



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 May 2025

by **B Astley-Serougi BA(Hons) LLM MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D0840/W/24/3358167

Pennare Farm, St Allen, Truro, Cornwall TR4 9DG

- 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 Tom Tripp against the decision of Cornwall Council.
 - The application Ref is PA24/00795.
 - The development proposed is described as continued stationing of ten shipping containers and proposed stationing of twenty containers for domestic storage purposes.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. On my site visit I noted that a number of shipping containers had been stationed at the appeal site. Nevertheless, given the proposed development would result in additional shipping containers, I have considered the development as a whole, as did the Council.
3. I have used the address contained within the Decision Notice and appeal form for clarity in the above banner heading.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the appeal site is a suitable location for the proposed development having regard to local and national policy.

Reasons

5. Policy 5(1)(c) of the Cornwall Local Plan 2010-2030 (CLP) establishes that in the countryside new employment land and uses should be of a scale appropriate to its location or demonstrate an overriding locational and business need to be in that location such as farm diversification.
6. In the reasoning text of the online version of Policy 7 of the CLP (online version) paragraph 2.33 defines open countryside for planning purposes as the area outside of the physical boundaries of existing settlements where they have a clear form and shape. Given that the appeal site is located outside of the physical boundaries of nearby existing settlements such as Shortlanesend which has a clear form and shape, it follows that, in this case, it is located in the open countryside for planning purposes.
7. The Farm Diversification Appraisal (the FDA) dated April 2024 states that the appeal scheme would create a dependable, recurring income for Pennare Farm (the Farm). The predominant activity in terms of land use is the letting of the land

and the Council's Agricultural Need Appraisal estimates approximately 6% of the business income is derived from Llamaland (which offers Llama walking and handling experience). Therefore, the appeal scheme would likely result in a limited income stream.

8. Nevertheless, given the above, it is reasonable to classify the proposed development as a farm diversification scheme.
9. Paragraph 88 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) establishes, amongst other things, that in order to support a prosperous rural economy planning decisions should enable the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. I have identified above, that, the appeal scheme would contribute to the diversification of the Farm and accord with Paragraph 88 of the Framework.
10. Notwithstanding this, the Farm is located in a generally rural area and whilst relatively close to Shortlanesend, is a significant distance from Truro. It is sited within Cornwall Character Area CCA20 – Truro and Tresillian Valleys (CCA20). CCA20 has, amongst other things, a strong working agricultural character with rolling fields to the north-east of Truro feeling particularly remote. The Cornwall Character Area Description for CCA20 refers to the dilution of traditional farmland character as a consequence of the conversion of pasture to arable and increasing industrial development. Therefore, the appeal scheme would further dilute the character of CCA20 due to the placement of numerous shipping containers within the countryside.
11. Moreover, I acknowledge that the road that provides access to the site is designated as a multi-use trail which is accessed via a larger road and is a relatively short distance from Shortlanesend. Nevertheless, there remains limited sustainable transport options available, with a bus stop not located relatively close to the appeal site. Given that the storage containers would be used for domestic purposes it is unlikely that individuals using the containers would travel to the site by foot or bicycle.
12. Consequently, the appeal scheme would likely result in persons using the containers for domestic storage to be reliant upon private motor vehicles. There is limited substantive evidence before me to adequately demonstrate that the appeal scheme would not result in an unacceptable number of vehicle trips. Accordingly, although the Highways Authority has not objected to the scheme, in my judgement, the likely intensification as a consequence of the coming and goings of individuals using the storage containers would result in unacceptable harm to the rural character of the surrounding area.
13. I acknowledge that the appeal scheme would form part of a farm diversification scheme for the Farm. Moreover, whilst I do not have the full circumstances of the closures of Dairyland Farm Park and Flambards Theme Park in Helston, it has not been adequately demonstrated that there is an overriding locational and business need for the appeal scheme. It therefore does not in my judgement, generally accord with Paragraph 85 of the Framework insofar as it outlines that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

14. Notwithstanding this, given the likely reliance upon private motor vehicles and the limited substantive evidence to demonstrate that there would be no unacceptable harm regarding the frequency and intensity of the use, in my mind, the harm as a result of the unsustainable location would outweigh the limited benefit from the income stream as a result of the appeal scheme.
15. There is limited information before me regarding other similar schemes located in Cornwall such as Allstore storage site. Nevertheless, each case is determined on its own merits and for the case specific reasons I have identified above, the appeal site is not a suitable location for the proposed development.
16. In conclusion, given I have found the appeal site to be an unsuitable location for the proposed development, it follows that the appeal scheme would conflict with Policies 1, 2 and 5(1) of the CLP insofar as they seek to ensure sustainable growth including appropriate locations for new employment land and uses.

Other Matters

17. I acknowledge the personal preference of the appellant to pass the Farm to their children and that the appeal scheme would contribute to its financial viability, albeit modestly. These personal circumstances do not outweigh the harm I have identified above and there has been limited substantive evidence to demonstrate an absolute need for the development in this location. I therefore give this matter limited weight.
18. Additionally, whilst the appeal scheme would likely result in a modest contribution to the local economy and community, this would be limited due to the scale of the appeal scheme.
19. A lack of harm regarding parking provision and its perceived compliance with Policy 27 of the CLP is a neutral factor in this case.
20. The appeal site is within the zone of influence of the Penhale Dunes Special Area of Conservation and the Fal and Helford Special Area of Conservation (the SAC's). I have a duty under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 to assess any impact the proposed development would have upon the SAC's. However, as I am dismissing the appeal for the reasons given above, I do not need to conduct any further assessment in relation to the SAC's.

Planning Balance

21. The appeal scheme results in a development that is in an unsustainable location. The proposal would likely result in modest income stream for the Farm. However, the benefits associated with the proposed development is limited and do not outweigh the conflict with the development plan that still exists.

Conclusion

22. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

B Astley-Serougi

INSPECTOR