



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 December 2025

by N Robinson BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/D0121/W/25/3367798

Land East of Nailsea Wall Farm, Nailsea Wall Lane, Nailsea BS48 4DD

- 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 Khalili (Van-X-Van Ltd) against the decision of North Somerset Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/P/2165/FUL.
 - The development proposed is change of use of agricultural land to tourism use for 21 camping pitches together with associated development of toilet and shower blocks, access tracks, parking, paths and landscaping.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant has submitted documents with the appeal which did not form part of the planning application including: Proposed Habitat Site Plan (drawing Ref VX 01.09.A), External Lighting Strategy (drawing 1648-LB-EX-XX-DR-E-7080-21 Issue P03), Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (Revision 3 Avondale Ecology, June 2025), Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (Revision 4, Avondale Ecology, August 2025) Habitats Regulations Assessment (Avondale Ecology, June 2025) and spreadsheets entitled VX02.02.RevA.Current SPD Greater Horseshoe and VX02.02.RevA.Current SPD Lesser Horseshoe. The Council have been given the opportunity to comment on these documents. On this basis, I do not consider that any party would be unfairly prejudiced, and I therefore have had consideration to these documents in determining this appeal.

Main Issues

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The site comprises a gently undulating field which shares an access with commercial units to the north. The proposal seeks to change the use of the land to tourism use. 21 camping pitches are proposed within the centre of the field, laid out in 3 rows of 7 pitches, each including an area of hard surfacing accessed by a new access track. A path is proposed to link the pitches with the toilet and shower blocks, located on the site's southwestern boundary. 10 additional car parking spaces are proposed. The appellant states that the site will be open for public use,

but it is expected it will predominantly be used by customers of the campervan refurbishment supplier to the north of the site, also operated by the appellant.

5. The North Somerset Council Core Strategy (2017) (CS) policy CS22 seeks to support new, improved and replacement visitor and tourist facilities and accommodation provided specified criteria are met. Policy DM58 of the Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 Development Management Policies (2015) (DMP) states that planning permission will be granted outside of the Green Belt and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty for new or extended touring and static caravan sites and camping sites provided that specified criteria are met. Both policies seek to ensure that proposals do not harm the character of the surrounding area.
6. The site is within the 'Nailsea Farmed Coal Measures' Landscape Character Area (LCA). The Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Guidance (2018) (SPG) states that this LCA is characterised by underlying coal measures geology, small to medium irregular and sinuous fields bounded drystone walls and hedgerows, gently undulating landforms and traditional stone and render farmsteads along narrow rural roads. The SPG states that the character of the area is strong and the LCA is in good condition. The landscape strategy for the LCA is to conserve the intact medieval landscape of pastoral fields and scattered stone farmsteads and restore those minor elements that are declining.
7. The site comprises a field surrounded by mature trees and hedges. There are clear views of the site from the access and from the highways to the southeast and southwest through gaps in the vegetation. Notwithstanding the site's backdrop of commercial uses and the existing areas of hardstanding serving this, the hedge-lined gently undulating field nonetheless displays many of the qualities of the LCA and contributes positively to the landscape character of the area.
8. There is no indication that the proposal would result in adverse impacts on the historic environment, Sites of Special Scientific Interest or local wildlife sites and the Council raised no objections to the scheme's impacts on the operation of the highway network or the living conditions of nearby residents. I see no reason to take a different view. The toilet and shower blocks were in situ at the time of my site visit, and I was able to observe that these structures did not appear obtrusive or prominent in nature: their siting enabled the qualities of the LCA to be read and understood and they did not result in harm to the character of the landscape.
9. The pitches would be tightly laid out in a regimented fashion and, in combination with the areas of hardstanding serving them, would have an intensive appearance. Whilst the campsite would be seen in the context of the commercial development to the north, these areas of hardstanding, along with the presence of the caravans/tents/vans and associated structures and paraphernalia, would change the rural character of this field, appearing stark, prominent and over dominant in the landscape, harmfully detracting from the qualities of the LCA.
10. Landscaping is proposed, including along the access and site's northwestern boundary and there is no indication that the development would be visible from any public rights of way. However, even once this planting is mature, the development would still be visible from beyond the site boundaries, including in views from the site access and in gaps in the vegetation along the highways to the southeast and southwest. Whilst acknowledging that some people travelling on these highways may be focused on the road, this cannot be said for all road users

including passengers, pedestrians and cyclists who would experience the site's altered rural setting and for whom the obtrusive development form would be apparent. The landscaping would thus fail to limit the visual impact of the proposal.

11. Whilst it is stated that the proposed use would be limited to weekends, I note that the appellant is not proposing to restrict the opening times. In any case, the areas of hardstanding and access tracks would remain permanently in situ even when the pitches are not in use, eroding the qualities of the LCA and resulting in appreciable harm to the landscape character of the area throughout the year.
12. In support of the proposal the appellant references development which could be carried out under permitted development (PD) rights under Part 4 Class BC of the General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (the GPDO) which allows for development consisting of the use of any land as a recreational campsite for not more than 60 days in total in any calendar year and the provision of not more than 50 pitches and any moveable structure reasonably necessary for the purposes of the use. I have limited information about whether there would be an intention to carry out this PD right if this appeal were dismissed. However, there would seem a greater than just theoretical possibility that this would take place. Nonetheless, this PD right is time-limited to not more than 60 days a year and there is no indication that it also includes operational development such as the access tracks, parking and areas of hardstanding which I have found to be harmful to the character of the rural landscape. Thus, there is no indication that a development carried out under the aforementioned PD rights would result in the same level of harm to landscape character as the appeal proposal. I afford this PD fallback position limited weight.
13. Drawing on the above the proposal would fail to conserve the rural nature of the landscape. It would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area and would be contrary to those aims of CS policies CS5, CS12 and CS22 and DMP policies DM10, DM32 and DM58 which seek to strictly control development in the open countryside to protect the character of the rural area and prevent unsuitable development and which require that proposals demonstrate sensitivity to local character. Conflict also arises with the SPG which has similar aims.
14. The appellant suggests that the proposal comprises the intensification of an existing business and thus DMP policy DM55 is applicable. This policy requires that the scale of such proposals is not harmful to the character and appearance of the countryside, and the supporting text sets out that, although the Council is committed to sustaining and enhancing the rural economy, it is recognised that this needs to be balanced against protecting the landscape value of the countryside. Given my observations regarding the proposal's impact on the landscape and the character of the area, this policy does not lend support to the proposal.

Other Matters

15. The appeal site is within the influence of the North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designated because of its importance for Greater and Lesser Horseshoe Bats and in which development activities can impact the qualifying features and integrity of the SAC. As I have found harm in relation to the main issue it is not necessary in this instance to undertake an appropriate assessment to consider the effect on the SAC.
16. The proposed development would increase visitor accommodation in the area and would enhance and expand an existing business. It would also increase tourist

spending in the area, providing support for the local economy. I afford moderate weight to the public benefits of the appeal scheme; however, these benefits do not outweigh the harm identified to landscape character.

Conclusion

17. The proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations which indicate that the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

N Robinson

INSPECTOR