



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 July 2023

by K Ford MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/P1615/W/23/3318587

Land at Chapel Cottage, Playley Green, Redmarley GL19 3NB

- 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 Mr and Mrs C and D Williams against the decision of Forest of Dean District Council.
 - The application Ref P1550/21/FUL, dated 2 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 15 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is use of land for tourism: provision of 8 caravan, campervan or motorhome holiday pitches. Erection of a washroom block. Improvement to existing vehicular access.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have used the description of development as it appears on the Council's decision notice and the appellant's appeal form to reflect the changes made to the scheme following the submission of the planning application and prior to determination by the Council.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is an irregular shaped undeveloped field with a rural character sandwiched between the A417 Ledbury Road and a small group of houses that front onto Playley Green and Bromsberrow Road. The wider area comprises some scattered dwellings, farms and a pub. The site is within open countryside for the purposes of planning policy and has features typical of the Severn Vale, the landscape character within which it sits.
5. Whilst the development would retain and enhance some of the landscape characteristics of the area, such as additional hedgerow and tree planting, the development would introduce hardstanding and built development alongside the visiting caravans, campervans and motorhomes. Even if the proposed bund and landscaping provided some screening, the development would lead to a loss of the open rural character that defines the site. The proposal would cause localised harm to the landscape character of the area and would not represent high quality design or make a positive contribution to the area, as suggested

- by the appellant. The proposed landscape enhancements could be achieved without the development which reduces the weight I attach to it.
6. The appellant says there are a number of significantly larger developments in more prominent sites within the Severn Vale. The details of such developments and their locations have not been provided and so I am unable to draw comparisons with the case before me. In any event each case is determined on its own merits which is what I have done.
 7. Whilst it is accepted that national policy supports sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments this is only where it respects the character of the countryside. The site is not in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or other locally designed area but would nevertheless harm the character and appearance of the area.
 8. The development would harm the character and appearance of the area. As such it would conflict with the part of Policy CSP1 of the Forest of Dean Core Strategy which requires new development to take into account important characteristics of the environment and conserve, preserve or otherwise respect them in a manner that enhances their contribution to the environment. It would also conflict with Policy AP4 of the Forest of Dean Allocations Plan which amongst other things expects new development to be of high quality design making a positive contribution to the design quality of the area.

Other Matters

9. The development would generate economic benefits in the form of 2 part time jobs. There would also be some economic benefits generated by tourism activity associated with visitors to the site, although there are limited services and facilities in the immediate area and they are not easily accessible without a car given the absence of footpaths in the vicinity of the site on Bromsberrow Road and Ledbury Road.
10. The scale of the development limits the benefits and the weight I attach to them and is outweighed by the harm I have identified. I accept that some development requires a rural location. However, in this case the harm outweighs the advantages of the development.
11. A Grade II listed Building, Playleys Place and a Grade II listed milestone is located in proximity to the site. The Council is satisfied that subject to appropriately worded planning conditions on planting, landscaping and lighting, particularly to protect Playleys Place, there would be no harm to the significance of the heritage assets. I have no reason to disagree.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons identified, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

K Ford

INSPECTOR