

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt. Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
17 Smith Square
LONDON, SW1P 3JR

11th March 2019

Sean Michael,

RE: PLANNING APPLICATION 18/02428/FUL, FINESHADE WOOD HOLIDAY PARK.

I have been contacted by a significant number of my constituents in respect of their concerns over a recently submitted planning application requesting a change of land use in Fineshade Wood for a timber lodge holiday park.

I strongly object to this application on a number of grounds. First, the application documents are incomplete and contradictory. There is a severe lack of specific detail on the footprint of the 'lodges', as well as the impact on local residents; for example through noise pollution, and contradicting information presented about the number of parking spaces to be allocated. Through reading the application it is impossible to discern the total number of people this development would bring to the area, and the impact of traffic is a great concern that has been raised with me many times.

Furthermore, the application provides no evidence that it will be used as a holiday park for tourists, and thus the space could be operated instead as a residential park. This would put further pressure on local services, such as schools and medical facilities, detracting from the opportunities provided for existing local residents.

The proposal also fails to make the case that it would be a sustainable development. It claims to be socially sustainable through securing "related economic benefits for jobs and the local economy", and yet also states that there will be no employment generated.

From an environmental stand point, it is a concern that even the necessary ecological surveys, as suggested by the 'Preliminary Ecological Appraisal,' have not been carried out, thus preventing the environmental impact and sustainability from being fully assessed.



The proposal also fails to comply with JNC Policy 3: 'Landscape Character' and JNC Policy 2 'Heritage Assets.' Not only is it impossible to assess the visual impact of the development with the limited information presented in the application, but further the applicants have failed to demonstrate an understanding of the impact of the development on heritage assets and their setting. The determination that some vegetation will be planted to mitigate visual and environmental disruption simultaneously fails to indicate any biodiversity gain from this development, and means that any screening the vegetation would provide is reliant on the successful maturing of this vegetation, and thus cannot be relied upon.

To summarise, and as we have discussed previously, Fineshade Wood is a site of great natural beauty, and brings huge pleasure and opportunity to local residents in a great number of ways. It is unthinkable that, having so recently fought off Forest Holidays' intention to develop the site—and I hugely appreciated your help and support in that endeavour—that another destructive application could blight Fineshade in the same way.

I would therefore be most grateful if you could review these concerns, and for any support you are able to provide in this matter. I have also raised these very concerns directly with East Northamptonshire Council as the local planning authority.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Pursglove'.

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

House of Commons
LONDON, SW1A 0AA

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TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr David Oliver
The Chief Executive
East Northamptonshire Council
Cedar Drive
Thrapston
NORTHANTS, NN14 4LZ

11th March 2019

Dear Mr Oliver,

RE: PLANNING APPLICATION 18/02428/FUL, FINESHADE WOOD HOLIDAY PARK.

I have been contacted by a significant number of my constituents in respect of their concerns over a recently submitted planning application requesting a change of land use in Fineshade Wood for a timber lodge holiday park.

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From an environmental stand point, it is a concern that even the necessary ecological surveys, as suggested by the 'Preliminary Ecological Appraisal,' have not been carried out, thus preventing the environmental impact and sustainability from being fully assessed.



The proposal also fails to comply with JNC Policy 3: 'Landscape Character' and JNC Policy 2 'Heritage Assets.' Not only is it impossible to assess the visual impact of the development with the limited information presented in the application, but further the applicants have failed to demonstrate an understanding of the impact of the development on heritage assets and their setting. The determination that some vegetation will be planted to mitigate visual and environmental disruption simultaneously fails to indicate any biodiversity gain from this development, and means that any screening the vegetation would provide is reliant on the successful maturing of this vegetation, and thus cannot be relied upon.

To summarise, and as we have discussed previously, Fineshade Wood is a site of great natural beauty, and brings huge pleasure and opportunity to local residents in a great number of ways. It is unthinkable that, having so recently fought off Forest Holidays' intention to develop the site—and I enclose copies of the letters that I recently received from the Rt. Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and from Bruce McKendrick, Chief Executive Officer at Forest Holidays, confirming the end of that threat—that another destructive application could blight Fineshade in the same way.

I would therefore urge that this application is refused. I have also raised these very concerns directly with the Rt. Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, given his past involvement in these matters.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

Yours ever,

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

House of Commons
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Department
for Environment
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The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
From the Secretary of State for Environment, Food
and Rural Affairs

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Tom Pursglove MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

MHG

October 2018

Dear Tom,

Thank you for raising with me the matter of the possible Forest Holidays development at Fineshade Wood in your constituency. I am pleased to be able to advise you that Forest Holidays have now decided not to pursue any development plans at Fineshade for the foreseeable future. This will be announced shortly, and I hope provides the reassurance that your constituents have been seeking.

With every good wish,

Yours, as ever,

Michael Gove

Michael

29 October 2018

Mr Tom Pursglove MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA



Forest Holidays, Bath Yard, Moira,
Derbyshire DE12 6BA

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Web: www.forestholidays.co.uk

Dear Mr Pursglove

Re: Fineshade Wood

I hope this letter finds you well. Your question last week to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in which you referred to our "long standing" interest in [Fineshade Wood] prompted me to get in touch.

Forest Holidays was established by the Forestry Commission in 1973 and we continue to work in close partnership supporting the management of the public forest estate for future generations. The reason we exist is to create authentic experiences in Britain's amazing forests, connecting people, nature and local communities.

We have created over 600 jobs and bring all year round tourism to rural communities. Having met almost all the MPs local to our existing locations, they are overwhelmingly positive to our contribution and in particular to our high environmental standards, seeking always to be net positive to the environment.


I would be delighted to meet with you to discuss Forest Holidays contribution to the environment, people's health and well-being and rural economies, all very much in line with your own government's 25-year Environment Plan, and would be especially pleased to offer you a visit to one of our existing locations to see for yourself the reality of what we offer.

That said, and specifically on Fineshade Wood, I am aware that a planning application was submitted in September 2014, (before I joined the business) which was considered by the local Planning Committee in March 2015. I wish to make it clear that we have no plans to bring forward a further planning application for Fineshade Wood.

We remain focused on working with Forestry England, Natural Resources Wales and Forest Enterprise Scotland on our many priorities to bring benefits for people, nature and rural communities across the UK.

As you may know, we are headquartered in the National Forest where we employ over 90 people in the constituency of Andrew Bridgen MP. I am therefore copying this letter to him for information.

Kind regards



Bruce McKendrick
CEO

Registered Office

Forest Holidays is a private limited company with registered number of 08159308.
Forest Holidays Limited is a wholly owned subsidiary of Forest Holidays Group, a private limited company, with registered number of 08159281 and registered office of Bath Yard, Bath Lane, Moira, Derbyshire DE12 6BA.

