
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 February 2025

by **N Bromley BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/R1845/W/24/3350223

Yew Tree Farm Caravan Site, Pound Bank, Rock, Worcestershire, Kidderminster DY14 9TH

- 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 Lunnon against the decision of Wyre Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/0172/FUL.
 - The development proposed is described as “Temporary use of land for the storage of an unoccupied static caravan (on a caravan park) until pitch becomes available (18 months).”
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) on 12 December 2024 and updated on 7 February 2025. Those parts of the Framework most relevant to this appeal have not been amended. As a result, I have not sought submissions on the revised Framework, and I am satisfied that no party’s interests have been prejudiced by taking this approach.
3. I observed during my site visit that the static caravan was stored on the land. Therefore, the development is retrospective, and I have dealt with the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. The appeal site is located within a touring caravan park in the open countryside. The site includes a number of buildings associated with the caravan park, as well as a former farmhouse and a number of static caravans, occupied on a permanent residential basis. Overall, the caravan site has an open appearance, largely comprising well maintained grassed areas, as well as hardstandings.
6. The surrounding landscape has a prevailing rural character with open fields, bounded by tall hedgerows, and areas of woodland. Villages and sporadic clusters of residential buildings are also a feature of the landscape.
7. The change of use of the land and the storage of a static caravan, on land that was previously undeveloped, results in additional physical mass on the site,

adding a new structure into the landscape. As a result, it reduces the relatively open, rural, character and appearance of the land.

8. Furthermore, although the static caravan has a modern but relatively conventional size and appearance, sited adjacent to an existing static caravan within the caravan site, it occupies a focal position within the site. In addition, despite the caravan being largely screened from the road by tall hedgerows and existing buildings, there are glimpses of it from the access point onto Pound Bank. For these reasons, the appeal scheme introduces additional mass and built form to the locality and a degree of countryside encroachment through the storage of the static caravan on the land. As a result, it is harmful to the character and appearance of the landscape.
9. While I acknowledge that the harm would be for a temporary period, and in time, the more modern caravan would replace an older unit, the development is an additional feature which currently has a harmful effect on the landscape. Additionally, even though the storage of the caravan on the site would ensure a smooth operational transition once a pitch on the site becomes available, it is unclear, on the limited evidence before me, whether there is a realistic prospect of a pitch becoming available in the foreseeable future. In particular it is not known why delays have occurred and it is also unclear why alternative storage options could not have been secured. As a result, I attribute limited weight to these factors, and they do not outweigh the harm caused by the impact of the appeal scheme on the character and appearance of the area.
10. For the above reasons, I conclude that the development is harmful to the character and appearance of the area. As such, it conflicts with Policies SP.2, SP.20, SP.22, DM.21, DM.24 and DM.30 of the Wyre Forest District Council Local Plan 2016-2036, which together and amongst other things, seek to safeguard and enhance the open countryside and requires development to make a positive contribution to the landscape, protecting its character.

Other Matters

11. It is suggested that the appeal scheme would support the established business in a rural location which supports employment, and that the storage of the caravan on the land would also reduce the need to transport it from an alternative site. However, mindful that there is limited information about what benefits there would be to the business, I only attach minor weight to these factors. Likewise, even though Rock Parish Council support the application, and no other objections have been raised from neighbouring occupiers, the minor benefits of the scheme do not outweigh the unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the landscape.

Conclusion

12. The appeal scheme conflicts with the development plan when considered as a whole. There are no material considerations, either individually or in combination, that outweigh the identified harm and associated development plan conflict. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

N Bromley

INSPECTOR