



TREE TENTS®

Tree Tents Planning Support Guide

At Tree Tents our mission is to get more people outside and enjoying our wild and natural places and so will support you every step of the way towards your tree house dream, including offering a bit of advice to help you with your successful planning application.

In our experience, most site owners will not require planning permission for the addition of a Tree Tent. If you do, this guide will support you to get through the planning process easily.

We'll talk about how UK policy is favourable to your success; why our structures don't usually require planning permission and if they do are very planning friendly and presents a full example of a recent application as well as examples of supporting documentation for you to adapt.

UK Policy supports 'Eco Tourism' from the top

If you already run an existing glamping / camping site, the addition of a Tree Tent will likely fall under your existing planning permission. If you are looking to set up a new site, you may need to apply for change of land use permission. Luckily, the odds are stacked in your favour as land use change for small scale tourism purposes is generally supported by UK policy.

The promotion of tourism, in particular 'Rural' and 'Eco Tourism', is a key element of the UK's economy and is high on the government's agenda. As a result, the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) favours and offers significant support to proposals that can demonstrate that they are sustainable; not harming the countryside and offering accommodation and tourist facilities that have a neutral impact on the environment.

This is backed up in the real world with glamping agents [Canopy & Stars](#) telling us:

“The planning system can seem complex, but in our experience, with the right preparation well thought out tourism development is usually supported and granted planning permission”

Jackie Jewel from [Classic Glamping](#) confirmed this telling Inspired Camping:

“A number of planning departments/councils have a stated aim of assisting in the development of tourism and many are supportive of farm diversification which can help with the process.”

What about Tree Tents, what makes them so planning friendly?

Funnily enough, our mission to get more people out and enjoying our woodlands and wild places in a way that has little to no impact on the environment, aligns perfectly with that of policy makers. In fact, we've **never had a planning application for a Tree Tent refused, and have successful precedents for applications in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Ancient Woodlands and National Parks.**

This is because planners love that Tree Tents:

- ▶ are designed to visually harmonise with their natural surroundings;
- ▶ respect the character and appearance of rural and woodland locations;
- ▶ are locally made from sustainable materials;
- ▶ can be walked into their locations and are very low-impact to install;
- ▶ are classified as small, bespoke tourism facilities;
- ▶ are semi-permanent so usually fall under any existing planning permissions;
- ▶ are totally unique, easily demonstrating a need not yet met by nearby settlements;
- ▶ And have never come up against community opposition!

[Read more in our blog post 'Planning for simplicity'](#)

Case in point : Dunscombe Farm

Dunscombe Farm, a new glamping site in an AONB, recently applied for “*the change of use of part of woodland to allow a Tree Tent for tourism purposes (including new fencing, a septic tank and a shower / toilet unit)*” and passed with flying colours. Here are some of the reasons why:

- ▶ The Council concluded that “*the size, scale and location of the development and the structures that are proposed are considered to be respectful to the rural and agricultural character and visual amenities of the area*”.

So, they liked the design and how it harmonised with the natural setting!

- ▶ The planning application was for a change of use of “*a small part of an agricultural holding (principally an area of woodland) to set up a bespoke facility for tourism*”. Small is beautiful and our bespoke structure got the thumbs up.
- ▶ Ordinarily, the development of a site in the open countryside would not be permitted, but the Council concluded that “*the application is considered to be in accordance with Policy DM24 of the Local Plan Part 3 (Development Management Policies)*”.

Policy DM24 states that: “*Tourism and leisure development Proposals for new or expanded tourism, visitor or leisure facilities will be supported within or adjacent to defined settlements. Elsewhere, the nature of the proposed development must justify a countryside location and minimise environmental impacts, avoiding an unacceptable traffic impact on the local road network. Development proposals must: a) Respect the character and appearance of the location; b) Where possible, involve conversion or replacement of existing buildings; and c) Demonstrate that the need is not met by existing provision within nearby settlements*”.

So, their Tree Tent easily overcame all of these hurdles!

- ▶ They also said “*the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the proposed scheme will not result in any harmful impacts...on the amenity of occupiers of nearby properties*”.
- ▶ And “*The local community’s views were taken on board – “...the Local Planning Authority has also involved the community in the consideration of this application*”.

[Click here to read the full planning application.](#)

What do the experts say?

We may be experts in designing sustainable and innovative glamping accommodation, but we wouldn't call ourselves planning experts! So, we enlisted the help of [Marie Stacey, Senior Planner at Pegasus Group](#), for her advice in this area. She told us:

"The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside. The Tree Tents concept complies with the NPPF as the tents will cause minimal permanent impact on the countryside and are therefore the perfect sustainable solution to enjoying the countryside and providing a diverse means of income."

"The low impact and sustainable design of the Tree Tents structures contributes greatly to their success in getting planning permissions without the headaches that many, more permanent, glamping options encounter."

If you haven't been down the planning application route before, it might be worth enlisting an expert to help you out. Having worked alongside them while designing our structures, we highly recommend [Pegasus Group](#). They are knowledgeable about glamping and already know Tree Tents and the planning requirements associated with them, meaning less work for you.

Resources and Supporting Documentation

A lot of valuable information can be found online and the [UK Government Planning Portal](#) is a particularly useful tool if you intend on progressing the application yourself.

You'll need to submit supporting information with your planning application, the minimum requirements [can be found here](#).

To help you prepare this documentation, we have included some examples as appendices to this guide. Feel free to use and adapt these as you need. For a small fee we are also happy to assist in the creation of drawings specific to your site.

We hope this pack has given you the confidence to go forward with your planning application and a few resources to make the road a little smoother. If you have questions or need extra support, please get in touch.

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Please note: while every effort is made to supply correct information this document is intended as a guide only and should not replace professional advice.

