



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 November 2025

by F P Tinsley MA (Hons) MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6th January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/C2741/W/25/3373329

Country Park, Pottery Strensall, York, YO32 5TJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr. S Nelson against the decision of the City of York Council.
 - The application reference is Ref: 25/00597/FUL
 - The development proposed is 'change of use of land for caravan storage'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. An appeal¹ was dismissed for the retention of existing hardstanding on the northern portion of the appeal site now before me. The Inspector in that case found that the proposal was inappropriate development in the Green Belt and that the harm regarding flood risk, which was a main issue in that appeal, would not be clearly outweighed by the other identified considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances required to justify the development. I refer to this as the previous appeal below. There was also a further appeal² relating to an application in 2013 seeking permission for the winter storage of up to 30 caravans which was also dismissed.
3. No works are proposed in the current appeal, which solely relates to a material change of use of land for the storage of caravans. It is not my role to establish the current lawful use of the land in determining this appeal.

Main Issues

4. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - (i) whether the proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and any relevant development plan policies;
 - (ii) if inappropriate, the effect on the openness and purposes of the Green Belt;
 - (iii) if inappropriate, would the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, be clearly outweighed by other considerations so as to amount to

¹ APP/C2741/W/23/3335577

² APP/C2741/A/13/2209861

the ‘very special circumstances’ necessary to justify the proposal.

Reasons

Inappropriate development

5. The appeal site lies within the Green Belt. Paragraph 154 of the Framework sets out the categories of development that may be regarded as not inappropriate in the Green Belt, subject to certain conditions. The Council considers the proposal to be inappropriate because none of the criteria in paragraph 154 apply. The appellant contends that it is not inappropriate, relying on paragraph 154(b), which states that the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries, burial grounds and allotments, may be acceptable provided the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with its purposes.
6. The proposal is for a new storage use and, as such, is not connected to the existing use of the land nor does it represent a change of use within the meaning of paragraph 154(b). Therefore, paragraph 154(b) does not apply. I have not been presented with compelling evidence to indicate that the provisions of paragraph 155 apply, which would otherwise mean the development should not be regarded as inappropriate. I acknowledge that the northern portion of the site contains hardstanding and, in line with the appellant’s submissions, could be considered previously developed land. However, I have not been provided with evidence regarding the previous use of the southern portion of the site, which appears to be undeveloped.
7. Policy GB1 of the City of York Local Plan 2017–2033 (the Local Plan), adopted in 2025, addresses development in the Green Belt. It is consistent with the Framework and does not provide any additional scope for development beyond that set out in national policy.
8. Accordingly, the proposal would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt, as it would not represent an acceptable change of use. It would therefore conflict with Local Plan Policy GB1 and Part 13 of the Framework.

Openness and purposes of the Green Belt

9. A fundamental aim of Green Belt policy, as set out in paragraph 142 of the Framework), is to keep land permanently open. Openness has both visual and spatial aspects.
10. On my site visit, I confirmed that the site is well screened from public view, including from roads and the Public Right of Way to the west, by vegetation and the existing building to the north. It is also well screened in views from within the wider site. Given the dense and partially non-deciduous planting, it is likely to provide some screening even during winter months. However, I cannot be certain that the vegetation and trees, which provide most of the screening will not die, become diseased, or be removed. This would result in the proposal being a significant visual feature in the landscape.
11. The proposed development would enable the parking of caravans. The accompanying site plan illustrates the land has the potential to hold up to 40no, caravans to be laid out within parking bays. This activity, involving caravans likely

parked for extended periods, particularly if positioned close together, would create a significant feature in the landscape in part of the greenbelt which is currently essentially open and as such there would be a spatial impact.

12. Furthermore, the southern portion of the appeal site appears undeveloped, and its use for caravan parking would urbanise this part of the site, regardless of surrounding planting. In this regard, I also find some conflict with one of the purposes of the Green Belt, namely safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. This is notwithstanding that the wider site accommodates a touring caravan site immediately to the east and a building immediately to the north with a lawful use under Class E (commercial, business or service).
13. Consequently, the proposal would conflict with the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy, as defined in the Framework, which is to keep land permanently open and would conflict one the five stated purposes of the Green Belt, which is safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

Other considerations

14. The proposal would enable the appellant to expand their business. In this regard, I note paragraph 88(a) of the Framework, which states that planning decisions should support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas. Paragraphs 85 and 89 also emphasise that decisions should create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand, and adapt. Furthermore, planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may need to be located adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations not well served by public transport.
15. Although the proposal relates to caravan storage rather than directly providing a tourism or leisure facility, there is a link to paragraph 88(c) of the Framework, which requires planning decisions to enable rural tourism and leisure developments that respect the character of the countryside. In addition, Local Plan Policy EC5 supports rural diversification and the development of caravan parks in certain circumstances. The scheme would also provide a safe and secure storage option for caravan owners.

Other Matters

16. The issue of flood risk has been raised by interested parties to the appeal. This matter does not form part of the Council's reason for refusal, and I am dismissing the appeal for other reasons I have not addressed this matter.

Green Belt Balance

17. The proposed development would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt, resulting in a loss of openness and conflicting with one of the purposes of the Green Belt, namely safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. The Framework establishes that substantial weight should be given to this harm.
18. There would be personal benefits to the appellant in supporting the development of their business. It is a rural enterprise with links to the tourism and leisure sector, and I therefore attach moderate weight to this consideration. The proposal would also provide a facility for the storage of caravans for those seeking such services. However, I attach neutral weight to this factor as I have no evidence relating to the demand for this service or the availability of alternative provision in the area.

19. Therefore, the other considerations in this case do not clearly outweigh the harm identified. Consequently, the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development do not exist.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons set out above, the appeal is dismissed.

F P Tinsley

INSPECTOR