



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 November 2025

by **P Barton BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P0119/W/25/3371485

Land and Building at Pipleigh 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 P25/00538/F.
 - The development proposed is erection of extension to 1 no. glamping pod.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the appeal site address and description of development given in the Council's Decision Notice in the banner heading above. This address better describes the location of the building subject to this appeal and the description is more concise and removes superfluous text from that set out in the application form.

Main Issues:

3. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and any relevant development plan policies;
 - the effect of the proposed development on the openness of the Green Belt;
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area; and
 - whether other considerations clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm as to amount to very special circumstances.

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development in the Green Belt

4. The appeal site is located within the Green Belt located off the access drive from North Stoke Lane that leads to buildings at Pipleigh Court Farm. The existing glamping pod is a small single storey structure.
5. The Framework identifies that the fundamental aim of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of

Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. The Framework states that inappropriate development is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

6. Development within the Green Belt is inappropriate with the exceptions of the types of development listed in paragraphs 154 and 155 of the Framework. The appellant has not presented an exception listed under these paragraphs in support of the proposal. The Council has referred to paragraph 154 c) of the Framework, which is an exception covering the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in the disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building. Based on the evidence before me I have no reason to disagree.
7. Taking the form of 2 distinct parts, the proposed extension would consist of a projecting gable end to the south elevation, providing a separate bedroom, and a flat roof element to the east elevation, providing an enlarged living and dining area.
8. Whilst the Framework does not provide a definition of 'disproportionate additions', Policy PSP7 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan Policies, Sites and Places Plan (PSPP) provides more detail policy guidance. It identifies that, as a general guide, an addition resulting in a volume increase up to 30% of the original building would be likely to be proportionate. Moreover, additions that exceed 30% will be carefully assessed and increases of 50% or more would most likely be considered to be disproportionate additions and refused as inappropriate development.
9. There is broad agreement between the parties regarding the size of the extension's footprint. Moreover, the appellant has not disputed the Council's calculation of the approximate volume increase or its conclusion that the proposal would result in a noticeable exceedance of the 50% guideline. Including the floorspace of the storage space within the roof would result in a figure larger than the size of the existing building's footprint. Nevertheless, it would have no impact upon the volume calculations.
10. Such quantitative measurements are useful to assess whether an extension amounts to a disproportionate addition to an original building. However, its scale, bulk, massing and height are also relevant to such an assessment. In this respect, whilst the extension would not increase the height of the building, the significant increase in the building's footprint and volume would result in a significant spread of its current built form. Consequently, the proposal would create a substantially larger structure and would result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.
11. For these reasons, the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which is, by definition, harmful in terms of the Framework. Neither does it accord with Policies CS5 and CS34 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan Core Strategy (Core Strategy), which, amongst other things, seek to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development.

Openness

12. Openness is an essential characteristic of the Green Belt. In considering the concept of openness, the courts have found that it broadly has visual and spatial dimensions.

13. There would be limited harm to the visual openness of the Green Belt due to the level of vegetation surrounding the site, screening it from North Stoke Lane and the nearby public footpath. Nevertheless, the increase in the quantum of built form by virtue of the increase in footprint and volume would result in moderate harm to the spatial openness of the Green Belt. Consequently, the proposal would have a greater impact on openness than the existing development.

Character and appearance

14. The existing building, with its timber clad walls and clay tiled pitched roof, holds a simplistic rural charm. Whilst, the projecting gable end aspect of the proposed extension reflects this, the flat roof element represents a noticeable departure. Due to its size and flat roof design incorporating large areas of glazing to 2 elevations, it would introduce a more distinctly contemporary and domestic feature that would be at odds with the existing rural character of the site and its surroundings.
15. Therefore, the proposed development would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area. It would be contrary to Core Strategy Policy CS1 and PSPP Policies PSP1 and PSP2 that include a requirement for the development proposals to be informed by, respect and enhance the character, distinctiveness and amenity of both the site and its context.

Other considerations

16. Paragraphs 88 and 89 of the Framework seek to enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas. This includes the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses as well as sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respects the local character of the countryside. PSPP Policy PSP28 seeks sustainable new development which promotes a strong rural economy and is subject to criteria including the development being reasonably necessary for the purpose of the business use and of a scale which is consistent with its rural location.
17. The existing glamping pod forms part of an established farm-based glamping enterprise and the appellant asserts that the extension would provide additional income that would strengthen the underlying farming business. However, there is no substantive evidence before me to demonstrate the impact of the proposal on the existing business and that a smaller extension would not make an impact on the income generated from tourism. In addition, there is no compelling evidence before me that visitors to the extended glamping pod would encourage the retention and development of local services and community facilities. Therefore, I attribute limited weight to these benefits.
18. The appeal site is not at risk of flooding or within the curtilage of a listed building. A lack of harm in these respects are neutral considerations that weigh neither for nor against the proposal.
19. The appeal site is within the Cotswold National Landscape (CNL). Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (as amended) requires that regard be had to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of National Landscapes. There is also a duty under Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of these areas. These purposes also include increasing the

understanding and enjoyment by the public of the special qualities of the National Landscapes. The Council has not raised an objection to the proposal's impact on the CNL and from my own observations, I see no reason to come to a different conclusion on this matter.

Planning Balance

20. Paragraph 153 of the Framework is clear that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. I have found that there would be harm to the Green Belt by reason of the proposed development's inappropriateness and its effect on openness. There would also be harm to the character and appearance of the area.
21. The Framework states that the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm resulting from the development must be clearly outweighed by other considerations for planning permission to be granted. The other considerations in this case, as detailed above, are not sufficient to comprise the very special circumstances necessary to justify this development. This would be contrary to the Framework and Core Strategy Policies CS5 and CS34.

Conclusion

22. 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.

P Barton

INSPECTOR