



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 February 2025

by **E Worley BA (Hons) Dip EP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/E3715/W/24/3348532

Caravan at Jax Barn, Flecknoe Road, Broadwell, Warwickshire CV23 8HS

- 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 Jacky Hart against the decision of Rugby Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is R24/0141.
 - The development proposed is described as the change of use of existing temporary dwelling (mobile home) to holiday let. The existing structure and layout will remain. New materials are proposed to the exterior of the structure.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have used the Council's description of development as set out on the Decision Notice in the banner heading above, the revised description has been used on the appeal form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the site is a suitable location for the proposed holiday let accommodation with particular regard to accessibility to services and facilities.

Reasons

4. The appeal site, which is occupied by a mobile home, is located beyond a defined settlement boundary, in an area of open countryside. The appeal scheme seeks the conversion of the existing temporary accommodation, to a 2 bedroom holiday let, including the installation of cladding above a brickwork plinth to the external walls.
5. Policy GP1 of the Rugby Borough Local Plan 2011-2031, adopted June 2019 (LP) sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which reflects the approach set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Policy GP2 of the LP includes a settlement hierarchy for the location of new development within the district. In accordance with Policy GP2, new development in the countryside will only be permitted where national policy allows. The policy approach to the rural economy is set out in Policy ED4 of the LP, which supports small-scale tourism, visitor accommodation and leisure based uses, both in and outside the urban area, subject to compliance with other policies in the LP.

6. Paragraph 88 of the Framework is clear that to support a prosperous rural economy, decisions should enable, among other things, sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside. The Council has not raised an objection to the proposal in terms of its design or effect on the character and appearance of the area.
7. I observed at my site visit that the appeal site is located some distance from existing infrastructure, local services, and facilities. Moreover, the surrounding highway network comprises narrow rural lanes that are devoid of streetlights and footpaths. Given the lack of connectivity with the surrounding settlements, and regular bus service, it is therefore unlikely that visitors using the proposed holiday let would walk or cycle to the nearest services and facilities and would instead be heavily reliant on the private car.
8. The appellant acknowledges that, while there are active travel routes, including cycle routes, bridleways and footpaths in the vicinity of the site, future visitors to the holiday let would realistically access day-to-day services and facilities located in the surrounding settlements by car. As such, visitors are likely to be reliant on the private car both to get to the site and during their stay. While the number of trips generated by the proposal may be modest, due to the scale of the development and the possibility that the accommodation may not be occupied all year round, the proposal would nonetheless give rise to additional vehicular movements and in that regard would fail to constitute sustainable rural tourism.
9. In light of the above considerations, the proposal would not represent sustainable development and would conflict with the aims of the Framework that seek to support a prosperous rural economy. Given the conflict with national policy, the proposed holiday let in the countryside location would not benefit from support set out in Policy GP2 of the LP.
10. While I acknowledge rural tourist accommodation by its very nature is typically located within the countryside, whereby it is likely to generate trips by car, there is no clear evidence that facilities to support rural tourism could not be directed to locations within rural areas that benefit from a greater degree of accessibility to services and amenities. Furthermore, even if the accommodation is primarily used by visitors from the UK, they would nevertheless travel to the site by car. Moreover, while I am mindful that part of the district falls within the Green Belt, there is no substantive evidence that this would have any significant implications in terms of the delivery of tourism development in the area.
11. The appellant asserts that occupiers of new residential properties within the nearby rural settlements would be similarly dependent on the private car to access services and amenities to visitors at the site. Nonetheless, such development within the existing boundaries of rural villages would accord with relevant policies in relation to the location of new residential development. Accordingly, such development would not be directly comparable to the appeal proposal, and I therefore attribute it very limited weight.
12. My attention is drawn by the appellant to several examples of holiday let accommodation for which planning permission has been granted¹. However, I do not have full details in respect of such developments so I cannot be sure of the

¹ LPA Refs. R23/1158, R23/0669, R21/0271 and R20/0867

circumstances of each case. In any case, I have determined the appeal on its own merits, based on the evidence before me.

13. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the site would not be a suitable location for the proposed holiday let accommodation with particular regard to accessibility to services and facilities. In that regard the proposal would fail to accord with the Framework and would therefore conflict with Policy GP2 of the LP and subsequently LP Policies GP2 and ED4 of the LP.

Other Matters

14. The absence of harm in relation to the character and appearance of the area, living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties and highway safety are normal expectations of new development and therefore of neutral weight, as is the inclusion of renewable energy measures, which the Council's submissions indicate is a policy requirement.
15. While I note the lack of objection from statutory consultees and interested parties, this would not render the scheme acceptable.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

16. The proposed holiday let would give rise to social and economic benefits through increased tourism in the area. In addition, the proposal would also provide opportunities for visitors to engage in physical activity in the locality, which may offer benefits in terms of health and wellbeing. However, any benefits in the above regards would be limited given the scale of the development, for a single 2 bedroom unit of visitor accommodation. Moreover, while I acknowledge the appellant's intention to develop the holiday let alongside the established equestrian use of the site, there is no clear evidence as to how it would operate as part of the existing business so as to enable its diversification.
17. Set against this, the proposal would fail to accord with LP Policies GP1, GP2 and ED4, having regard to its location and lack of accessibility to services and facilities by means other than the private car. Therefore, the proposal would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. Material considerations in this case have not been shown to carry sufficient weight to indicate that a decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with it. For the foregoing reasons the appeal should be dismissed.

E Worley

INSPECTOR