



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 March 2025

by **B Phillips BSc MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P0119/W/24/3356216

Building At Piple Court Farmhouse, North Stoke Lane, Upton Cheyney, South Gloucestershire BS30 6NG

- 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 R Jefferies against the decision of South Gloucestershire Council.
 - The application Ref is P24/01742/F.
 - The development proposed is the change of use of building from agricultural to 1 no. dwelling with associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the change of use of building from agricultural to 1 no. dwelling with associated works at Building At Piple Court Farmhouse, Upton Cheyney, South Gloucestershire BS30 6NG in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P24/01742/F, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have removed wording that does not describe an act of development from the description above.
3. The Government published in December 2024 a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Both main parties have had opportunity to comment on this, and as such I am satisfied that no party would be prejudiced by my also referring to the Framework in this decision.
4. A revised site location plan has been submitted with the appeal which has reduced the curtilage to the immediate area of level hardstanding. I have taken this plan in to account in my consideration of the appeal, as has the Council in their statement of case. Natural justice will not be prejudiced by my doing so.
5. The appeal site lies within the Green Belt. There is no dispute between the parties that the proposal represents the re-use of a building that is of permanent and substantial construction. Given the amended plan outlined above, the Council is content that there would be no harm to the openness of the Green Belt. They consider that the development is not inappropriate, as it would fall within one of the exceptions to inappropriate development detailed in paragraph 154 h) iv) of the Framework. Based on the evidence before me, including my own observations, I find no reason to conclude otherwise. The Council has therefore withdrawn its objection in this regard and do not wish to contest reason for refusal 1.

Main Issue

6. As such, the main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing building.

Reasons

7. The existing barn structure comprises of a large rectangular steel portal framed building, with concrete blockwork on the lower half, and timber boarding on the top half. The roof is fibre cement profiled cladding, incorporating a number of existing rooflights. It is of no architectural merit but in its simple agricultural form possesses a typical rural character.
8. The proposal would retain the external footprint and simple pitched roof shape of the building. The proposed glazing elements are not excessive, including on the eastern elevation, where, whilst double height doors are proposed, these would mostly infill the large existing opening. Along with the relative lack of openings on the northern and southern elevations, this ensures that the simple agricultural form of the building would be retained.
9. In combination with the appropriate use of materials, such as the retention of some existing timber boarding, addition of new timber cladding, new corrugated steel roof and Cotswold render, this would result in a coherent and balanced design that does not detract nor obscure the agricultural origins and character of the building.
10. The proposal would not therefore harm the character and appearance of the existing building. There is no conflict with Policy CS1 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Core Strategy (2013) which requires development to be high-quality in terms of design.

Other Matters

11. The appeal site is located within the Cotswold National Landscape (CNL). Across the CNL, settlements are distinctive, developed in the Cotswold vernacular, with high architectural quality and integrity. Traditional buildings are an integral part of the landscape's beauty. Given my findings above, the proposal would conserve the visual qualities and essential characteristics of the CNL in terms of its landscape and scenic beauty.
12. The submitted Ecological Appraisal¹ found both the barn to be converted and the stable building to be demolished to provide garden space had negligible roosting suitability. Based on what I observed on site and from the information before me, I am satisfied with the Council's conclusion that the site is not likely to be used by bats, or indeed any other protected species. There is no conflict therefore with the protection of protected species requirements the Habitats Regulations and Framework.

Conditions

13. The Council has not suggested any conditions. To meet legislative requirements, a condition shall be imposed to address the period for commencement. It is necessary that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of certainty.

¹ Crossman Associates, February 2024

14. A condition to secure details of the works for the disposal of sewerage so that there is not an increase in the risk of flooding, or a risk to public health, or the environment, is both reasonable and necessary.
15. In the interest of wider sustainability, conditions requiring the installation of electric vehicle charging is necessary, along with the provision of bicycle parking spaces. A condition ensuring that turning and parking spaces are available to residents is appropriate, in the interests of highway safety.
16. A condition ensuring the submitted landscaping scheme is implemented promptly is necessary in the interest of visual amenity and ecology.
17. Conditions that require compliance with the ecological enhancements detailed in the submitted Ecological Appraisal and securing details of any external lighting, are necessary to ensure that there would be no adverse impact on protected species and the rural character of the area.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons above, the appeal is allowed.

B Phillips

INSPECTOR

Schedule of 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: Revised location plan, landscaping plan, 100 A, 101 A, 102 A.
- 3) The dwelling hereby permitted shall not be occupied until works for the disposal of sewage are provided on the site to serve the development hereby permitted, in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained in accordance with the approved details.
- 4) The dwelling hereby permitted shall not be occupied until an electric vehicle charging point is provided in accordance with details which shall have been first submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The charging point shall be retained thereafter.
- 5) The dwelling hereby permitted shall not be occupied until a bicycle store is provided in accordance with details which shall have been first submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The bicycle storage shall be permanently retained and maintained thereafter.
- 6) The dwelling hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the parking and turning area space has been laid out within the site in accordance with the approved landscaping plan. This area shall be maintained and remain available for this use at all times thereafter.
- 7) All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved landscaping plan shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the building; and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.
- 8) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations set out in Section 4 of the Ecological Appraisal by Crossman Associates, February 2024.
- 9) No external light fixture or fitting shall be installed within the application site unless in accordance with details that has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The submitted details will demonstrate how the proposed lighting will impact on bat habitat compared to the existing situation.

End of Schedule