

Building Justification

We propose to split Huntley Wood into three separate zones, supported by built facilities including toilet and shower blocks and indoor bunk-room style accommodation, each of which will be available either for exclusive hire or for general camping and use by day visitors.

We appreciate that, although recreational and leisure use of a green belt site such as Huntley Wood is generally considered appropriate, all buildings in the green belt must be fully justified on a business basis in terms of their existence, size and location. This document sets out the justification for the buildings and works for which we are applying for planning permission, based upon our proposed business use of the site, and also comments on the proposed construction methods.

When considering the facilities that are necessary it is important to keep in mind the target market for Huntley Wood. Although we hope to appeal to a number of markets, including school and community groups and general campers, the main revenue generation for the business is expected to come from groups who run outdoor events for profit. A large proportion of the outdoor event market involves events with historical themes, for example re-enactment, living history and role playing events. These groups have many of the same requirements as other outdoor activity groups, with additional requirements which arise from the historical nature of their events. In particular they require the following things to make a venue attractive to them:

- A secluded, rural location with a good mix of outdoor space, both open ground and woodland, uninterrupted by modern features such as cars, houses, roads, factories, modern buildings, machinery or equipment, as these sorts of anachronisms are detrimental to the atmosphere of the event;
- Uninterrupted, exclusive access to the area they have hired, to enable them to run (and their participants to enjoy) their event undisturbed;
- High standard, modern toilet and shower facilities; and
- Indoor space to shelter from the elements and indoor accommodation for those involved with running the event or, in the case of smaller events, for all participants, particularly during the winter months.

A site which offers these features, particularly in a central location in England with good transport links, can be expected to draw a significant proportion of this expanding, national market, and thus draw significant amounts of business to the area as well as providing an excellent facility for more local groups. However, none of these features will detract from other uses of the site, and in fact are likely to increase its desirability to all users; for example, organisers of healing or yoga retreats will appreciate the lack of modern interruptions to the peaceful, rural nature of the site, while many school and youth groups, particularly those working with vulnerable people, require exclusive access to a site for security reasons.

These, therefore, have been our overriding principles when designing the facilities at Huntley Wood, in order to ensure that the site appeals to the widest possible market to ensure the success of the business, while also providing an excellent, affordable resource for community organisations.

The positions of the various buildings are indicated on Drawing HW/3 in the Planning Statement and the schematics of each are shown individually in Drawings 001 to 006 also in the Planning Statement. All of the buildings on Zone 1 and Zone 2 are completely screened from the surrounding countryside by the lie of the land, being within the bowl created by the former quarrying operations at Huntley Wood, and cannot be viewed from off the site. Zone 3 slopes in part away from the bowl but the location of the buildings has been chosen partially due to the large number of trees which screen it from view; there is a dense pine plantation immediately behind this location with many trees over three times the height of the proposed structures.

1 Zoning

Existence

The market of groups wishing to hire venues such as Huntley Wood ranges in scale from groups as small as ten people up to significant events for several hundred people. Smaller groups require less space, fewer facilities and, on the whole, are more restricted in the prices they can afford to pay than larger groups. Hence, to appeal to as wide a proportion of the market as possible, it is necessary to have several areas of differing sizes available to hire at different price points.

Also, while we anticipate demand for this sort of venue throughout the year, it is to be expected that due to the outdoor nature of much of the facilities, demand from profit-making event-running groups will be considerably higher during the warmer period of the year, when competition for similar sites around the country is fierce, especially on bank holiday weekends or during the school holidays. Thus, to capture as much of the most profitable part of the market as possible, and to maximise the revenue from the land, it is necessary to be able to host multiple events simultaneously.

We also hope to make Huntley Wood accessible to non-profit organisations or those with a much less commercial focus such as schools, charities and community groups, who are unlikely to be able to afford to pay full commercial rates. This is only possible if the revenue-generating side of the business can continue to function profitably while supporting use of the site by such groups at prices below the commercial value. To ensure this, it is necessary to have the ability to take bookings from profit-making groups when they are available, to sustain the business, while still being able to give access to non-profit making groups. If we only had a single zone available, commercial necessity would be such that we could only take bookings in advance from those who could afford the highest prices, meaning we would be unable to take other, socially important but less lucrative bookings which would be detrimental to these community groups who would then only be able to use the facilities at Huntley Wood on very short notice, on occasions when it became apparent that a commercial booking would not be forthcoming. Having multiple zones available for exclusive use will enable us to offer advance bookings to non-commercial groups without losing the opportunity to take a more lucrative commercial booking if it becomes available at a later date.

Finally, we intend to supplement the event hosting side of the business with trade from individual campers to maximise the revenue from the land. For this to work successfully it is necessary to have areas available for camping which are separate from areas being used for event running, so that event runners retain exclusive, undisturbed access to their area.

Consequently, to make the business as profitable as possible, while also being able to support use of the site by community and charity groups, it is necessary to split the land into several independent zones.

Size

The wide variation in sizes of groups who are in the market for sites such as Huntley Wood makes it advantageous to have zones of differing sizes, so that large, medium and small events can be hosted on a zone which is of a suitable size and with enough facilities to accommodate their needs while still being affordable to them. The proposed boundaries between zones at Huntley Wood ensure this, providing a large first zone of approximately 70 acres, a medium-sized second zone of approximately 60 acres, and a smaller zone of approximately 30 acres, on which we propose to build facilities commensurate with the size of the zone and its capacity for accommodating visitors. This will enable us to appeal to the widest possible cross-section of the lucrative event-running market. It should be noted that although zones 1 and 2 are not widely dissimilar in their overall area, the terrain of zone 2 is much more hilly, making significantly less of the land suitable for use, and has a much smaller area available for camping, meaning it is suitable for events of a considerably

smaller size than zone 1.

Although aiming to divide the site into zones of differing sizes, to accommodate different sized groups, the exact size and shape of each zone has been determined by the topography of the site; see below.

Location

Because many groups require exclusive, undisturbed access to the area they have hired, splitting the site into several zones raises concerns about users of one zone disturbing those on another zone when multiple areas of the site are in use simultaneously. Since undisturbed access is itself a crucial element of our business plan, this could cause significant problems and be detrimental to the business. Uniquely, Huntley Wood is able to be split into zones with minimal risk of this sort of undesired disturbance, due to a combination of the large size of the site and its unusual topography.

The proposed zone boundaries have been designed to make use of existing, significant features in the landscape, including large hills and bodies of water which have arisen from the former quarrying operations at Huntley Wood, each of which acts as a substantial natural barrier between zones. Because of these features and the large distances involved it will be impossible for groups participating in activities at the main facilities in each zone to see or hear groups at the main facilities of any of the other zones, thus ensuring each group can enjoy undisturbed use of their zone. In addition, the size of the land and scale of the natural barriers between zones means that it is extremely unlikely that members of a group based at the facilities on one zone would range far enough to cross into the next, or even to come close to visitors using the neighbouring zone. Furthermore, the management zone in the centre of the site will act as an additional buffer between zones in the area where the topography of the site means that cross-over between them is easiest.

The locations of these natural barriers, and the advantages they give in terms of undisturbed access to each zone, have been the primary motivation for the exact size, shape and location of each zone and the boundaries between them, within the guiding principles that each zone should have a variety of terrain and that zones should be of varying size to allow Huntley Wood to appeal to as much of the outdoor event market as possible. It should be noted that although zones 1 and 2 are relatively similar in area, zone 1 is able to host much larger events than zone 2 owing to the significantly larger area of open ground available for camping, and the much flatter terrain of zone 1.

Finally, the proposed boundaries between zones make it possible for visitors to the site to access whichever zone they have hired with minimal disturbance to users of other zones, as the access tracks from the main gates to the facilities in each zone generally lie either within the zone they are accessing, or on the boundaries between zones. The one significant exception to this is where the access track to zone 2 cuts through the north-western corner of zone 3. This is unavoidable, as moving the road to the boundary would involve unacceptable disturbance to sensitive areas of the site, and moving the zone 1 / zone 3 boundary to the road would result in a portion of land being assigned to zone 1 despite it being separated from the rest of zone 1 by a very significant hill which acts as a natural barrier to movement. It is anticipated that groups hiring zone 3 who are particularly sensitive to disturbance will mitigate this problem by confining their camping and activities to the area of zone 3 which is south of the access track, this being the vast majority of zone 3, and will sacrifice use of the small camping area north of the track in favour of remaining undisturbed.

Construction

In order to prevent accidental cross-over, zone boundaries will be clearly marked and users of each zone made aware when they first arrive of the limits of the land they are entitled to use. However, we do not intend to fence the zones as some groups may wish to hire multiple, contiguous zones for events such as orienteering or mountain biking, where participants can be expected to cover more ground than usual, or for occasional particularly large events where any single zone does not have

the necessary capacity. It is considered that the significant distance and natural boundaries between zones, along with clear markings, will be sufficient barrier to prevent accidental intrusion into a zone, and that fencing is unlikely to prevent intentional cross-over from one zone to another. This is because secure fencing is both impractical over such large distances and undesirable in terms of its appearance and the way it would restrict access between zones on occasions when it is desired, while insecure fencing will not prevent intentional access, whilst still introducing problems of access between zones when contiguous areas have been hired by a single group.

2 *Camping Areas*

Existence

As our business model involves hosting outdoor events of varying sizes, the most sensible choice for the vast majority of accommodation, especially in the warmer summer months when we anticipate a higher number of larger events, is camping. This allows us to cater to a wide range of sizes of groups on each zone, while minimising the built facilities necessary to accommodate them.

Size

In general the sizes of the proposed camping areas on each zone reflect the sizes of event each zone is suitable for hosting. Within this, the exact sizes and shapes of each camping area have to a large extent been determined by the existing landscape.

Zone 1: The size of the zone 1 camping area has been determined largely by the existing landscape, which includes a large piece of open ground of nearly 10 acres which was left bare by the former quarrying operations and which can be restored using soil stockpiled by the former quarrying company for this purpose. A camping field of this size will allow us to host events of up to several hundred people – although not common, occurring on only a few weekends of the year, events of this size represent significant revenue generation, making them an important aspect of the business plan. This has been supplemented with a small amount of forest camping in woodland adjacent to the camping field to allow users to have some choice in the style of camping they prefer. There are several acres of additional open ground available to the west of the proposed camping area in zone 1, but it is considered that 10 acres is sufficient ground for camping at even the largest events, so this additional open ground will be seeded as a meadow or left as bare ground, in accordance with our ecological management plan.

Zone 2: The size of the zone 2 camping area has been determined largely by the existing landscape, which includes a flat area of approximately 3 acres which has been formed by a dried silt bed. This has been supplemented by a small amount of woodland camping, for variation, situated in woodland close to the camping field.

Zone 3: With no existing open area available for camping in zone 3, forest camping is the only option. Within suitable areas of woodland we propose to create glades sufficient for comfortable camping for up to 100 people (assuming multiple occupancy of larger tents).

Location

The location of each zone's camping area has been determined by a combination of ease of access and the existing landscape.

Zone 1: The location of the zone 1 camping area makes use of the existing area of flat open ground, thus minimising disturbance to the site. Of the available bare ground, this section is closest to the access track leading from the entrance, and furthest from neighbouring properties.

Zone 2: The location of the zone 2 camping area makes use of the existing area of flat open ground, thus minimising disturbance to the site. It is also situated at the end of an existing track leading from the entrance to zone 2.

Zone 3: Zone 3 lacks an existing open area suitable for a camping field, so by necessity camping will be provided in woodland areas. The location of the zone 3 camping area makes use of a piece of land which is relatively flat, unlike much of zone 3 which is on too steep a slope to permit camping. It also ensures that the only trees which need to be cleared to make glades suitable for forest camping are pines which are not native and which, independent of the provision of camping space, need to be thinned to encourage biodiversity in this area of the site.

Construction

Zone 1: The camping field will be created by spreading approximately 200mm of soil from on-site stockpiles across the existing open bare sand and gravel area in the centre of zone 1, then seeding with a stress-tolerant grass mix.

Zone 2: The camping field in zone 2 will make use of an existing open area of dried silt bed, enhanced by seeding with a stress-tolerant grass mix.

Zone 3: The camping glades in zone 3 will be created by felling some additional trees in the pine plantation, alongside those being felled to enhance biodiversity, and clearing dead wood from the ground in the mature birch woodland adjacent to it.

3 Accommodation Buildings

Existence

Camping is not desirable accommodation for the vast majority of people during the colder winter months, meaning that groups wishing to use Huntley Wood in the cooler part of the year would only be able to do so if there were suitable buildings which provided sufficient accommodation for both organisers and participants. While participants may be willing to brave the elements to pursue activities for limited periods of time, indoor space for eating, sleeping and gathering to listen to important information in reasonable comfort is vital. Thus, in order to be an attractive venue all year round, and to be able to run profitably during the colder winter months, some indoor space is a necessity on all zones at Huntley Wood.

Discussions with commercial groups who have already expressed interest in using Huntley Wood has made it clear that they require some indoor space even during the warmer summer months for two main reasons. The first is shelter from the elements in the case of inclement weather, which can occur at any time of year and which can be disastrous for outdoor events. Guaranteed ability to shelter in the case of extremely bad weather is vital for encouraging participants to buy tickets for events in advance, which in turn is important for the feasibility of such events. The second is that many event organisers require assistance from a significant number of people who are involved with the organisation and running of the event, and many of these people, who often assist on a voluntary basis, are reluctant to camp when they are working hard during the course of the event and therefore require basic indoor accommodation. Since these events cannot run smoothly and efficiently without such assistance, it is vital for event organisers to be able to guarantee their staff and volunteers a reasonable standard of accommodation.

Several groups have indicated to us that while they believe Huntley Wood to be a very suitable venue for their events, they will not consider hiring the facilities until some indoor accommodation is available, which demonstrates the necessity of this for the business.

This necessity for buildings alongside camping space is borne out by the long experience of the Scouting organisation who always equip their sites with buildings for use as both bunk rooms and activity space.

Size

On each zone we have aimed to be able to provide enough indoor accommodation to satisfy the

requirements of the largest groups who would be using that zone in the summer to accommodate their staff and volunteers, and to give sufficient accommodation for groups of a reasonable size to be able to hire the facilities during the winter months, when both organisers and participants will require indoor accommodation.

On the larger two zones, accommodation space has been split into several separate blocks so that individual blocks can remain closed when smaller events which do not require so much indoor space are using the zone, so as to avoid unnecessary heating and cleaning of unused accommodation space. This also allows groups who require separate accommodation for sub-groups, for example different classes from a school, to house them in separate blocks.

Location

It is desirable for the accommodation buildings on each zone to be adjacent to the camping area, so that visitors staying in either can easily access the communal toilet and shower facilities.

Zone 1: The accommodation buildings on zone 1 are situated in the north-eastern corner of the camping field, for a number of reasons. This area is already well-screened from much of the rest of the zone by a raised area of forest to its north, a high bank of earth and rock to the east, and a bank of earth and drainage ditch, with considerable vegetation including a number of tall trees, to the west. To the south there are views from this area towards part of the camping field, but even from this direction the area of buildings is somewhat screened by a small raised area of ground and associated vegetation. The ground in this area is also suitable for the construction of wooden buildings in terms of its structural integrity, meaning it is possible to build here without having to undertake extensive remedial strengthening works, which is not the case on all areas of the very sandy soil at Huntley Wood. This area also allows us to take advantage of the bank to the east for the construction of an amphitheatre (see below) for use for outdoor teaching and demonstrations. Finally, situating the accommodation buildings here keeps the majority of the construction on zone 1 in a single location (excepting the south side toilet block – by necessity toilets should be spread out not closely grouped).

Zone 2: The accommodation buildings on zone 2 are situated in an existing clearing in the woodland a short distance to the south of the camping field. Although it might be more desirable in some ways for the accommodation buildings and associated toilet facilities to be right on one edge of the camping field, this is not possible since the ground of the camping field, which is a dried up silt bed, is not suitable for building even single-storey wooden buildings without extensive remedial works to strengthen the ground, which would be financially prohibitive. The clearing in which the buildings are situated is, however, very close to the camping field and the ground here is structurally suitable for building. This area also appears to have previously been used for structures related to the former quarrying operations and is already well-screened from much of the rest of the zone by woodland on all sides. Additionally, it is adjacent to an existing track which will allow vehicular access to the buildings for unloading and for emergency vehicle access. The ground in this area is also suitable for the construction of wooden buildings in terms of its structural integrity, meaning it is possible to build here without having to undertake extensive remedial strengthening works, which is not the case on all areas of the very sandy soil at Huntley Wood.

Zone 3: The accommodation buildings on zone 3 are situated in between the two forest camping areas, on an area of ground which is relatively flat. Additionally, it is close to the proposed access track which will allow vehicular access to the buildings for unloading and for emergency vehicle access. The lack of an existing open area of flat ground in zone 3 necessitates the clearing of some trees to make space for the necessary buildings. The buildings have therefore been sited in the edge of the pine plantation, where regardless of other considerations the trees need to be thinned to encourage biodiversity, and where the trees removed are not native and have lower ecological value. This area is already well-screened from much of the rest of the zone by woodland on all sides. The ground in this area is also suitable for the construction of wooden buildings in terms of its structural

integrity, meaning it is possible to build here without having to undertake extensive remedial strengthening works, which is not the case on all areas of the very sandy soil at Huntley Wood.

Construction

The proposed accommodation blocks on each zone are single story wooden “log cabins” with low pitched roofs which will blend into the natural surroundings and cause minimum visual impact. This is a sustainable method of construction, the wood being sourced from sustained forests. Although the buildings are likely to be constructed by a specialist national or international company we hope that, subject to financial considerations, they will be erected and completed on site by local craftsmen.

Each block has been designed to provide the necessary amount of bunk accommodation, along with some space for eating and a small self-catering kitchen, with the minimum floor area and while also minimising build costs.

The design of each block, which involves three small buildings linked by corridors, both minimises build costs and gives extra advantages in terms of flexibility, for example allowing school groups to separate male and female students within a single block, or by making it possible to use some areas for bunk accommodation and others as classroom or indoor activity space. It also minimises sound transfer between areas of the building, thus minimising disturbance of those in one area by those in another, for example of people sleeping by anyone engaging in activities, or of one class by another.

Finally, this design also keeps each individual sub-building to a relatively small size, approximately 30m², which severely limits their suitability for future conversion to other uses such as dwellings.

4 Toilet Blocks

Existence

Since our business model relies upon people visiting and staying overnight at Huntley Wood, basic toilet and shower facilities are obviously a necessity in each zone.

Size

Guidelines for camp sites suggest ratios of toilets to visitors of between 1:5 and 1:40, depending on the quality of the site. We propose to provide facilities on each zone which fall within this level for even the largest events which would be hosted on that zone, aiming for a ratio of at least 1:35 for the largest events to ensure that we fall well within the guidelines. Although a higher ratio of toilets to visitors, closer to 1:20, is desirable to minimise queues and increase the quality and desirability of the site, we do not anticipate that every zone will be used to full capacity all the time, and in particular expect the two larger zones to only be used to full capacity on a few weekends during the high season. Consequently toilet ratios will often be considerably higher due to the zone being used by smaller than maximal groups. In the case of larger events which require higher toilet ratios, we will supplement the built facilities with portable ones hired from local firms for the duration of the event. This will allow us to cater for even the largest events with a good level of facilities, while still keeping the built facilities to a minimum size which is reasonable for the all year round requirements of the site.

There are no guidelines for showers, since these do not have to be provided, but we have aimed for a ratio of at least 1:100 for the largest events, although a ratio closer to 1:50 would be more desirable, again anticipating that the ratio will often be higher as each zone will not always be full to maximum capacity, and that these will be supplemented by hired portable facilities where necessary to improve the facilities for larger groups.

Zone 1: Assuming maximum numbers of 550 people on zone 1, a ratio of 1:35 requires 16 toilets, which is equivalent to a ratio of 1:20 for 320 people. We assume most groups will consist of

approximately equal numbers of male and female visitors, so these toilets have been provided as 8 male and 8 female. In addition, zone 1 has the largest amount of flat terrain of all the zones at Huntley Wood, so is considered the only zone suitable for wheelchair users, and one toilet accessible to wheelchair users has been provided. A ratio of 1:100 for showers for 550 people results in a need for 6 showers on zone 1, which is equivalent to a ratio of 1:50 for 300 people. These have been provided as 3 each for male and female visitors.

Zone 2: Assuming maximum numbers of approximately 200 people on zone 2, a ratio of 1:35 requires 6 toilets, which is equivalent to a ratio of 1:20 for 120 people. We assume most groups will consist of approximately equal numbers of male and female visitors, so these toilets have been provided as 3 male and 3 female. Since the terrain of zone 2 is largely unsuitable for wheelchairs, wheelchair accessible toilets have not been provided. A ratio of 1:100 for showers for 200 people results in a need for 2 showers on zone 2, which is equivalent to a ratio of 1:50 for 100 people. These have been provided as one each for male and female visitors.

Zone 3: Since zone 3 is the smallest zone we anticipate it will be used closer to full capacity more often than the other zones, so in this area we propose to provide toilets at a ratio of 1:20, and showers at a ratio of 1:50, for the full number of visitors. Assuming maximum numbers of 100 people on this zone, this requires 5 toilets but we have increased this to 6 to allow for equal numbers of male and female toilets. Since the terrain of zone 3 is largely unsuitable for wheelchairs, wheelchair accessible toilets have not been provided. A ratio of 1:50 for showers for 100 people results in a need for 2 showers on zone 3, which have again been provided as one each for male and female visitors. This also allows us to minimise build costs by using the same design toilet block for zones 2 and 3.

Location

In general it is desirable for toilet and shower blocks to be situated close to both the camping areas and accommodation blocks in each zone, so that they can be easily accessed by visitors staying in both the indoor and camping accommodation.

Zone 1: The toilet and shower facilities for zone 1 have been split into two separate facilities, on account of the considerable size of the zone 1 camping area. If all the toilet facilities were concentrated in one location, some guests would be camped a considerable distance from the facilities and would have to walk an unreasonable distance to reach them¹. The largest set of facilities is situated close to the zone 1 accommodation buildings, between them and the camping field, so that it can be easily accessed by those staying in or otherwise using the buildings as well as those who are camping. The second, smaller set is situated on the far side of the camping field, so that campers who are most distant from the main facilities will be significantly closer to the secondary facilities.

Zone 2: The toilet and shower facilities for zone 2 have been situated close to the zone 2 accommodation buildings, between them and the camping field, so that they can be easily accessed by those staying in the buildings as well as those who are camping.

Zone 3: The toilet and shower facilities for zone 3 have been situated close to the zone 3 accommodation buildings and camping areas, so that they can be easily accessed by those staying in the buildings as well as those who are camping.

Construction

The proposed toilet blocks on each zone are single story wooden “log cabins” with low pitched

¹For comparison, a local camp site at Consall which is approximately two fifths of the size of zone 1, has toilet facilities at three separate locations spread across the site to provide sufficient facilities for visitors (see Case Study).

roofs which will blend into the natural surroundings and cause minimum visual impact. This is a sustainable method of construction, the wood being sourced from sustained forests. Although the buildings are likely to be constructed by a specialist national or international company we hope that, subject to financial considerations, they will be erected and completed on site by local craftsmen.

The exact dimensions of the toilet and shower blocks have been designed to provide the necessary level of facilities while minimising floor area and build costs.

5 Car Parking

Existence

Although it is anticipated that some visitors to Huntley Wood will arrive by public transport, and efforts will be made to encourage this, it is unavoidable that many visitors, especially those coming from further afield with camping gear, will arrive by car. Therefore it is essential to provide parking facilities. Separate parking facilities are necessary for each zone, so as to minimise disturbance of users of one zone by those of another, and so that visitors are not camped an unreasonable distance from their vehicles, which would be inconvenient and also introduce additional security concerns.

Size

It is important that sufficient car parking space will be available for the number of cars regularly expected at Huntley Wood. Research suggests that attendees at events such as those we propose to host arrive at an average of 2.5 people per car, with at least 10% of attendees arriving by public transport. We would hope to increase the number arriving by public transport by developing relationships with local taxi and minibus firms, etc, but have made provision for car numbers based on this as a worst case scenario. Guidelines for car parking space suggest that each car requires 22m² of space to allow for parking, turning, etc.

Zone 1: Assuming maximum numbers of 550 people attending events on zone 1, it is necessary to provide parking for approximately 200 cars, thus requiring a parking area of approximately 4400m².

Zone 2: Assuming maximum numbers of 200 people attending events on zone 2, it is necessary to provide parking for approximately 70 cars, thus requiring a parking area of approximately 1550m².

Zone 3: Assuming maximum numbers of 100 people attending events on zone 2, it is necessary to provide parking for approximately 35 cars, thus requiring a parking area of approximately 770m².

The proposed car parking areas on all three zones are approximately the areas given above, but their exact sizes and shapes have been determined by the landscape.

Location

Given the necessity of minimising the impact of modern features on the rural nature of the site, so as not to negatively impact on the atmosphere of historically themed events, car parking areas in all three zones have been carefully sited so as to minimise their visual impact on the site, while taking into account the need to be accessible by car and to be in reasonably close proximity to the camping areas, for reasons of security and convenience. When siting car parks we have made use, where possible, of existing areas of open ground so as to limit the impact on the site.

Zone 1: The zone 1 car park is situated on an existing area of open ground on the south-east side of the zone 1 camping area. This area is already well screened on its north-eastern and southern sides by high hills which restrict the view of the car parking area from most of the rest of the site. On the north-west side there is currently a view over the car park from part of the zone 1 camping area. The proposed car parking area is, however, already somewhat lower than the camping field which limits this view and minimises the visual impact of the car park. We would further obscure the view using landscaping, consisting of a berm of earth approximately 1m high in combination with

planting to completely hide the car park from the zone 1 camping area.

Zone 2: The zone 2 car park is situated on an existing area of open ground adjacent to the proposed accommodation buildings which is already well screened on all sides by trees and woodland, and which will be further screened by the proposed buildings.

Zone 3: The zone 3 car park is situated on an existing area of open ground to either side of the main access track which leads from the main gates into Huntley Wood towards all zones. Although this is not ideal in terms of its distance from the camping areas and the fact that users of other zones will pass through the zone 3 car park, it is the best available option for zone 3 which does not require significant additional removal of trees, and is not anticipated to cause unacceptable disturbance to the users of zone 3 as their activities will be taking place some distance from the car park.

Construction

We propose to use compacted sand and gravel from on-site stock piles in addition to the existing ground surface in order to produce a suitable surface for cars in each of the parking areas.

6 Club House

Existence

The proposed buildings discussed above provide sufficient space for indoor bunk accommodation on each zone, but for larger groups will not provide adequate facilities for indoor activities alongside the accommodation. Additional indoor space is necessary to allow larger groups to gather together in one space for lectures, demonstrations, workshops, etc, or to eat together whilst being protected from the elements. This is particularly important during the winter season, when inclement weather which would prevent outdoor gathering occurs more frequently.

Thus to make Huntley Wood a superb venue which will attract the highest quantity and quality of business we require further indoor activity space on each zone above and beyond the proposed accommodation.

However, for the present time we are only proposing additional indoor space on zone 1, in the form of a club house. Being the largest zone which will host the largest groups, zone 1 is the most likely to require such space. It has been indicated by the planning authority that they would prefer to see a phased approach to built facilities where possible. Since we believe that, on account of the smaller sizes of groups which will use them, zones 2 and 3 can function adequately, although not to their full potential, without additional indoor space, we propose to test this need on zone 1 initially, and accept the position of the planning officers that similar facilities on zones 2 and 3 should be constructed later once the business has proven its viability.

Size

The size of the proposed club house would allow for lecture-style seating for approximately 100 people, and could also be utilised for banquet- or classroom-style seating for approximately 80 people. This would give sufficient space for a group hiring zone 1 in the winter months using all the available bunk accommodation to all gather in one space. It would also give larger summer groups the ability to gather all their staff and volunteers together for briefings, etc.

Location

The club house has been situated alongside the other built facilities in zone 1 to allow easy access to it from the accommodation blocks, and to keep all the buildings in this zone localised to a single area which is well screened from the rest of the site.

Construction

The proposed club house is a single storey wooden building of traditional oak-framed construction designed to look like an old barn which has been converted, and thus not be out of place in the countryside, blending into its surroundings. This is a sustainable method of construction, the wood being sourced from sustained forests.

Although this building is likely to be constructed by a specialist national or international company we hope that, subject to financial considerations, it will be erected and completed on site by local craftsmen.

7 *Amphitheatre*

Existence

Although the club house will make it possible to gather up to 100 people in one place for lectures and training, in the summer months it is anticipated that zone 1 will be used by groups of several hundred people. In order for very large groups to be able to gather together and adequately see/hear demonstrations and instructions we require a larger area for people to congregate. Since this is only required in the summer months when particularly large groups are present on the site, we propose to make it an outdoor area.

An outdoor area of this nature will also help us appeal to varied sectors of the market such as companies specialising in outdoor theatre productions and we hope to encourage some of the local armature dramatic groups to use this part of the site in combination with the other buildings for changing rooms etc.

Size

The aim of the amphitheatre is to allow larger groups to gather together in the summer months, but its exact size has been determined by the existing landscape of the site. The proposed amphitheatre will provide seating for up to 200 people, and due to its outdoor nature will allow even larger groups to congregate by making use of standing room around the seating.

Location

The amphitheatre has been located adjacent to the rest of the zone 1 buildings which both makes access easy from the accommodation blocks and club house and keeps all the built facilities in one localised area which is well screened from the rest of the site. Additionally, this location allows us to take advantage of the existing high bank of sand and rock to the east of the buildings, into which the amphitheatre will blend, making it seem part of the natural hillside and helping it to blend into its surroundings.

Construction

We propose to take advantage of the shape of an existing high bank of sand and bedrock to form the basic shape of the amphitheatre. The amphitheatre will then be constructed in front of this bank, with the rise of each “seat” being faced with wood and the top of each “seat” being grassed so that the structure will blend into the hillside, minimising its visual impact.

8 *Amphitheatre Storage Hut*

Existence

In order to fully utilise the Amphitheatre some groups are likely to require equipment and teaching aids necessary for demonstrations and performances, which will need to be stored inside when not

in use. Some groups are also likely to require nearby access to electricity, for example to power demonstration equipment or to provide lighting. Both of these needs can be fulfilled by a small storage hut.

Size

Some of the equipment and teaching aids needed by groups for outdoor displays and demonstrations could be sizeable, due to the distances over which they need to be clearly visible, and some groups who are running multiple events at Huntley Wood over the course of a season may wish to store their equipment between events, meaning that it may be necessary to store multiple sets of equipment simultaneously. A hut similar in size to a good-sized garage is considered necessary and sufficient for this purpose.

Location

In order to serve the amphitheatre it is necessary for this hut to be situated adjacent to it.

Construction

The proposed amphitheatre storage hut is a single story wooden “log cabin” with low pitched roof which will blend into the natural surroundings and cause minimum visual impact. This is a sustainable method of construction, the wood being sourced from sustained forests. Although the building is likely to be constructed by a specialist national or international company we hope that, subject to financial considerations, they will be erected and completed on site by local craftsmen.

9 *Manager's Accommodation*

Existence

We believe that an on-site manager is necessary for the successful functioning of the business at Huntley Wood for a number of reasons.

First, we are projecting that at least one zone at Huntley Wood will be in use at all times throughout the year. Since business will occur on all days of the week, and will usually involve overnight accommodation of visitors, it is necessary to have a manager on hand at all times to look after visitors and deal with any issues which arise. Anticipated issues visitors may have include any problems with infrastructure such as heating, lighting and plumbing; security problems, i.e. dealing with intruders onto the site; disputes between groups hiring different zones; and health and safety issues.

Groups who have paid commercial rates for the hire of a venue rightly expect to have someone on-hand to deal with all such issues whenever they arise, which may be in the middle of the night. Individual campers, who do not have a group organiser on hand to deal with more minor issues can also reasonably expect to have a manager available to assist them at all times.

Secondly, we are informed by the local police that Huntley Wood has been a centre of antisocial activity for some time² and that dealing with this currently costs the local authority considerable sums of money. This antisocial behaviour has included incidents of vandalism, dumping, illegal use of the site for motor sports, and arson. It the view of the police that, owing to the impracticality and prohibitive cost of securely fencing such a large area, and the requirement for 24-hour access by visitors to the site, an on-site presence will be required 24 hours a day to prevent and deter such

²We have a copy of a police report showing over 100 instances which is appended hereto as Schedule [].

activity³. This is particularly important from the point of view of the viability of the business, since visitors to the site will not tolerate such anti-social interference from outsiders, and any such occurrences could reasonably be expected to severely damage the business. Also, buildings on unoccupied zones would be particularly vulnerable to arson and vandalism, which would cause considerable, potentially crippling expense to the business, and which therefore need to be monitored at all times.

Thirdly, there will be a considerable amount of work related to the management of the land which will need to be undertaken at various times of year, including forestry and general maintenance.

In light of these issues we believe an on-site manager to be a vital necessity for the functioning of the business. In line with planning policy regarding dwellings in the green belt we have initially requested permission for temporary accommodation, with a view to applying for a permanent dwelling once the business is established.

Size

Being a full-time dwelling, this building will need to be someone's home and may also need to house their family. The size of the proposed manager's dwelling provides just two bedrooms and falls well within that usually recommended for an agricultural or forestry workers dwelling, which is in the region of 140-150sqm.

Location

The location of the manager's dwelling must meet certain criteria in order to allow the manager to be able to fulfil his or her most important roles.

It must allow the swiftest possible response times to all areas of the site, particularly those where built facilities exist, to allow the manager to respond as promptly as possible in the case of any emergency, whether related to the health and safety of visitors or the security of unoccupied buildings, and to allow visitors, who may be restricted to walking on foot, to reach the manager's accommodation as swiftly as possible if they require the manager's assistance. At approximately 1 mile long and 0.8 of a mile wide, the distances at Huntley Wood present a significant problem in this regard and make a central location very necessary for the manager's dwelling. Although no one position at Huntley Wood can offer a manager a view of all possible access points to the land, of which there are several, a central location also offers a good chance of hearing access, particularly by vehicles such as quad or motocross bikes, from any direction, thus allowing the manager to respond promptly to any such intrusion.

The location of the manager's dwelling must allow easy access to the network of maintenance tracks, and allow the manager to gain vehicular access to any zone on the site, both for undertaking maintenance of the land and buildings and in case of emergencies, without causing unnecessary disturbance to users of any other zone. As previously mentioned disturbance, particularly by modern machinery of the type which will be necessary for much of the forestry work and maintenance of tracks, ditches, etc, would be very detrimental to the atmosphere of historical events and would significantly deter a very large and lucrative part of the market from hiring Huntley Wood, so it is essential that the manager is not forced to drive vehicles or transport equipment through one zone to reach another. It is also important that the manager's dwelling and associated equipment not be visible from the main areas in use on any zone for the same reason.

The location proposed for the manager's accommodation fulfils all these requirements, being centrally located and having a boarder with all three zones, allowing the manager to access each one directly without passing through any of the others. It also has additional benefits including having

³We have a letter from the police to this affect which is appended hereto as Schedule [].

ground which is suitable for building, and being a high point within the bowl of the quarry which, although being well screened by trees and thus having no visual impact on the rest of the site, offers additional advantages in terms of being able to hear unauthorised vehicular access to the site from any direction, and being the best location to receive wireless data transmission from remote monitors such as alarms and CCTV cameras, making it superior from the point of view of security.

Although it will be necessary to clear some woodland to make space for the manager's accommodation and associated buildings, the vast majority of the trees to be felled are small, being below the threshold necessary for a felling licence, and the woodland is of relatively low ecological value. The felling of some woodland for this purpose is unavoidable as all the areas of open ground on the site are all unsuitable locations for the manager's accommodation, being used for, or overlooked by, camping areas.

Construction

The manager's accommodation is a single story wooden “log cabin” style building with low pitched roof which will blend into the natural surroundings and cause minimum visual impact and which can swiftly and easily be removed from site, thus satisfying the requirements for a temporary dwelling.

Due to the nature of the building and its requirement to be easily removed it may well arrive on site in an almost assembled condition so unlike the other log cabins will probably be purchased in a ready to use format.

10 Storage Barn

Existence

Huntley Wood is a large site with a number of different types of terrain. Maintaining the site will require a number of items of mechanical equipment in order to perform normal forestry and maintenance operations such as managing the woodland and sustaining paths and ditches as well as support for the infrastructure of the buildings on the site, and which need to be stored inside to protect them from the elements. This necessitates a storage barn.

Size

The size of the barn has been designed around the basic equipment likely to be necessary to maintain the woodland, camping areas and buildings. Equipment necessary for land maintenance will include items such as a tractor, digger, land rover, mower, forest mulcher, wood chipper, log splitter, timber trailer, chainsaws, strimmers, etc, all of which need to be stored out of the elements. A barn of the proposed size should be able to accommodate the majority of this equipment. If additional storage space becomes necessary in future years it can be expanded upon as appropriate, subject to the necessary planning permission.

Location

The storage barn has been situated adjacent to the manager's accommodation, so that the equipment necessary for maintenance is immediately available to the manager and can be transported to any zone without passing through another, as discussed above, and also so that it cannot be seen from any zone when being stored. It also allows the manager to be on hand for the security of valuable equipment which could be easily stolen or vandalised.

Construction

The proposed storage barn is a one-and-a-half storey wooden building of traditional oak-framed construction designed to look like an old barn, and is thus not out of place in the countryside and

will blend into its surroundings. This is a sustainable method of construction, the wood being sourced from sustained forests.

Although this building is likely to be constructed by a specialist national or international company we hope that, subject to financial considerations, it will be erected and completed on site by local craftsmen.

11 Office

Existence

Since the manager will also be expected to deal with the paperwork side of the business, an office is required, which will also serve as a space for meetings with potential clients.

Size

The office needs to be large enough for the manager and at least one book keeper to work, as well as providing space for meetings with potential clients. Beyond this requirement, the exact size of the office has been determined by its location.

Location

The office needs to be situated adjacent to the manager's accommodation for easy access for the manager. In consideration of the fact that woodland will need to be cleared to make space for the manager's accommodation and all associated buildings it is proposed that the office be situated in the eaves of the storage barn, as this maximises the use of the space within the storage barn and reduces the footprint necessary for the required facilities, thus minimising the amount of woodland which must be cleared.

Construction

The proposed office is situated in the upper level of the one-and-a-half storey storage barn which is a wooden building of traditional oak-framed construction designed to look like an old barn which has been converted, and is thus not out of place in the countryside and will blend into its surroundings. This is a sustainable method of construction, the wood being sourced from sustained forests.

Although this building is likely to be constructed by a specialist national or international company we hope that, subject to financial considerations, it will be erected and completed on site by local craftsmen.

12 Services Distribution Hut

Existence

In order to distribute services such as electricity, water and communications across such a large site, a number of items such as power distribution equipment, water distribution manifolds and routers are necessary. To protect it from the elements it is important for this sort of equipment to be housed in a water-tight building.

Size

To accommodate the above, and to make provision for the separation of power and water, a hut similar to a good-sized garage is considered necessary and sufficient.

Location

In order to be able to house the equipment necessary for the distribution of electricity across the site, it is necessary for this equipment to be situated adjacent to the existing electricity supply, which comes onto the site at the entrance and terminates at a telegraph pole adjacent to the location proposed for the hut. This is also the location which appears to have housed the buildings used for this purpose when the site was formerly a quarry.

Construction

The proposed services distribution hut is a single story wooden “log cabin” with low pitched roof which will blend into the natural surroundings and cause minimum visual impact. This is a sustainable method of construction, the wood being sourced from sustained forests. Although the building is likely to be constructed by a specialist national or international company we hope that, subject to financial considerations, they will be erected and completed on site by local craftsmen.