (section 6.1.6)
2. Mitigation for impacts on bats in accordance with ecology report (section 6.1.6)
3. Updated Bat re-survey prior to commencement of development

The applicant should note that a European Protected Species licence from Natural England will be required prior to commencement of works.

Other mitigation measures specified in section 6 of the ecological appraisal must be followed

25. **Archaeology**

Following appraisal of the above development scheme, we recommend that you advise the applicant of the following archaeological requirements.

1. An Archaeological desk-based Assessment
2. A field evaluation, by appropriate techniques including trial trenching, if identified necessary in the assessment, to identify and locate any archaeological remains of significance, and propose suitable treatment to avoid or minimise damage by the development. Further design, civil engineering or archaeological work may then be necessary to achieve this.

This information should be submitted to the planning authority before any decision on the planning application is taken, so that an informed decision can be made, and the application refused or modified in the light of the results as appropriate. Without the information that such an Assessment would provide, it would be difficult in our view for the planning authority to assess the archaeological impact of the proposals.

Further comments following receipt of Archaeological report:

Thank you for the desk-based assessment, I can confirm that it is satisfactory.

Having reviewed the new information, I can confirm that the application area has been substantially truncated which has the potential to have impacted on archaeological remains. There are however areas that may still have surviving archaeological remains which would be impacted by this application. Therefore we suggest that further archaeological investigation is undertaken under a suitably worded condition. These investigations would include a metal detecting survey and archaeological trial trenching to inform a suitable mitigation plan.

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Section 16, paragraph 190, assessment of the submitted development details and particular archaeological interest of the site, has indicated that the proposals are likely to have a detrimental impact upon any heritage assets present. NPPF paragraph 199, states that developers are required to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact of development, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.

In that context it is recommended that the current application is approved subject to conditions for an appropriate programme of archaeological mitigation, including as necessary intrusive and non-intrusive investigation and recording. The Historic & Natural Environment Team (HNET) will provide a formal Brief for the latter work at the applicant's request.

If planning permission is granted the applicant must obtain a suitable written scheme of Investigation (WSI) for both phases of archaeological investigation from an organisation acceptable to the planning authority. The WSI must be submitted to the planning authority and HNET, as archaeological advisors to your authority,

for approval before the start of development. They should comply with the above mentioned Brief, with this Department's "Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland" and with relevant Institute for Archaeologists "Standards" and "Code of Practice". It should include a suitable indication of arrangements for the implementation of the archaeological work, and the proposed timetable for the development.

We therefore recommend that any planning permission be granted subject to the following planning conditions (informed by paragraph 37 of Historic England's Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment GPA 2), to safeguard any important archaeological remains potentially present:

1. No demolition/development shall take place/commence until a staged programme of archaeological work has been undertaken. Each stage will be completed in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI), which has been [submitted to and] approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI, which shall include the statement of significance and research objectives, and
 - The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works
 - The programme for post-investigation assessment and subsequent analysis, publication & dissemination and deposition of resulting material. This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory archaeological investigation, recording, dissemination and archiving.

The Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) must be prepared by an archaeological contractor acceptable to the Planning Authority. To demonstrate that the implementation of this written scheme of investigation has been secured the applicant must provide a signed contract or similar legal agreement between themselves and their approved archaeological contractor.

The Historic and Natural Environment Team, as advisors to the planning authority, will monitor the archaeological work, to ensure that the necessary programme of archaeological work is undertaken to the satisfaction of the planning authority.

26. **Environment Agency**

We have no objection to this application

Informative advice

Package treatment plant

The development involves the use of a non-mains foul drainage system. This is acceptable based on the number of units and the distance to the main sewerage

network. Should the applicant wish to further expand the number of lodges on site in the future, there may be a requirement for them to connect to mains.

In addition to planning permission the applicant may also require an environmental permit from the environment agency. Please note that the granting of planning permission does not guarantee the granting of an environmental permit. Upon receipt of a correctly filled in application form we will carry out an assessment. It can take up to 4 months before we are in a position to decide whether to grant a permit or not. Further advice is available at septic tank and treatment plants; permits and general binding rules.

Lakes

If you intend to fill and/or maintain a proposed lake with water from a surface source E. G. A stream or from underground strata (via borehole or well) then you are likely to need an abstraction licence. There is no guarantee that a licence will be granted. A licence is not required if you intend to excavate and allow the lakes to fill naturally to existing groundwater levels. Further information is available at apply for a water abstraction or impoundment licence.

Should you require any additional information, or wish to discuss these matters further, please do not hesitate to contact me on the number below

27. **Transport Strategy**

Please see Transport Strategy comments below relating to 2020/1480/MAF.

- The proposed holiday site is not sustainably located, as such the development will lead to a high level of car dependency - both by staff and visitors.
- The application refers to the provision of cycle parking near to the driving range. The level of cycle parking provided is welcomed, however, to encourage residents (and staff) to travel round the site by bicycle it is suggested that the developer provide cycle parking at strategic locations across the site.
- To further encourage cycling around the site, it is suggested that the developer ensure the bound gravel pathways are of a suitable width to cater for pedestrians and cyclists.
- The Rights of Way Officer's comments are also noted and supported. Due to the site location, there are limited opportunities to provide direct walking and cycling routes (via footway or cycleway infrastructure within the highway) to nearby settlements - as such, visitors are likely to use existing public rights of way for travel and leisure - putting additional demand and wear on these provisions.

28. **Public Rights of Way Officer**

From the information submitted the proposed development does not appear to have any direct effects on the bridleway (E165) that adjoins / passes through the

site. There will almost certainly be indirect effects on the bridleway, and direct effects on the public road that leads to the site and connects to the bridleway.

An increase in the volume of traffic of all classes (vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists) seems likely on both the bridleway and the public road that leads to the site. There is also significant potential for damage to the surfaces of both during the construction phase. This being the case a traffic management plan, to mitigate potential conflict between construction traffic and other users, and a condition survey (of so much of the access road and bridle way as falls within applicants ownership) should be required.

If this application is successful we may also need to consider the potential for increased use of and raised expectations for other public rights of way between the site and neighboring villages / points of interest.

In addition to the above the applicant must be made aware of the following and ensure that:

(a) There is no diminution in the width of the right of way available for use by members of the public (b) No building materials are stored on the right of way (c) No damage or substantial alteration, either temporary or permanent, is caused to the surface of the right of way (d) Vehicle movements are arranged so as not to interfere with the public's use of the way (e) No additional barriers (e.g. gates) are placed across the right of way, of either a temporary or permanent nature (f) No wildlife fencing or other ecological protection features associated with wildlife mitigation measures are placed across the right of way or allowed to interfere with the right of way (g) The safety of members of the public is ensured at all times

29. **Greetham Parish Council**

GPC made comments neither objecting to or supporting the Planning Application

Greetham Parish Council would like to be assured that Highways are happy with access and that the public footpath will not be restricted or closed.

30. **Total Fina Pipeline**

Not Affected

Neighbour Representations

31. There are 4 private dwellings located within the complex of buildings in the centre of the site, one of them is a farm dwelling associated with the buildings at the rear. The residents have expressed concerns about the following issues:

- Like being faced with a housing estate
- Conflict with pedestrians at the agricultural access
- Width of access is unsuitable – hedge replaced by a row of trees
- Noise from pedestrians leaving the club at night
- Proximity of lodges around Lake A (now revised)
- Visitors to the lodge occupiers will cause additional noise/vehicles
- Impact on ecology, Deer herd in woodland nearby

- Doubt its viable
- Loss of outlook by machine store
- Impact on environment if it fails
- Risk to security

On Revised layout:

- Still concerned about noise, lighting and access
- Concern that these will become market housing if venture fails

Non-planning considerations raised:

- Loss of outlook
- Impact on value

32. One comment said it would bring economic benefits to the local area

Planning Assessment

33. The main issues are planning policy, residential amenity, visual impact, contamination, highway safety and archaeology.

Planning Policy

34. In terms of policy, there are policies and considerations that would support the proposal which need to be balanced against the overall requirement for sustainable development.

35. Those elements of the policy that generally support the proposal are as follows:

NPPF Para 83 (Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy)

Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
- c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside;

Core Strategy Policy CS15 (Tourism) allows development that (inter alia):

- Allows provision for visitor which is appropriate in use and character to Rutland's ...countryside
- Allows new tourism development of an appropriate scale and use which utilises historic buildings whilst respecting their character

CS16 (The Rural Economy) allows (inter alia)

- (d) Development that would safeguard rural employment and permit the improvement and expansion of existing businesses (provided it is of an appropriate scale) where it would be consistent with maintaining enhancing

the environment and contribute to local distinctiveness in the area.

- (f) the conversion and re-use of appropriately located rural buildings to employment generating uses particularly where they assist in the retention or expansion of existing rural businesses or encouragement of enterprises that have little environmental impact.

Policy SP7 (Non-residential development in the countryside) allows development that is (inter alia):

- (b) Essential for the provision of sport recreation and visitor facilities for which the countryside is the only appropriate location;
- (d) a rural enterprise comprising small scale alterations or extensions or other development ancillary to an existing established use appropriate to the countryside

The required criteria to SP7 include:

- Cannot be accommodated in a village
- New build kept to a minimum
- Won't adversely impact bio-diversity or character & appearance of the landscape or reduce land between settlements
- Is in an accessible location and would not generate an unacceptable increase in the amount of traffic movements

Policy SP25 (Lodges, log cabins and self-serviced holiday accommodation)

This policy states that outside the Rutland Water Recreation Areas, this type of accommodation will be acceptable where:

- a) provision is made to minimise disruption and prevent pollution;
- b) they are well related to an existing tourism attraction or recreation facility;
- c) they are located with convenient access to supporting facilities;
- d) they would not result in an unacceptable increase in the amount of car travel;
- e) they are not detrimental to environmental, amenity and highway considerations; and
- f) they are not detrimental to visual amenity and the appearance of the landscape;

Criteria (a) is complied with. Criteria (b) is difficult to define. Permission was granted by the Committee for a campsite well out of Ketton. Permission was lost on appeal for a camp site near Preston that was nearer to Uppingham than the Ketton site was to that village. This site is convenient for Stamford, just down the A1. Glamping sites have been approved in Belton, Exton, Greetham and Barrow. Nowhere in Rutland is too far away so Oakham and Rutland Water are likely places for occupiers of the site to visit. There is a policy ban on holiday sites around Rutland Water generally so they have to be provided a little further away, whilst (e) and (f) are also complied with.

36. It is therefore necessary to balance the negative aspects of the policy against the tourism/economic benefits, taking into account the amount of harm that the development would cause visually.

37. A planning permission for a significant accommodation facility has been granted three times on the site. Together with the golf course that would have generated a significant amount of traffic. It would be difficult to compare the levels had that been built compared with the levels for this development with the retained golf range facility for the public.
38. The development clearly cannot be accommodated in a village. New build in terms of SP7 is relatively extensive but would not be prominent and this needs to be weighed against the economic benefits.
39. The site is in an accessible location directly off the A1 without impacting on other villages.
40. Whether it would generate an 'unacceptable' level of journeys compared to the full use of the existing facility (and possibly with the unbuilt accommodation) is difficult to define. There is no definition of 'unacceptable' in the policy.
41. The proposal is an expansion of an existing use albeit with different overall facilities.
42. The wider use of the facility by the public is in line with the wishes of Empingham Parish Council
43. On balance the benefits of keeping the site in economic use together with the limited impact on the environment and highway safety would outweigh the concerns about sustainable locations and a pragmatic view has to be taken on that issue. The introduction of more electric vehicles will, over the coming decade and beyond, reduce the impact of car journeys on the environment, particularly in terms of climate change. There is a condition above which calls for EV charging to be implemented on site. The scheme complies overall with the policies set out in this section.

Residential Amenity

44. The location of the lodges in relation to the dwellings on site has been altered during the course of the application. The nearest lodge to one of those houses would now be 64metres away. The next nearest would be 90.48m away.
45. The pathway back to the Lodges around Lake A would be beyond a new tree screen, an existing road and another hedge in front of the houses. This is the existing footpath to the golf course.
46. There is no vehicular access to the lodges as all cars would be parked in the existing golf car park to the rear of the existing buildings.
47. In relation to the amenity building, the only entrances to the barns closest to the residential dwellings and proposed to be converted are to serve a yoga studio (in place of the current Pro shop), a small provisions shop and access to staff accommodation.
48. The layout of the proposed development has been purposely designed to place

the staff accommodation at the eastern side of the building closest to the existing dwellings such that public areas are furthest away.

49. Lighting would be controlled by a condition. The application states that permanent security staff will be on site.
50. The scheme complies with SP15.

Visual Impact

51. The site itself is relatively well screened from the A1 in particular by trees along the edge of the A1. There is also a bund across the front of that part of the site where the lodges would be which would be increased in height by 1m and improved in terms of landscaping. The lodges would be set back well off the highway so would not be prominent in the wider landscape. There are some undulations but the site is relatively flat and would be re-contoured to make the landscape more interesting. The area in front of the driving range is more open but would not alter.
52. Low level lighting is proposed along the roads and public spaces but the aim of this is to ensure safety rather than cause light pollution. Details of this can be required by condition.
53. The application states that:
..landscaping reports and plans that have been produced, highlight that there are no short, medium or long-distance views significantly adversely affected by the development proposals. It is also considered that the overall effect on the character and appearance of the landscape would be between limited and no visual effects on the views from local landscapes, owing to the significant landscaping works to be undertaken across the site.
54. Officers concur with this statement. The scheme would comply with SP23.

Contamination

55. The EHO originally requested a ground contamination survey. However the agent stated as follows:
Chris Riddle our client has got rather more papers about the original 1991 consent to create the golf course than are immediately available on your file. The land was all part of Hardwick Farm and was just agricultural. We are a couple of fields off the end of the old airfield so there would be more likely to be a UXB issue than a ground contamination issue but nothing was found remodelling the land for the golf course.
56. On that basis there is no longer considered to be a need for a contamination survey. A note to applicant is sufficient.

Highway Safety

57. The local highway authority has no objection to the proposal. Highways England did have some initial concerns but it was not clear if they realised the access was

not directly off the A1. The proposed redevelopment is anticipated to lead to a net decrease of approximately 6 vehicle movements in the AM peak hour and a net increase of approximately 10 in the PM peak based on the calculation methodology agreed with Highways England.

58. The applicant is proposing improvements, to both the existing site access junction and the Lane itself.
59. At the site access, the junction will be widened to allow two vehicles to pass without overrunning the verge. The Lane will also be widened with three passing places provided to allow vehicles to pass without the need to drive over the verge. These passing places have been designed to accommodate cars and larger farm vehicles to ensure the current issues which occur when farm vehicles meet cars are addressed as part of the application. The scheme complies with SP15.

Archaeology

60. The pre-determination work required by your consultant has been carried out. The results are that there may still be remains on site of archaeological interest and a condition has been recommended which is contained in the recommendation above.

Conclusion

61. The site is in an arguably unsustainable location. The existing golf course was failing and has been taken over with a view to making a significant investment to provide what appears to be a high quality tourism destination. The access is convenient off the A1 without pulling traffic through local villages. There is scope to visit nearby tourist locations and the scheme will create a significant increase in employment over the existing use. The impact on residents is such that refusal would be difficult to justify, there is minimal visual intrusion with capacity for major new landscaping works. The scheme will provide support for sustainable transport.
62. Overall, the benefits outweigh the negative issues which mainly surround the location and whether it is sustainable.