

Planning Statement – Overnight Campervan Parking

Goring Gap – Planning Application AWDM/0737/26

The proposed overnight campervan parking forms a modest and carefully controlled element of the wider application to regenerate previously unused land as a seasonal community green space supporting recreation, biodiversity, tourism and public wellbeing.

The proposal is not for a permanent caravan park, holiday park or residential caravan site. Rather, it seeks to provide a limited number of overnight spaces for genuine touring campervans, principally serving visiting kite surfers, paddleboarders, sea swimmers, cyclists and other recreational visitors to Worthing.

The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960

The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 establishes the legislative framework governing caravan sites throughout England.

Importantly, Parliament recognised that not every form of overnight caravanning should be treated as a permanent caravan site requiring the same level of planning control.

Schedule 1 of the Act provides exemptions where caravan use can occur in certain circumstances, including temporary occupation, use for limited periods, use by exempted organisations, small recreational sites and certified locations operated through recognised recreational organisations.

These exemptions demonstrate Parliament's intention to allow responsible recreational touring while maintaining appropriate safeguards for local communities and the environment.

Natural England and Exempted Organisations

The Secretary of State has authorised Natural England to issue exemption certificates to recognised recreational organisations.

Natural England authorises organisations including the Caravan and Motorhome Club and the Camping and Caravanning Club to certify small recreational sites throughout England, subject to compliance with relevant rules and controls.

This national framework exists because Government recognises the public benefit of small, well-managed touring sites supporting outdoor recreation and tourism.

Established Planning Principle

Across England, thousands of small certified locations operate successfully under this legislative framework.

Typically, these sites accommodate a limited number of touring caravans or motorhomes and are intended for short recreational stays rather than permanent occupation.

The widespread existence of these sites demonstrates an accepted planning principle that small-scale overnight touring accommodation can coexist successfully with countryside, coastal, open and environmentally sensitive locations where properly managed.

Relevance to Goring Gap

The proposal at Goring Gap follows the same general philosophy.

The overnight parking is intended solely for genuine recreational visitors using the coastline, including kite surfers, windsurfers, paddleboarders, sea swimmers, walkers and cyclists visiting Worthing.

- No permanent pitches are proposed.
- No static caravans, lodges or residential occupation are proposed.
- The overnight use would remain seasonal, carefully managed and ancillary to the principal leisure and community use of the site.

It would support the visitor economy identified within the Worthing Local Plan by encouraging visitors to remain in Worthing, use local cafés, restaurants, pubs and shops, and contribute to the local economy.

The proposal therefore represents a sustainable tourism facility consistent with national legislation encouraging responsible touring caravan use, while remaining proportionate in scale and compatible with the wider recreational objectives of the application.

Conclusion

The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 demonstrates that Parliament has long recognised the value of small-scale touring caravan and campervan accommodation.

Natural England's certification framework, together with the long-established operation of certified locations by organisations such as the Caravan and Motorhome Club and the Camping and Caravanning Club, confirms that carefully managed overnight touring accommodation is an accepted component of the rural and coastal visitor economy.

The proposed overnight campervan parking at Goring Gap is consistent with these established principles. It is modest in scale, seasonal in operation, directed towards recreational visitors, and will make a positive contribution to sustainable tourism, local businesses and the wider visitor economy of Worthing, whilst avoiding the characteristics of a permanent caravan park or residential caravan site