

Thank-you for comments which have been passed to the case officer Lesley Wells

Representor Details

Planning & Policy Manager

East Hampshire District has received the following comment

Thank you for consulting the Joint Committee on this application.

As you will be aware, the sites lies outside the East Hampshire AONB, but within the South Downs National Park. Whilst the designation of the Park still awaits final Ministerial confirmation, the site lies within the Park as designated in 2002 and within the area the Minister has stated he will confirm as National Park. (The applicants agent is therefore not entirely correct in her statement that the site was until April 2009.....ordinary open countryside).

Strictly speaking, the Joint Committee currently has no remit to comment on applications that are not within the AONB (unless outside but which would affect the AONB, which this development would not) even if within the National Park. However, it is our policy to comment when consulted on such applications.

The site has rather the appearance of a former quarry, although I note from the applicants statement that it was at one time a pig farm. The caravans and structures are clearly visible from Longmoor Road, although I am not aware that they have any wider visual impact and I saw that a conifer hedge had been planted along the roadside boundary when I visited the site. In terms of landscape character, a pig farm is more characteristic of the area than a private caravan site, but may itself not have been particularly attractive and given rise to complaints about odour.

I have read the applicants agents supporting statement carefully. I am not in a position to comment on the applicant and his familys gypsy status but these following comments are made on the assumption that they do indeed enjoy that status. I am not aware either of the position regarding the availability of other pitches in the district.

I do, however, note the applicants historic and family connections to this locality. I am also aware of the advice in ODPM Circular 01/2006 regarding gypsy sites in National Parks etc. I do not consider that the use of this site, subject to certain controls, would compromise the objectives of National Park designation. Those controls should be a restriction on the number of caravans, no business use and a landscaping scheme, which should use native species occurring naturally in the locality for the boundary hedging.

Therefore, subject to the permission, if granted, being subject to these conditions, I raise no objection to this application. I would, however, welcome the permission being additionally restricted to the Shea family and a temporary permission might be appropriate to allow the Council or a future National Park Authority to review the

position in the future.