

PRESS RELEASE

A MAGNIFICANT SEVEN

Seven planning permissions, in seven months, for new holiday caravan pitches, delivering some £7million per annum into the local economy, have been secured by specialist planning consultants Rural & Urban Planning Consultancy.

Despite the current economic climate, one sector of the tourism and leisure industry that weathers the storm better than most is the holiday caravan parks market. Whether the economy is booming or bust, the trusty caravan is consistently sought after in the UK by those seeking a rural or seaside holiday.

Following a cautious start to the year, park operators have moved ahead with new development proposals and RUPC have been busy securing planning permissions around the country, ready for implementation this winter.

- In Devon permission was granted to extend an existing park by 100 static holiday caravan pitches in an AONB, doubling the size of the park
- In north Kent a 71 pitch extension to an existing static holiday park was granted following revisions to landscape impact and resolving flood risk concerns; and
- On the Isle of Sheppey permission was granted for a new development of some 130 static holiday pitches
- On the Isle of Wight a continuing programme of regeneration to a traditional chalet based holiday camp in an AONB was rewarded with four permissions for some 230 static caravan pitches, adding to permissions secured and implemented last season

To put the UK holiday parks market in context: in 2009, tourism was worth £88bn to the British economy and provides about £1.5 million jobs. VisitBritain is predicting 29.5 million visitors this year with an increase in spend to £16.7 billion. Statistics prepared in 2008 and gathered by the United Kingdom Tourism Survey (UKTS) indicated 12.3% of total tourist spend in the UK (equating to £2.6 billion) is derived from the holiday parks industry and 19.7% of total UK tourist bed nights (74.4 million nights) came from holiday park accommodation.

Director of RUPC Ian Butter BSc FRICS MRTPI has been advising the caravan industry for over 30 years and noted:

“Despite the recognised slowdowns within the national economy the holiday parks market has continued to perform successfully, boosted in the last two years by ‘staycation’ trends in holiday-taking. This is not a unique situation and reflects similar patterns evident in previous recessionary periods. Although the depth of this recession has taken its toll, particularly in the manufacturing sector of the industry, parks continue to thrive and provide operators with scope to upgrade and improve”.

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