



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 December 2024

by Neil Pope BA (HONS) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1153/W/24/3344718

Land at Sx 463 663, Bere Alston, Devon, PL20 7EF.

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Josie Gay against the decision of West Devon Borough Council (the LPA).
 - The application reference is 3278/23/FUL.
 - The development proposed is described as *stables, hay store with hardstanding and equestrian use of land (Retrospective)*.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Reasons

2. The stables and hay store provide facilities for the appellant to keep her horses on the land. The stables also reduce damage to the land caused by poaching and the hardstanding allows more convenient access and movement within the site, including visits by the vet. I recognise that there are some animal welfare benefits of the development. During my visit, I also noted equine activities in some neighbouring fields, as well as field shelters and other associated equine developments within the surrounding area.
3. The small-scale nature of the development, the siting of the buildings well-away from public view, as well as the dark coloured walls and roofs, ensures that there is no harm to the appearance of this part of the Tamar Valley National Landscape (NL)¹. However, not being able to see buildings from the public realm is not sufficient to justify development, especially within a landscape that is recognised as being of national importance. In essence, the most important development plan policies² to the determination of this appeal seek to avoid isolated development and to conserve and enhance the quality of the landscape. This is consistent with national policies³ for NL's which require great weight to be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape.
4. The development is remote from other buildings and erodes the pleasant, unspoilt pastoral character of this part of the NL. Even with some proposed tree planting, it would amount to an inappropriate change in character and loss of natural beauty within this important and sensitive landscape. This sporadic development within the countryside fails to conserve and enhance the quality of the landscape and conflicts with LP policies DEV25, TTV26, TTV28 and NP policy E1. If permitted, it could also make it difficult for the LPA to

¹ The provisions of section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way 2000 (as amended) are engaged.

² DEV25, TTV26, TTV28 of the Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan (LP) and E1 of the Bere Peninsula Neighbourhood Plan (NP).

³ The National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024.

resist future pressure for other equine related development alongside or in neighbouring fields, which could result in cumulative harm to this NL.

5. Given all of the above, I conclude that the benefits of the development are outweighed by the harm to the character of this NL. The appeal should not therefore succeed.

Neil Pope

Inspector