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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 November 2025

by **Lewis Condé BSc, MSc, MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 January 2026

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**Appeal Ref: APP/C3105/W/25/3369373**

**Cropredy Lawn, Cropredy Lawn Road, Cropredy, Oxfordshire, OX17 1DR**

- 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 and Mrs P Webber against the decision of Cherwell District Council.
  - The application Ref is 22/03163/F.
  - The development proposed is the change of use of land for the stationing of two glamping pods.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Preliminary Matters

2. Main parties agreed to an amended description of development during the course of the planning application. The Council's decision notice, however, instead reverted to a previously used description in error, albeit the Council has indicated that this would not have affected its overall decision.
3. The description of development in the banner heading above therefore replicates that previously agreed between the main parties (and which was subject to public consultation), as it most accurately reflects the appeal development.
4. Glamping pods were introduced at the site prior to the determination of the planning application and remained present during my site visit. The appeal scheme has therefore been determined on a retrospective basis.

### Main Issue

5. The main issue is whether the appeal site is a suitable location for the appeal proposal having regard to the development plan and national policy.

### Reasons

6. The appeal site comprises the edge of a field forming part of the appellants' wider landholding and sits within a largely open rural landscape. The glamping pods are positioned at some distance from existing buildings, and their rather secluded siting results in a somewhat sporadic pattern of development in this countryside location.
7. Policy SLE 3 of the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 (2015) (the CLPP1) sets out support for proposals for new or improved tourist facilities in sustainable locations, where they accord with other policies in the plan. This is broadly consistent with Paragraph 88 of the Framework that, amongst other matters, provides support for

sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside.

8. Meanwhile, Policies SLE4 and ESD1 of the CLPP1, together amongst other matters, aim to focus growth in the most sustainable locations, whereby the need to travel is reduced, whilst also encouraging sustainable travel options.
9. On my site visit, I observed that the nearest village of Cropredy, is located a significant distance from the appeal site (over a kilometre to the edge of the village). The village contains a small range of facilities and services that visitors to the proposed development may utilise. This includes two public houses, a café, a local shop/post office, churches, a bus service, as well as access to the Oxford Canal route. Meanwhile, it was evident that other facilities or services nearby to the site were highly limited.
10. Notwithstanding that Cropredy, may have an interesting history, an annual festival, and that occupants would only be residing in the pods on a temporary basis, it still likely that visitors to the appeal site would seek access to a wider range of services and facilities. For example, shops for wider provisions and visitor attractions. Therefore, it is likely that visitors to the site would need to travel further afield to accommodate additional needs or activities.
11. Furthermore, even the limited facilities available in Cropredy are not easily accessible from the site by sustainable modes of transport. This is due to the distances involved and the nature of the surrounding road network, which consists predominantly of unlit rural roads without dedicated pavements. Indeed I found the character of the roads near to the appeal site would not encourage pedestrian or cyclist use.
12. A public right of way passes close to the appeal site and could be used for part of the journey to Cropredy. However, the route is largely exposed, requires crossing agricultural fields with uneven ground conditions, and is unlit.
13. The absence of pavements and lighting may not deter all persons from walking or cycling to facilities in the wider area. Indeed, the appellants have provided evidence in the form of visitor reviews that indicate the village was in walking distance. Nevertheless, I still consider the physical context of the routes to the nearest villages would be a hinderance that would likely deter visitors of the proposal from regularly utilising sustainable means of transport, especially during adverse weather or periods of darkness.
14. Likewise, I am not persuaded that the site's proximity to the Oxford Canal, or the physical characteristics of the towpath and its distance from key destinations, would make it a route that visitors would regularly choose to walk or cycle to access facilities and services.
15. The inclusion of a travel plan including the provision of electric bicycles for guest use, to be secured through the submitted unilateral undertaking (UU), is commendable. Nonetheless, given the site context described above, I am not convinced that these measures would result in a significant proportion of future occupants travelling to and from the site by sustainable modes.
16. Similarly, I am not persuaded that the proposed collection and return service for guests arriving at Banbury Railway Station or Banbury Bus Station would attract

significant use, owing to the likely inconvenience for both guests and the appellants. Equally, the availability of food delivery services would not necessarily lead to any meaningful reduction in the travel demands associated with the development. In my view, the need to offer many of the measures contained within the UU further underlines the inherently unsuitable location of the appeal site.

17. Consequently, I consider that future visitors are likely to be heavily reliant on the use of private vehicles to access the site and for wider travel requirements. This would be the least sustainable travel option.
18. The Framework recognises that the potential for alternative means of transport in rural areas is often limited. However, in this case, I find the site's characteristics would not suitably encourage future visitors to use alternative modes of transport or provide genuine, usable, or practical alternative modes.
19. Glamping is an activity generally associated with the countryside and the appeal scheme may enable guests to immerse themselves in a quiet rural retreat and appreciate the rural surroundings. Still, such rural features are common throughout the countryside and do not justify the degree of seclusion that the appeal site would provide.
20. Although the use of private vehicles by guests cannot be fully controlled regardless of where tourist accommodation is located, the surrounding context of a site still plays an important role in encouraging more sustainable travel choices.
21. Paragraphs 88 and 89 of the Framework also express support for the rural economy, including through the diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural enterprises. Similarly, the Local Plan—most notably Strategic Objective 29—seeks to encourage diversification within the rural economy. However, such support is not unconditional and must be weighed carefully against the wider planning policy context.
22. The appellants have provided a statutory declaration that sets out details of the scale of their landholding and previous activities at Cropredy Lawn, including the running of racehorse training facilities and a bed and breakfast. Additionally, the need for the appeal proposal as a form of farm diversification has also been expressed within a letter from the appellants' longstanding financial advisor.
23. Notwithstanding the submitted evidence, I have been provided with very limited information regarding the operation of the appellants' existing rural enterprise, including its financial circumstances, the detailed extent of previous diversification undertaken, or the income generated by the appeal proposal. Consequently, even if I were to regard the scheme as a form of farm diversification, the limited details before me mean that this consideration can attract only modest weight and does not outweigh my earlier concerns regarding the site's location.
24. Bringing the above together, I find that the appeal site is not a suitable location for the appeal proposal when assessed against the development plan and national policy. For the reasons outlined, the appeal scheme conflicts with Local Plan Policy SLE3, SLE4 and ESD1. It also conflicts with Saved Policy C8 of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996, which seeks to resist sporadic development in the countryside.

## **Other Matters**

25. In reaching the above findings I have considered the previous appeal decisions referenced by main parties. These decisions though relate to alternative sites in other parts of the District or country, whereby the precise site contexts will differ to that before me. The appeal scheme has been determined on its own merits.
26. The development may not be significant in scale, but it remains contrary to the above development plan policies.
27. The appeal scheme is likely to provide socio-economic benefits to the local community, arising from tourism and visitor spend. Whilst no precise quantification of these benefits have been outlined by the appellants, given the scale of the development, they are likely to be modest in nature.
28. The appellants have previously operated a bed and breakfast from their home at Cropredy Lawn. I have extremely limited details of that operation though, including any robust evidence to allow an appropriate comparison of the likely trip generations of that previous use compared to the appeal scheme.
29. In reaching my decision, compliance with other development plan policies, for example in respect of flood risk, highway safety or the character and appearance of the area, amount to neutral matters.

## **Conclusion**

30. The proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the Framework's provisions, that outweigh this finding. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

*Lewis Condé*

INSPECTOR