



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 August 2020

by M Bale BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/D1265/W/20/3251040

Yew Tree Stables, Cross Lane, Corscombe, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 0NX

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Miss Kay Russell against the decision of Dorset Council.
 - The application Ref WD/D/19/000901, dated 18 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 7 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as retain existing mobile home as office/mess room subject to new landscaping plan for a temporary period of five years.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, including the landscape and scenic beauty of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Reasons

3. The proposal follows an earlier appeal¹ for the same proposal. In that appeal, the Inspector found harm to the North Dorset Escarpment Landscape Character area and the landscape and scenic beauty of the Dorset AONB. There is no particular evidence, to lead me away from that finding. Instead, this proposal seeks to mitigate the harm through a landscaping and planting scheme.
4. I have no reason to believe that the proposed landscaping scheme would not effectively screen the mobile home, once established. However, there is no substantive evidence as to the length of time that it would likely take to grow to a height sufficient to perform that function. Mindful that permission is sought for a temporary period of time, I cannot be certain that a landscaping condition would adequately mitigate the harm within the lifetime of a permission.
5. My attention has been drawn to a number of other temporary mobile homes that have been permitted within AONBs. One of these² included a landscaping condition. However, whilst this may indicate that landscaping could be effective in screening that particular temporarily positioned mobile home, it does not indicate that landscaping at this site would be effective. In the other cases, the

¹ Appeal Ref: APP/F1230/W/19/3228870

² LPA Ref: WD/D/17/001550

officer reports provided do not indicate that harm to the AONB would arise and they are, therefore, not directly comparable.

6. I accept that the business requires staff welfare facilities, particularly given the outdoor nature of the work and long hours. In this respect it has in principle support from Paragraph 83 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and Policy ECON10 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 (LP). However, both Policy ECON10 and the Framework read as a whole also require consideration of landscape impacts. Moreover, Framework Paragraph 172 requires great weight to be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs.
7. Whilst there may be no other existing buildings available for use, there is no evidence as to why the welfare facilities could not be sited elsewhere on the site that may have less impact on the AONB. I, therefore, give only moderate weight to the business needs for the facility in this location.
8. For the reasons given above, the harm to the AONB outweighs the need for the facility. The proposal would, therefore, conflict with LP Policies ENV1, ENV10, ENV12 and ECON10 which, whilst allowing equestrian development, seek to maintain and enhance local distinctiveness, respect the character of the surrounding area and protect the landscape and natural beauty of the AONB.
9. Therefore, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Bale

INSPECTOR