

New bid to build holiday accommodation on farmland outside Penicuik

A new bid to build holiday accommodation on farmland outside Penicuik has been launched a year after councillors rejecting proposals for 'shepherd hut' style pods on the site.

The proposals for five holiday 'units' on land between Braidlaw Farmhouse and the A766 is set to go before Midlothian planning committee later this month for a first look.

Public consultation events are set to be held in June to give people a chance to find out more about the proposals.

Last year the council refused permission for five glamping pods to be built on land at the farm in the style of shepherds huts. At the time, the project was described as creating a horse lovers haven with visitors able to spend time with the animals in the stables or bring their own for a stay.

Planners ruled the pods would be too 'conspicuous' from the road and would stick out on the hillside.

Now a Pre Application Notice for a new application for holiday units has been lodged with the local authority.

In a report to elected members, officers said that while the new proposals were on land designated as countryside the

council's own development plan is 'generally supportive' of holiday accommodation, but they warned the design of the units would need to blend with their surroundings.

They said: "While the principle of holiday accommodation is generally accepted, detailed consideration will need to be given to the design matters. In particular, the site's relationship to the surrounding rural area and the impact on the landscape character of the area, as well as the layout, siting, scale, design and materials of the proposed accommodation and any other associated works.

"There must also be an important emphasis placed on the sustainability of the development and its impact on the climate crisis."

Planners also point out there is a high pressure gas pipeline running through the site which will need to be considered.

A Pre Application Notice gives councillors the chance to give their views on plans and public views to be gathered before a formal planning application is lodged.

The public events will be held in Ladywood Leisure Centre, in Penicuik on June 11 and June 25.

By Marie Sharp, Local Democracy Reporter