Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Examination

Hearing Day 10

Matter 4 Policies

Note on Policy SCLP6.3 Tourism Development within the AONB and Heritage Coast

1. This note responds to actions arising in the hearing session on Matter 4 Policies (Wednesday 18th September, PM) which relate to the Tourism policies in the Final Draft Local Plan.

2. The Council provided a response to the Inspector’s question 4.16 in the Hearing Statement published for Matter 4 in relation to the threshold for 10 units/pitches seen in Policy SCLP6.3 (b).

3. During the hearing session, the Inspector outlined paragraph 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework in relation to “major development” and the wording in the Final Draft Local Plan. The Council acknowledge that developments of less than 10 units/pitches could constitute “major development” and therefore the current policy wording is not justified as “major development” is a matter for the decision maker as outlined in footnote 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Further discussions also related to the Local Plan reflecting the primary purpose of the AONB which is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of an area. In pursuing the primary purpose of the AONB, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry and other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities.¹

4. To reflect the discussions at the hearing session, the Council propose the following amendments to paragraph 6.20 and Policy SCLP6.3 which have been considered by Officers at the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Unit.

5. Modifications are shown in strikethrough for deleted text and in underline for additional text. The Council will include this revised wording in the schedule of modifications that is being collated as part of the Examination.

Paragraph 6.20

“Tourism can take many forms but within the AONB, the Local Plan will seek small scale only support developments and proposals which are of a higher standard of design, and proposals that reduce the impacts on the environment, by making reuse reusing of existing buildings to ensure that and which satisfy the primary purpose of designation, that is to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the AONB area are retained. Opportunities for...”

¹ Paragraph 1.3 of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Management Plan 2018-2023
Policy SCLP6.3

b) Is of a scale and extent that does not have a significant adverse impact on the primary purpose of the AONB designation, an appropriate scale for its surroundings (10 pitches/units or fewer in relation to proposals for tourist accommodation);