



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 January 2025

by **E Pickernell BSc MSC MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 February 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P0119/W/24/3348820

**Kingmore Farm, Old Gloucester Road, Winterbourne, South Gloucestershire
BS36 1RT**

- 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 Mr and Mrs P and S Howes against the decision of South Gloucestershire Council.
 - The application Ref is P24/00672/F.
 - The development proposed is the conversion of an existing and underused stone built agricultural barn to form an extension to the existing Farmhouse.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for the conversion of an existing and underused stone built agricultural barn to form an extension to the existing Farmhouse at Kingmore Farm, Winterbourne, South Gloucestershire BS36 1RT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P24/00672/F, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing nos 50812/08/001 and 50812/08/100.

Preliminary Matters

2. Since the determination of the application the Government has published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) in December 2024 which was amended in February 2025. Although I have made my determination against the updated national policy context, the relevant changes are not fundamental to matters which are determinative to the outcome of this appeal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt (GB) having regard to the effect on openness and the purposes of including land in the GB, the Framework and any relevant development plan policies;
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling; and
 - if the proposed development is inappropriate development, whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly

outweighed by other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances required to justify the development.

Reasons

Whether or not inappropriate development in the Green Belt including the effect upon openness and the purposes of the Green Belt

4. The Framework at para 142 identifies that the fundamental aim of GB policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. It goes on to state at para 153 that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the GB and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The Framework establishes that development in the GB is inappropriate unless one of a number of exceptions apply.
5. Para 154 h) iv. allows for the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction and provided it preserves the openness of the GB and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
6. The proposal involves the re-use of an existing stone barn which is physically attached to the existing farmhouse. The application was accompanied by a Structural Report which concludes that the walls, arch and roof are generally sound and capable of conversion with some simple repairs and maintenance. The Council have not contested the findings of the report. Based on my observations at my site visit, and the evidence before me, I am satisfied that the building is of permanent and substantial construction.
7. Therefore, having regard to the Framework, it is necessary to assess whether the proposed development would preserve the openness of the GB or conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
8. Case law¹ has confirmed that the openness of the GB has a spatial as well as a visual aspect. The works associated with the re-use of the building involve the infilling of the arched opening on the front elevation with glazing and the insertion of new openings on the rear and side elevation. The building would not be enlarged as a result of its conversion and there would be no change to the mass, bulk or footprint of the building. Consequently, the proposal would preserve the openness of the GB.
9. Furthermore, the proposal would not result in the spread of development beyond the envelope of the existing building. Therefore, it would not contribute to the sprawl of built-up areas, the merging of towns or encroachment into the countryside. As a result, the proposal would not conflict with the purposes of including the land within the GB.
10. I therefore find that the proposal benefits from the exception provided at para 154h) iv. of the Framework and as a result would not be inappropriate development in the GB.
11. The Council considered the scheme on the basis of whether or not it would comprise an exception allowed under para 154 c) of the Framework. This allows for the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Even if I

¹ Turner v SSLG & East Dorset Council [2016] EWCA Civ 466

were to consider the scheme on this basis, the proposal would not result in any additional built form. Consequently, the proposal would not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

12. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal would not amount to inappropriate development in the GB.

Character and appearance

13. The host dwelling comprises a detached, two-storey farmhouse with a hipped roof and single storey projections to the front and side elevations. It is in close proximity to the existing farm buildings which form a relatively compact grouping within the open countryside. The character of the host dwelling therefore is very much of a farmhouse within an agricultural setting.
14. Despite the existing extensions, the house itself retains a relatively balanced form, however the existing barn which is attached to the house is an obvious physical presence. The barn has an asymmetric cat-slide roof and a large arched opening on the front elevation. The walls are mostly constructed of traditional stone and the roofing material is double roman tiles. The building is an attractive, traditional agricultural building which contributes positively to the character and appearance of the host dwelling.
15. Although the proposed conversion of the barn would add considerably to the floorspace of the dwelling, it would not result in the construction of any additional built form on the site. The alterations to the barn would be relatively modest and would preserve its agricultural character.
16. The overall width and scale of the barn are relatively large, in comparison with the host dwelling. However, this would not, in itself be harmful given that it comprises existing built form which already has a strong influence on its character and appearance. Accordingly, the principles relating to extensions set out in the Householder Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted March 2021) cannot be readily applied to this proposal.
17. Consequently, the alterations proposed would not detract from or dominate the original dwelling. Overall, the visual changes would be minimal, would preserve the character and appearance of the host dwelling and would not result in the over-development of the site.
18. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not result in a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling. It would therefore accord with Policy CS1 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Core Strategy 2006 – 2027, and Policy PSP38 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Policies, Sites and Places Plan (Adopted November 2017). Together these seek to ensure that development achieves a high standard of design including respecting existing form, scale and proportions.

Conditions

19. I have had regard to the conditions suggested by the Council. Time limit and approved plans conditions are required in the interests of certainty. I have not imposed a matching materials condition as the materials used in the barn to be converted differ to those used in the host dwelling. The approved plan provides sufficient detail in respect of the proposed materials.

Conclusion

20. I have found that the proposal would not represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt. As such it is not necessary for very special circumstances to exist. Furthermore, the proposal would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling.
21. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

E Pickernell

INSPECTOR