



BLUE SAIL▶
VISITORS PLACES DESTINATIONS

INVESTMENT STRATEGY ACCOMODATION APPENDIX

TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH VISIT. SLEEP. CYCLE. REPEAT DESTINATION PLAN

REPORT FOR
NORTH DERBYSHIRE/ NORTH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE VISITOR ECONOMY CONSORTIUM

JANUARY 2018



The European Agricultural Fund
for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas

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1 VISITOR ACCOMMODATION PROJECTS

The table below provides a broad range of identified accommodation development opportunities for the project area. It focuses on the non-serviced accommodation because that has the strongest fit with the Fun Families and Active Adults who are the target markets for the Plan and fit well with cycling.

The table is divided into three categories of accommodation:

- ▶ Accommodation elements for the tourism cycling hubs
- ▶ Accommodation for the accommodation-led hubs
- ▶ Other accommodation projects – that may come forward with or without public sector intervention and contribute to growing supply to meet existing and future demand.

As part of the project we have looked at potential partners to realise the Plan. Hotel Solutions directors have consulted with visitor accommodation developers and operators to get a feel for the level of interest there might be in visitor accommodation development and/or operation on some of the identified sites, and what the associated issues might be. Examples of national operators contacted include YHA, Camping & Caravanning Club, Camping in the Forest, Caravan & Motorhome Club, Featherdown (glamping and lodges), Natural Retreats (eco-lodges). These partners might invest, develop and manage a site, but to do so would require a strong opportunity. Outside this however, they will partner a site owner, investor or developer to operate visitor accommodation, bringing their expertise to the table if not their financial resources.

Smaller development opportunities might be more likely to appeal to independent visitor accommodation operators, individuals or small groups, often likely to be locally or regionally based. These are more difficult to get to and will likely require some targeted research to identify, or may come forward in response to advertising an opportunity for Expressions of Interest in appropriate property and leisure press.

Local authorities are increasingly partnering leisure operators to manage both their built facilities and their country parks e.g. Parkwood Leisure at Rufford Country Park; these operators might also be potential partners for visitor accommodation development.

Site	Market Opportunity (Type/Scale)	Timescale	Need for Public Sector Intervention	Potential Partners
ACCOMMODATION AT HUBS				
PLEASLEY				
Pleasley Vale	The big opportunity at Pleasley Vale is about the Outdoor Centre and relocating this. The Outdoor Centre seems to have a good base of core business that can be added to with overnight accommodation, and interest from other markets to expand into – adult groups, corporate days, stag parties, family events. Extra activities on the site, zip wire etc would increase appeal for families. There are 2 options around relocating the centre – moving into Mill 1, or developing a new building on the lines of the Mount Cook example. We are really talking about group accommodation here, ideally of a specification and mix that would also serve families, adult groups and corporates. Ideally the main centre building, whether in the Mill or new build, would incorporate some en-suite 2/4 bedrooms, and a 24/7 supervised centre would mean you could also develop camping pods/a camp site on the field as an adjunct. There could be significant technical challenges to developing the field given the sloping site and it all comes back to masterplanning and feasibility assessment. In terms of scale, this needs discussing with the operational team and would form part of the future feasibility/business plan. Residential capacity for 60 previously discussed, to which camping pods/camping pitches could be additional. Mount Cook considerably bigger. This approach strengthens the existing business, provides a better location, more activities, and opportunities for the Council to work with other operators such as YHA, as well as to learn from and draw on the experience of other exemplar centres re their delivery models and operating structures.	Phase 1 (feasibility) Phase 2 (delivery)	Masterplanning of site Technical and market feasibilities for the outdoor centre Investment appraisal Investigating Investor/ developer/ operator delivery models	YHA Other outdoor activity centre providers

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Pleasley Pit Country Park	This is an attractive site that can deliver a 'get away from it all' feel, offer good views, proximity to a village and pub and good road access. There is some current on-site activity in the form of a museum run by a Trust and there is active community involvement in this and in the conservation aspects of the site. The Trust have temporary toilets and café in portakabin type buildings. Additional uses on site could provide an opportunity for better quality permanent facilities that could be shared. The museum Trust are active, and run events, open days, beer festivals etc there, so camping would work with this. We understand that a camping/caravan site on a site close to the entrance/car park was proposed in the past. The flat site to the rear might be suitable for a small number of camping pods. Similar accommodation has been developed and run by community Trusts (see Portsoy) and could be worth investigating with the Trust as an income-generator for the Museum. Issues to do with land ownership to resolve with the Land Trust.	Phase 1-2	Planning investigations Site/land ownership discussions (DCC/Land Trust) Case study delivery models – community companies Consultation with the Trust re their potential interest in such a scheme and in what capacity	Pleasley Pit Trust Independent caravan/camp site operator
CRESWELL CRAGS –WELBECK- CLUMBER				
Big Local Caravan Site, Creswell	Proposal for a small caravan site at Creswell (12 units?).	Phase 1-2	Community initiative – contribution to funding package.	Elmton, Creswell and Hodthorpe Big Local
Clumber Park Caravan & Motorhome Club Site	This is an established and very popular site. The Club lease the site from the National Trust and the lease has 5 years to run. The Club would like to invest in and expand the site, possibly by adding lodges and pods on adjacent land, but need to renew the lease in order to do this. Currently the Trust are not prepared to discuss until 2-3 years before expiry.	Phase 1-2	Facilitating discussions around the future of the site and its potential expansion	Bassetlaw District Council Caravan & Motorhome Club

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Clumber Holiday Lodge Park (East of Clumber Lane End Farm)	Outline planning permission granted in August 2015 for a holiday lodge park with 129 lodges and a central leisure complex. Site being marketed and we understand under offer, likely to complete January 2018 and be developed for this use.	Phase 1	Awareness building of cycle tourism market opportunity/ connectivity to cycle routes	
Clumber Lane End Farm Caravan Site	Planning permission granted for 40 pitches June 2017. Further application submitted to extend period of opening to year-round. Development to commence once approved.	Phase 1	Awareness building of cycle tourism market opportunity/ connectivity to cycle routes	
Clumber Park (National Trust) Camp Site & Pods	The camp site and pods have had to close as a result of planning issues around the supporting facilities (showers/toilets). Details unknown. Potential to re-instate this if issues can be overcome.		Investigate the issues in detail and attempt to facilitate a resolution	Bassetlaw District Council National Trust
Welbeck Estate	There are already a number of tourism uses on the Welbeck Estate. Other parts of the estate could offer potential for visitor accommodation in terms of holiday cottages, holiday lodges, caravanning and camping, glamping. There is a natural synergy of accommodation with on-site activities like the Artisan Food School; providing accommodation captures that spend but also provides opportunities to boost spend in those existing uses, as well as encouraging longer stays and greater exploration of the wider area. With investment in Lady Margaret Hall that would provide enhanced facilities for the camp site, there is an opportunity to build on this and develop a permanent/larger site for camping, caravans and motorhomes, plus potentially camping pods and glamping. The glamping option could be considered separately and in terms of a small number of units being developed elsewhere on the estate with a high quality partner like Featherdown. Operators with green credentials/eco-pods might also add value and have good fit with on-site priorities to date.	Phase 1-2	Awareness building of the potential of visitor accommodation development. Facilitating exploratory discussions with potential glamping/lodge partners.	Featherdown Natural Retreats

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	<p>There is an estate masterplan that has identified visitor accommodation as an option for some of the properties in the 'village' behind the current visitor facilities, and there are a number of potential properties that would convert to high quality self-catering here, possibly with leisure/spa, but this does not seem to be a current priority for the owners. Other property on the estate, including estate lodges in the woodlands, could also offer potential for redevelopment to visitor accommodation. A key concern in taking any visitor accommodation proposal forward is separation of visitor activity from private space on the estate.</p> <p>There are proposals to renovate Cuckney House to a private house hotel/super-cottage with 11-12 bedrooms, likely to be leased to Cripps who run the wedding venue Hazel Gap Barn, but also providing additional accommodation capacity at other times for short breaks/family and group lets.</p>			
GRASSMOOR-CHESTERFIELD				
Grassmoor Country Park	<p>The strength of the Grassmoor site is really about its location, particularly for caravanning, being in close proximity to the motorway for overnight stop offs, but also close to the Peak District and with reasonable views looking towards it. As there is nothing on-site currently, anything going in here would need to be of sufficient critical mass to be able to support on site supervision/a live-in warden. So probably at least 50-60 pitches. If an operator such as the Caravan & Motorhome Club they would likely want c. 100 pitches, plus 30 glamping/camping pods, requiring 10-15 acres. It may need to be an independent operator that takes this opportunity up, and for the opportunity to be marketed. Delivery models require exploration. The Council may need to invest and get the operator in to manage or lease. It would clearly be a more attractive proposition if there was</p>	Phase 1	<p>Technical and planning feasibility</p> <p>Soft market testing</p> <p>Investment appraisal</p> <p>Investigating Investor/ developer/ operator delivery models</p>	<p>Derbyshire County Council</p> <p>Caravan & Motorhome Club</p> <p>Independent caravan site operator</p> <p>Lodge park operators:</p> <p>Pinelodge</p> <p>Featherdown</p> <p>Natural Retreats</p>

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	something else at the country park e.g. cycle hire, which maybe the caravan site operator could run? Typical site investment cost £2-2.5m; will generate £1m to local economy.			
ACCOMMODATION-LED HUBS				
Poulter Country Park	This site could have some potential, but given that it's not an identified hub and there's nothing else on site, security is the big issue. So as with Grassmoor it needs to be something of scale that could justify the infrastructure investment and support a full time warden for security and operational reasons. Caravans are not an option here as the lane is too narrow, so lodge park or maybe a pod park. The site is at the far side of the park and so should be able to be separated off. It would need to be a destination in its own right, though would benefit if there were other activities here like Sherwood Pines eg a visitor centre and cycle hire at the main car park. As with Grassmoor the park could operate the cycle hire and act as an accommodation-led hub. The other option would be for the Council to invest and lease – as in the Rosliston Forest lodges case study included in our stage 1 report.	Phase 2	Technical and planning feasibility Soft market testing Investment appraisal Investigating Investor/ developer/ operator delivery models	Derbyshire County Council Bolsover District Council Pinelodge Featherdown Natural Retreats
Thoresby Colliery	450 acres of country park forming part of the Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve, with spectacular views. Cycle routes – 30 mile, 50mile, 100 mile. A 10 year project commencing 2018, total completion 2028. There could be scope to include some form of visitor accommodation as part of the proposed country park. Current plans for leisure include a zip wire course, extreme segway track, mountain bike trail, cycle hire, abseiling and a viewing platform. Been approached by cycling operators eg Rutland; national cycle routes and Sherwood nearby, Tour of Britain came through in September, so a lot of activity. New Sherwood Forest £5m visitor centre underway next door. Will be facilities, cafes etc and 800 new homes. S106 will	Phase 2-3	Awareness building of cycle tourism market opportunity/ connectivity to cycle routes. Advice on visitor accommodation development opportunities	Harworth Nottinghamshire County Council

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	be used to refurbish buildings and provide leisure facilities. Planning consents by end of 2017. 90% of old colliery now cleared. Keeping one or two historic buildings. No accommodation in the scheme currently; there is a masterplan but flexible. Would love a hotel. Secured planning for lots of different uses, but needs to evolve. No large areas of land for additional development, but adjacent cleared sites that could be used e.g. for camping. Working with the Coalfield Regeneration Trust – there is a large historic workshop building, 100m x 20m – could convert to anything. Bunkhouse accommodation? Like the Portsoy Sail Loft. Trust could run. Could include other uses such as leisure and offices. Keen to be involved and get input as scheme evolves.			
Woodlands Country Park	Touring caravan park (57 pitches + on site warden), campsite and wigwams proposed as part of a project to develop a training, education and visitor centre on land next to Shireoaks Marina on the Chesterfield Canal. A community based project (Friends of Woodlands and Coachwood Green) working with Nottinghamshire County Council Green Estates and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. Planning approved 2015. Funding being secured before proceeding to next stages. Looking for a partner to develop and operate the caravan site and pods and to generate an income stream to cover the management of the country park and facilities. Leased from Nottinghamshire County Council. Sits alongside NCN6 and the Cuckoo Way and accessible by train. FOWACG are a limited company currently, but will register as a charity once they are operational on site, enabling application for different grants. Also looked at Community Interest Company status.	Phase 2	Funding Sourcing an operator for the caravan site & glamping	Nottinghamshire County Council Bassetlaw District Council Independent caravan site/glamping operator

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WIDER CAPACITY-BUILDING				
Sherwood Forest – Camping in the Forest	Camping in the Forest (a partnership between the Forestry Commission and the Camping & Caravanning Club) submitted a full planning application to Newark & Sherwood District Council in June 2017 for a 200-pitch camping, glamping and touring caravan park with 96 hard standing caravan pitches, 20 glamping pitches, 28 glamping pods, and 56 grass tent pitches, together with associated buildings and site infrastructure. Planning pending). A significant opportunity to increase capacity with established quality operators.	Phase 1-2	Supporting the planning application in terms of economic benefits, growing the visitor economy, and capacity building for the VSCR programme.	Bassetlaw District Council Nottinghamshire County Council Camping in the Forest
Sherwood Forest – RSPB	The RSPB have taken over the management of Sherwood Forest Country Park from NCC. They are keen to encourage cycle tourism to Sherwood Forest, as part of the bigger network. At the moment, they are focussed on building the new visitor centre at Forest Corner and taking on management of Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve. This will provide a base on which to build the visitor experiences they would like to offer. They have spoken about the possibility of camping/glamping pods at Sherwood Forest, but would need to ensure that any development of this kind fits in with the landscape and doesn't have any negative impacts on the Sherwood Forest SSSI. However, they see it as a brilliant addition to the accommodation offer in the area, would definitely provide an ideal place for visitors with bikes to stay over, and is definitely something that they will be considering in the future.	Phase 2-3	Supporting the longer term planning for the country park to incorporate visitor accommodation.	Bassetlaw District Council Nottinghamshire County Council
Thoresby Estate	Thoresby Estate already provides accommodation in terms of The Sherwood Hideaway holiday lodge park, which has planning permission to expand to 170 holiday lodges. There may also be opportunities for other types of accommodation on other parts of the estate, such as glamping, camping pods, or a caravan and camping site. The Estate is looking at further expansions to the Sherwood	Phase 1-2	Providing market intelligence. Awareness building of cycle tourism market opportunity/ connectivity to cycle routes. Facilitating partner introductions.	

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	Hideaway and is likely to phase them into 5-20 lodges at a time, depending on occupancy levels and demand. They are also looking at touring caravan/camping opportunities along with opportunities to convert existing residential properties into self-catering holiday accommodation. There are no immediate plans but proposals are considered on an opportunistic basis linked to availability of sites, timing, funding opportunities and market demands. It would be good if the VSCR study could help them bring Forward development opportunities around visitor accommodation. Would consider all options in terms of delivering themselves or working with other developers and operators going forward.			