



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 July 2025

by **H Faulkner BSc (Hons) MSc PGCE MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3940/W/25/3360465

Teffont Woodland, Dinton Road, Teffont Magna, Salisbury SP3 5RR

- 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 T Austreng (Teffont Woodlands Ltd) against the decision of Wiltshire Council.
- The application Ref is PL/2024/01291.
- The development proposed is Conversion of Forestry building to tourism accommodation (holiday let).

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. A signed Unilateral Undertaking (UU) dated 15 July 2025 was provided by the appellant and copied to the Council. The UU is for financial obligations in relation to Phosphorus Mitigation relating to the Hampshire River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
3. Planning permission was previously refused in January 2020¹ for the conversion of the same building to tourism accommodation. The appeal for this was dismissed in September 2020² and I have had regard to that decision in my assessment of this appeal.
4. On 22 November 2023, all designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England and Wales became “National Landscapes” (NLs). The site is within the Cranborne Chase National Landscape (CCNL) which was formerly the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Statutory Management Plan for the Cranborne Chase AONB is the Cranborne Chase Partnership Plan 2019-2024 (The Management Plan). The Management Plan is referred to in this decision as it remains relevant to the CCNL

Main Issues

5. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, including its effect on the landscape and scenic beauty of the CCNL;

¹ 19/09738/FUL refused 9 January 2020

² APP/Y3940/W/20/3246187 dismissed 22 September 2020

- Whether the proposal would be suitably located having regard to relevant development plan policies concerning new dwellings in the CCNL; and
- The effect of the proposed development upon the SAC.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

6. The building which is the subject of this appeal is situated within woodland and from the evidence before me is not located within a settlement. The building is accessed via a track off the B3089. The alterations to the building remain the same as proposed in the 2020 appeal.
7. The appellant states that they have been operating a lawful caravan site within the area surrounding the building for a number of years. However, no certificate of lawful use or development issued under Section 191 or Section 192 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 has been provided. Reference is made to a license for the use of the site although no details have been provided. It is assumed that this relates to the permitted development rights under Schedule 2, Part 5, Class A of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (GPDO). Given the sites location in respect of the SAC and the implications of Article 3(1) of the GPDO with regard to permitted development I can only attribute limited weight to the use of the site around the building for caravans.
8. At the time of the site visit I saw some facilities associated with the caravan site use, such as a water point and areas set out presumably for caravans as well as a number of picnic tables. The building itself contained some furniture and it appeared to be in use as a facility for the caravan site and this is backed up by reviews of the site contained within the evidence. I have not been provided with any details of a permission for the building to be used in this manner. At the time of the visit there were no caravans or motorhomes using the site.
9. Within the previous appeal decision it was accepted that the conversion of the building itself would have little effect on the character and appearance of the area or the landscape or scenic beauty. However, it was found that the activity associated with the proposed use would have a significant detrimental effect.
10. I note the appellant considers the context of the site has changed to some degree with use of land adjoining the building as a caravan site allowable under Permitted Development rights. However, for the reasons set out in paragraph 7 above, I place limited weight on that use and consequently the appellants contention in that regard. In addition, it remains relevant that the previous appeal decision concluded that the change of use of the building itself would have an urbanising effect
11. The use of the site for caravans is likely to be somewhat seasonal whereas the change of use to a dwelling, even as a holiday let, would be a permanent feature. This would result in the domestication of the site, for example through the addition of garden furniture and other associated paraphernalia as well as result in the presence of cars on the site all year round. Furthermore, if the caravan site was in use during peak season the change of use would add to the number of vehicles and activity on the site, further intensifying the use of the site and its visual impact.

12. Lighting was specifically referenced in the previous appeal. I note there may be some lighting associated with the caravan site use, however the proposed development could result in light being visible from the building throughout the year, where as light coming from the caravan site during winter months is less likely. Furthermore light emanating from the proposed development would be more noticeable in views from the road during the winter months.
13. The lighting report supporting the proposal may show reduced lighting compared to the existing situation and whilst this may be a benefit it highlights the potential harm that exists on the site. Even if light spill is minimised through the lighting strategy there would still be some light emitted from the building. The lighting strategy involves specific internal arrangements which could be changed in future and would not be reasonable to condition. Furthermore, it would not be possible to restrict additional lighting being added, particularly internally if future occupants found the proposed lighting unsuitable for their needs.
14. Reference is made to additional tree planting being proposed to take place forming an additional natural boundary between the road and the appeal site. However, no details of this have been provided so I can only give this limited weight and it does not overcome my concerns.
15. I have a duty under Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 to seek to further the statutory purposes of protected landscapes, including NLs. The primary purpose of the designation of NLs is conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area. Furthermore, paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires great weight to be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty of NLs.
16. The Management Plan outlines some of the area's special qualities which include, amongst other things, remoteness, dark night skies and tranquillity. With it being a deeply rural area and largely free from development outside of settlements. These elements would be affected by the proposed development. Even if the caravan site already impacts these elements, that in itself is not justification for permanent harm to the identified special qualities of the CCNL.
17. The Management Plan may refer to farm diversification and the reuse of farm buildings. Given that the building is a disused forestry building I am not satisfied that this part of the Management Plan is specifically relevant. Even if it were, the Management Plan also recognises that the use must be right for the AONB and its setting, on the basis of the evidence before me, I do not consider this to be the case.
18. I acknowledge that the site is used for caravans for at least some of the year and the building has an existing visual presence in the landscape. However, for the reasons given above, the proposal would result in additional harm to the landscape character and appearance of the area as a result of the permanent nature of the proposed use which would at times of the year be free from development and activity. Consequently, I find that the proposal conflicts with the primary purpose of the designation of the CCNL and fails to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area.
19. Core Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (Adopted 2015) (WCS) requires development to protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact on landscaping character. I conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of

the area, as well as on the landscape and scenic beauty of the CCNL and therefore conflict with this policy. It would also conflict with the requirement to seek to further the purposes of the NLs.

20. Overall, whilst there are some changes in circumstances since the previous appeal was dismissed, I do not find that these changes provide justification for a permanent change to the building and the site and in accordance with the Framework I have given great weight to this harm. Therefore, as with the previous appeal I find that the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area, adversely affecting the landscape and scenic beauty. It would therefore be contrary to Policy 51 of the WCS.

Appropriate Location

21. The site is situated within woodland and is not located within a settlement. The previous appeal outlined the location as being some distance from the nearest settlement and the building was isolated. Although proposed as a holiday let the proposed use would fall within use class C3 (Dwellinghouses) as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) (UCO). The appellant states that the proposal does not seek to create a dwelling in the countryside. However, even if a caravan site is now in operation on the adjacent land and the use proposed is for a holiday let accommodation this would still fall within use class C3 (Dwellinghouses), as defined in the UCO, albeit likely to be restricted by planning condition for use as holiday let accommodation. This is the same use as proposed in 2020 where the Inspector also concluded that the conversion would represent an isolated dwelling in the countryside.
22. Policies 1 and 2 of the WCS set out the strategy for settlements and where development will be permitted outside of those settlements. Linked to these policies is Policy 33 which identifies specific settlements which includes Teffont Magna. As the proposal would be outside of the settlement it is not supported by these policies.
23. Consistent with the previous Inspector's assessment, as a dwelling outside of a settlement to be used for tourist accommodation Policy 39 WCS is most relevant. All the criteria of the policy must be met for development to be acceptable. Criterion (i) is that there is evidence that the facilities are in conjunction with a particular countryside attraction. This was not found to be the case with the last appeal. The appellant contends a change of circumstances at the site has occurred with the introduction of the use of adjacent land as a caravan site. I consider this matter further below.
24. The operation of a lawful caravan site within the limitations of Permitted Development in the area surrounding the building the subject of this appeal could be argued to be a tourism use, as it could be a place for people to stay when visiting the area. However, based on the evidence before me, I am not satisfied that the facilities provided by the proposed development would be in conjunction with a particular countryside attraction. The pre-amble to Policy 39 of the WCS lists a number of particular countryside attractions and, whilst I do not consider it to be an exhaustive list, I am not satisfied that the caravan site mentioned above is a countryside attraction of the nature sought by criterion (i) of Policy 39 of the WCS. Furthermore, as I have established harm in respect of the character and appearance there would also be conflict with criterion (iii) of the same policy. As a result, the proposal is contrary to this policy.
25. Policy 48 of the WCS relates to the conversion of rural buildings and includes tourism uses. The use of the building as a holiday could be considered as a tourism use for the purposes of this policy, however, the concerns outlined above in respect of character

and appearance would mean that the proposal would be contrary to criteria ii of this policy and therefore is not supported by it.

26. A condition has been suggested to connect the holiday let and the caravan site. This would not preclude the building from being considered as a C3 dwellinghouse, as defined by the UCO. If the caravan site ceased to operate, for whatever reason, the residential use would still exist. As such I am not satisfied such a condition would meet the tests related to the imposition of planning conditions, especially in terms of reasonableness and enforceability.
27. To conclude, in respect of the suitability of the location of the proposed use the proposal would be contrary to Core Policies 1, 2, 33, 39 and 48 of the WCS.

Impact upon the Hampshire River Avon SAC

28. The appeal site is located within a catchment area which forms part of the River Avon. It is identified that the development in this area has the potential to cause adverse effects either alone or in combination with other developments through discharge of phosphorus into wastewater.
29. The Council operates a phosphorus credit scheme for Council-led development, if it were accepted that the proposal would be considered as being 'planned development' then a UU can be used as a mechanism to secure the credits.
30. A UU has been submitted at the appeal stage along with a proposed Package Treatment Plant (PTP). The Council accepts that the UU is in alignment with its mitigation charges. Details of the PTP were also included in the UU which include the specification of a model in line with the Council's suggestion.
31. Whilst I accept some measures have been taken to manage the impacts of the development with regard to nutrient burdens, given that I have found harm in respect of other matters above that are significant enough to dismiss the appeal there is no benefit in me pursuing this matter.

Other Matters

32. As well as being within the Hampshire River Avon SAC the site is also within the Chilmark Quarries SAC. Regulation 63(1) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 indicates that the requirement for an Appropriate Assessment is only necessary where the competent authority is minded to give consent for the proposed development. Therefore, given my overall conclusion on the main issues, it is not necessary for me to consider this matter in any further detail.
33. Paragraph 88 is supportive of sustainable growth and expansion of sustainable rural tourism which respect the character of the countryside. As harm is found in respect of harm to the character of the NL the proposal is not supported by this policy.
34. Reference is made to the approval by the Council at Woodminton Farm³ for two holiday lodges and also on the "Farmer Giles Farm" complex. However, no specific details have been provided and therefore it is not clear how comparable the site are in terms of their location or the effect on the NL.

³ 20/04267/FUL

35. I note that the site is close to a number of existing tourism accommodations in the area and that the area may be attractive to tourists. However, this does not specifically weigh in favour of the proposal.

Conclusion

36. I conclude that the proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole and the material considerations, including the Framework do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

H Faulkner

INSPECTOR