

**PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE TO CAMPSITE AND CARPARK
AT CROSSGATE FARM, CROSSGATE LANE, TINTWISTLE, SK13 1HP**

PLANNING STATEMENT



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1.0 Background

1.1 This statement supports a full planning application by Mrs Cooper and her mother Mrs Cooper ("the Applicant") to change the use of part of a grass field on their agricultural holding to a campsite, an area of underused hardstanding to a carpark, and an underused part of an agricultural barn to portable toilets and bike storage ("the Application") at Crossgate Farm, Crossgate Lane, Tintwistle, SK13 1HP ("the Site").

1.2 The Applicants farm approximately 140 acres, all owned, 68 acres of which surround the farmhouse and yard at Crossgates Farm. Until recently a dairy farm, they now run 100 beef cattle. With upland farming in crisis following the reduction of government subsidies, the Coopers are looking for sustainable ways to diversify.

1.3 The Coopers know first-hand how to run a successful campsite and that there is great demand for such a facility at Crossgate Farm, having run a temporary campsite there for the last two years.

1.3 Under Permitted Development Rights (extended during Covid), the Applicant ran a campsite for 56 days in 2021 and for 28 days in 2022. The demand was huge and the success really encouraging. In 2021 the campsite did not open until the end of June; there were 228 bookings over July and August. In 2022, to allow for reduced permitted development, the campsite was only open at weekends over the summer, yet still welcomed 197 bookings.

1.4 The land will remain agricultural, alongside the use for camping. The site area will continue to be mown for hay (two cuts on the surrounding field and one cut on the site area, made before the majority of bookings in July and August). During the winter all the land, including the site area, will continue to be grazed with cattle.

1.5 The site is a prime location for a campsite, being in an area of the High Peak with a lack of campsites, and being located so close to the Peak District National Park, Pennine Bridleway, Trans Pennine Trail and just 2.5 miles from the Pennine Way.

1.6 There is one small campsite 2.5 miles away just outside of Glossop. There are two campsites at Crowden and Hayfield, 4.5 and 9.5 miles away respectively, which are both more focussed on caravans. The next nearest campsites that cater solely for tents are 13 miles away at Holmfirth and 17 miles away at Upper Booth.

1.7 The site is adjacent to the popular Peak District National Park; the Pennine Bridleway runs adjacent to the site field to the east; the Trans Pennine Trail and Pennine Cycleway lie less than 1 mile away to the south; and the Pennine Way lies approximately 2.5 miles away to the east. Hadfield train station is within walking distance and there are several bus stops just minutes' walk away from the site.

1.8 The site is popular with Duke of Edinburgh students, with 100 students from Mossley Hollins High School using the campsite last summer, along with 150 muslim families, who were welcomed for a retreat weekend organised by Minhaj College in Manchester. The site has also been used by cyclists from America, the Netherlands and Germany, as well as Zoe Bicat and her mule Falco on their sponsored charity walk from Oxford to Loch Lomond. Over the last two years, the site has proved to be an important rural getaway for the surrounding conurbations of Stockport, Oldham and Manchester, as well as an important overnight stop-off for horse riders and cyclists completing the Pennine Bridleway and walkers completing the Pennine Way.

1.9 The site is advertised by the website Pitch Up, who recognised the campsite as Review Winner in 2021, with an average review rating of 9.3. The many positive reviews, along with 44 photographs, can be seen on the Pitch Up website under Crossgate Farm Campsite, I.D. 27355.

2.0 The Proposal

2.1 The proposed campsite forms part of a gently sloping field of permanent pasture measuring approximately 1 hectare (2.47 acres). The proposal is for 30 pitches and a 30m x 12m carpark, with portable toilets and secure bike storage in the adjacent agricultural building.

2.2 There will be no physical alterations to the camping site, which will be continue to be used for agriculture outside of the camping season. The site will be for tents and

small campervans only; no motorhomes or caravans. Camping will run from the beginning of April to the end of September.

2.3 The carpark will make use of an existing area of hardstanding, which will need no physical alteration. Part of the area is concrete and part is road planings. The car park will have space for 11 vehicles, including one disabled space. There is plenty of space (7.2 metres) for turning and manoeuvring within the car park.

2.4 The campsite will accommodate cyclists and horseback riders. It is anticipated that most users will arrive on foot or by bicycle, and that there will be few cars. There will be a bicycle storage facility in an existing agricultural building, and the adjacent field will be available to turn horses out to. The campsite will encourage access on foot, with the Applicant already running a pick-up service to and from the Pennine Way.

2.5 Four portable toilets and secure bicycle storage will be located in part of the adjacent agricultural building, which will need no physical alteration. The outside of the building and carpark are already lit by motion sensor lights. 2.3 The portable toilets are emptied weekly by the company that supplies them, so there is no need for foul drainage. A general waste and a recycling bin will be located inside the building by the toilets and will be put out by the Applicant at the same time as the main farm rubbish is collected. Up to four horses can be accommodated in existing stables, along with grazing in the paddocks.

2.6 A one-way system will be used for cars, so that they enter at the north of the farm via Crossgate Lane. This lane is single track along the top 250 metres but there are three existing passing places, maintainable by the Council. Vehicles will then exit the site at the south on to Manchester Road, where there is an existing wide access (9 metres) and sightlines of 45 metres and 250 metres on to a 30mph road.

2.7 It is proposed not to add any additional boundaries to retain the rustic nature of the campsite and to minimise landscape impact. No surfacing is required within the campsite or to the exist track, thus minimising landscape impact further.

2.8 Campsite rules will prohibit alcohol on site as well as group bookings, except Duke of Edinburgh, school and other organised educational groups. New arrivals must arrive before 9pm to minimise disruption and noise.

3.0 Development Plan and Policies

3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The High Peak Local Plan guides planning decisions across the borough.

3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") sets out the Government's objectives for the planning system and is a material consideration that must be taken in to account in all planning applications. Underlying the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development; that is development which promotes economic development, social inclusion and environmental protection.

3.3 The site is located in open countryside in the Green Belt, and must be assessed accordingly.

3.4 The low-key nature of this proposal, its location and accessibility by train, foot, bicycle and horseback, along with the small-scale, sensitive design, making use of existing facilities, make this proposal a sustainable scheme, entitled to the support set out in the NPPF.

3.5 Paragraph 28 of the NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities ("LPA's") to support a prosperous rural economy by supporting all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, and promoting the development and diversification of agricultural rural businesses. It encourages sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit business in rural areas, communities and visitors and which respect the character of the area.

3.6 The NPPF encourages LPA's to secure developments which improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of an area. The following paragraphs set out how the proposal would achieve these objectives, whilst at the same time meeting the requirements of the relevant policies contained within the Local Plan.

3.7 This proposal will help an established agricultural business diversify and boost income, thus promoting its long-term survival. The Site is located on a smallholding which is in need of a diversified income stream, thus enabling the long-term stewardship of the countryside that forms the holding. Accommodating more tourists in the area not only aids this individual farm business but has a positive knock-on effect on other local rural businesses and of the local area as a whole. It is a short walk to Tintwistle, Hollingworth and Hadfield from the Site, to where campers may want to go for, supplies, cafes, restaurants, pubs, shops, attractions and entertainment.

3.8 The increase in visitors to the area has already been a boost to local businesses in Tintwistle, Hadfield and Glossop. The Bulls Head, Liberal Club and local shops in Tintwistle have all said they look forward to the campers arriving and have enquired about opening for 2023.

3.9 There is a lack of camping facilities in the High Peak. Currently Bed and Breakfast, Caravanning and hotels are the only accommodation options in Glossop. Camping provides an affordable means of accommodation for people to enjoy the High Peak. The proposal is suitable for disabled users and families with children. Furthermore, it is accessible by public transport, as well as on foot, bike and horseback. In these ways the proposal promotes social inclusion.

3.10 The proposal is low-key and sustainable in its impact as well as accessibility. The Site will remain in permanent pasture and will be grazed by livestock outside of the camping season. The access already exists. There will therefore be no impact on the physical landscape, other than temporary tents and cars.

3.11 The proposal is hidden from views from the north due to the topography. The site that has been chosen does not rise significantly higher in elevation than Tintwistle and so is largely screened by the village buildings in views from the south, as can be seen in the photos submitted showing the view back to the site from Padfield and Higher Dinting. The hedge along the north of the site helps to screen it further. Anywhere that is higher in elevation and in better view of the site (particularly in the Peak District National Park) is further away and thus the site will be barely visible from those locations.

3.12 A further environmental consideration is the proposal's impact on carbon emissions. Being situated close to good walking and bridleway routes as well as being within walking distance of a train station, the town of Hadfield and village of Tintwistle, it is anticipated that campers will have less reliance on motor vehicles, helping towards the Government's sustainable transport objectives set out in Paragraph 29 of the NPPF. It is considered that this proposal will have little negative impact on the environment in terms of carbon emissions.

3.13 There will be a facility to recycle waste and this will be encouraged with signage.

3.14 Paragraph 146 of the NPPF states that "material changes in the use of land" are not inappropriate development in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. Paragraph 145 states that the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with...a change of use)...for...outdoor recreation" is also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. The campsite is a very low-key proposal and will only be open to short-stay visitors. There will be no permanent physical alterations to the land, as the carpark hardstanding already exists and the other facilities will be located inside an existing agricultural building.

3.15 According to the Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document the site falls within the Settled Valley Pastures Landscape Character Area. This is a pastoral landscape with permanent improve pasture, so it is important that the proposal will retain this landscape and not harm it or reduce it in anyway. Low-key camping can be complimentary to traditional agriculture in a pastoral landscape.

3.16 Paragraph 4.45 of the Local Plan states that "the Council will seek opportunities to provide access, outdoor sport and recreation for the benefit of the community in [the Green Belt]".

3.17 Policy EQ3 states that the Council will support "the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in sustainable locations where identified needs are not met

by existing facilities". It has been demonstrated that current demand is not being met by existing local campsites and that the Site is in a sustainable location easily accessible by train, on foot, bicycle and horseback and lying adjacent to the National Park and close to several recognised national trails. The facility will be welcomed by the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and schools, as well as other visitors to the area pursuing outdoor recreation or affordable accommodation.

3.18 Policy EQ3 goes on to state that the Council will support "development associated with recreational and open space uses in accessible and least environmentally sensitive locations". The proposed site is directly off a main road and is not on an area of any significant wildlife or habitat value, being improved grassland and not within any designated areas.

3.19 Paragraph 5.130 of the Local Plan stresses the importance of tourism to the local economy. Policy E6 states that the "Council will support the development of Peak District tourism". Camping sites are to be "sited in locations so as not to be prominent in the landscape... and without having "adverse impact upon the character or appearance of the landscape". The Site is on the edge of an existing settlement and requires no physical alteration to the land. The number of pitches is modest. It is argued that the proposal is not of a prominent nature. The visual impact from wider views is largely screened by natural topography. Due to the distance of surrounding higher land, the campsite's small size and low-key nature, and proximity to the edge of the settlement mean there will not be an adverse visual impact. The attached annotated photographs show what little impact there will be on the openness of the Green Belt. The benefits of this proposal to local tourism and to the local economy far outweigh any negative impact on the landscape of a small number of tents. Camping promotes a healthy and sustainable way to enjoy the High Peak countryside.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 It has already been shown to be a viable and popular proposal, which will bring significant economic, social and environmental benefits to the local area, while having minimal impact on the landscape due to its position, design, low-key nature

and small scale. Planning permission for a longer season will allow promotion of the campsite to schools, the Prince's Trust. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award and National Citizen Service Trust, who do not usually operate in the school summer holidays. This statement has set out how the proposal complies with relevant national and local planning policies, and it is hoped that the Authority will issue a swift decision in favour.