



Medmerry Park Holiday
Village Redevelopment

**ASSESSMENT OF
APPLICANT'S TRAFFIC
GENERATION**

On behalf of
Earnley Parish Council

GDB/5537/TN.2
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1.0 INTRODUCTION & PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 1.1 Bellamy Roberts LLP have been instructed by Earnley Parish Council to advise with regard to the robustness of the traffic generation assumptions used by the Applicant's Transport Consultants to assess the traffic impact of the proposed development. This Technical Note is based upon the submitted Transport Statement and the Traffic and Transport Summary document.
- 1.2 The development proposed relates to the Medmerry Park Holiday Village. This is an existing holiday accommodation site comprising bungalows and chalets, located south of Earnley and accessed by a private road. The existing development comprises 308 units of accommodation, made up of approximately 77 1-bedroom units and 231 2-bedroom units. By reference to Table 2 (page 7) of the applicant's Supplementary Planning Report – Development Need, the 1-bedroom units have a total floor area of 323ft² each and the 2-bedroom units have a floor space of 440ft² each. The proposal is, over time, to demolish the existing units and by expanding into nearby fields, to replace them with 518 new units, comprising 426 static caravans with a floor space of 520ft² each and 92 lodges with a floor space of 900ft² each.
- 1.3 The holiday park operates on the basis that each unit is let on a long term lease, whereby occupancy is generally by the regular returning leaseholders. This is in contrast to holiday parks let on a short-term basis to 1-off visitors, typically for a one week let, or sometimes, for just a few days. The applicants intend to maintain the existing operating model, and the Transport Statement of November 2019 stresses the fact that this reduces traffic generation compared with the short-term letting model.

2.0 EXISTING TRAFFIC DATA

- 2.1 A 7-day 24 hr automatic traffic counter was placed on the access road during the week commencing the 27th June 2018. The Transport Statement indicates (at para 3.25) that this was a prolonged period of good weather and that the figures therefore lead to a robust assessment of the peak operations at the current park.



2.2 That survey was of course outside the summer school holidays and, therefore, not in the peak season. The Traffic and Transport Summary document of November 2019 contains a graph (on page 3) showing average occupancy figures month by month for the existing park. That graph confirms that June occupancy is below the August peak. The applicant states that the August peak operates at around 45% occupancy and therefore on the basis of the graph referred to, the survey figures are probably some 10% below the numbers which would occur during the summer school holidays.

2.3 The Transport Statement considers weekday morning and evening highway network peak hours and 24 hour figures (at Table 3-2). It also considers the busiest hour on a Saturday (10-11.00am) and a 24 hour total for Saturday (Table 3-3). Unsurprisingly, the Saturday figures are the highest. The survey data is converted to vehicle movements per unit of accommodation, giving 1.61 vehicle movements per 24 hours on a Saturday. This is based upon 496 vehicle movements recorded in the survey.

3.0 PROPOSED TRAFFIC GENERATION

3.1 The Transport Statement calculates traffic generation from the proposed development by multiplying the number of units (518) by the existing trip rate per unit set out above, to give 834 traffic movements on a Saturday (Table 4.2). That is an additional 338 vehicle movements, an increase of 68% over the existing park.

4.0 ASSESSMENT OF METHODOLOGY

4.1 We do not believe that the applicant's methodology does give a robust assessment of the increase in traffic likely to be generated by the development proposal. Essentially, this is because we do not accept that the total traffic increase will be proportional to the increase in the number of accommodation units (i.e. 1.68). The new units are larger, there are more bedrooms, and simply being new will make them more attractive. The site currently has 308 accommodation units with a total floor area of 126,511ft² (based on 77 1-bedroom units at 323ft² each and 231 2-bedroom units at 440ft²). The new development will provide 426 2-bedroom static

caravan units of 520ft² together with 92 2-bedroom lodges of 900ft² each, a total of 304,320ft². That is 2.41 times the existing floor space.

- 4.2 An alternative measure of total accommodation is the number of bedrooms. The park presently offers 539, whereas the redevelopment will offer 1036. That is an increase of 1.92 times the existing number.
- 4.3 Floor space and/or the number of bedrooms are relevant to traffic generation because of the way in which this type of accommodation is frequently used. Given the operating model described by the applicants, the most frequent occupants will be the leaseholder of each unit. However, what often occurs is that family members or friends come to stay with the leaseholder, often for a short period such as over a weekend. Generally, that will involve a second vehicle coming and going. A classic example is grandparents as leaseholder, with their offspring plus associated children coming to stay over a weekend.
- 4.4 Clearly, an increase in the number of 2-bedroom properties as proposed, facilitates this type of activity. However, larger communal areas in the units also adds potential for additional short stay visitors, with room for sofa beds, airbeds etc. Examination of websites offering units in the existing park for short-term lets on a commercial basis, shows that these stress the availability of additional beds etc. which confirm this type of activity. It is reasonable to expect that the greatly increased size and quality of the proposed new units compared with the existing older style units will result in a significant increase in successful short-term letting by leaseholders.
- 4.5 The principle that large units increase trip rates is well established for conventional housing. The TRICS database (the industry standard reference for trip generation survey data) facilitates this by enabling calculation of trip rates on a per bedroom basis, as well as per dwelling, or per parking space. Whilst holiday accommodation is a somewhat different case, the description set out above of typical occupancy behaviour makes clear that the number of units itself is not a reliable measure of traffic generation. The applicant's Transport Statement has used a simple per-unit multiplier to increase the existing traffic generation to that which is likely to arise from the proposed development. That gives rise to a multiplier of 1.68. If the

increase in the number of bedrooms is used, the multiplier becomes 1.92, and if the total floor space is used, it becomes 2.41.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Given that these factors do not take account of the fact that the base survey of existing use was taken outside the peak holiday period and potentially underestimates the base flows by some 10%, and also that there is no allowance for the improved quality and attractiveness of the new holiday park, submitted traffic generation figures significantly underestimate the likely increase in traffic.

5.2 Taking into account the potential underestimate of existing peak traffic by some 10%, calculating the increase in traffic due to the proposed development for a peak season Saturday by reference simply to the number of units underestimates the likely figure by 26% compared with a calculation based on the increase in the number of bedrooms, and an underestimate of 58% compared with the calculation based on the increase in floor area. Expressing these increases in terms of vehicle movements, the 834 movements for a Saturday in June (Table 4.2 of the applicant's Transport Statement) increases to 1,048 for a Saturday in August (plus 10% on the base) with a per bedroom calculation, and 1,316 based on a floor area calculation.



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