



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 January 2026

by Hannah Guest BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/C3430/W/25/3374020

**Fair Haven, Shaw Hall Lane, Coven Heath, Wolverhampton, Staffordshire
WV10 7HE**

- 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 Mrs Anne-Marie Cunningham against the decision of South Staffordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/000789/FUL.
 - The development proposed is re-positioning of 1 caravan and extension to existing dayroom.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for re-positioning of 1 caravan and extension to existing dayroom at Fair Haven, Shaw Hall Lane, Coven Heath, Wolverhampton WV10 7HE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24/000789/FUL, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans, Drawing Nos: 71408:1002; 71408:1003.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to any relevant development plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework); and
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area;

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development

3. The appeal site is an established gypsy and traveller site. It comprises 4 permanent pitches, each containing a static caravan, and ancillary development, including a shared dayroom.
4. Policy GB1 of the South Staffordshire Council Core Strategy (2012) (Core Strategy) permits development acceptable within the terms of national planning policy set out in the Framework where it meets specific criteria. This includes limited extension(s) of an existing building where the extension(s) are not

disproportionate to the size of the original building. It advises that guidance in these matters will be contained in the Green Belt and Open Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

5. While this approach is broadly consistent with Paragraph 154c) of the Framework, Policy GB1 of the Core Strategy is not wholly consistent with national policy. This is because it does not reflect the full range of development that may be regarded as not inappropriate within the Green Belt under Paragraphs 154 and 155 of the Framework, nor does it acknowledge the potential for very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development. As the Framework is more up to date than the Core Strategy, I give greater weight to the policies in the Framework in this regard and have assessed the appeal on this basis.
6. The SPD builds on the approach set out at Policy GB1 of the Core Strategy. It advises that anything above a 20-40% increase in the floor area of the original building would likely amount to a disproportionate addition. A range is considered appropriate as it allows for the flexibility in the application of policy. All proposals are therefore considered on the individual merits of the case.
7. The proposed extension would result in an increase of approximately 121% of the floor area of the original dayroom, which would significantly exceed the 20-40% range set out in the SPD. This is not disputed by the appellant. It would be a substantial addition, which would more than double the size of the original dayroom. It would therefore result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building and would conflict with Policy GB1 of the Core Strategy and Paragraph 154c) of the Framework.
8. Notwithstanding this, the appellant considers the proposed extension would comply with Paragraph 154g) of the Framework, as it would constitute partial redevelopment of previously developed land. There is no dispute between the parties that the appeal site comprises previously developed land. However, the term “partial redevelopment” implies a material change to the land or its use, such as that arising in the appeal decision¹ cited by the appellant, or the erection of new buildings. In this instance, no change of use to either the land or the building is proposed. The dayroom already forms an integral part of the established residential traveller site. Its extension would therefore amount to an enlargement of an existing structure rather than redevelopment.
9. Turning to Paragraph 155 of the Framework, there is no dispute between the parties that the proposal would fulfil criterion (a). As such, it would not compromise the objectives of the Green Belt designation and would therefore accord with Policy H6 of the Core Strategy in this regard.
10. In respect of criterion (b), the extension is required to accommodate the appellant’s extended family, whose numbers have increased since the existing dayroom was constructed. This is not disputed by the Council. The extension would provide a larger communal space to enable the family to spend time together, including on special occasions. It would also provide an education room for the home-schooled children, a playroom for the younger children, utility and washroom facilities, and an additional toilet and shower, together with a storeroom.

¹ Appeal Reference: APP/E3715/W/25/3359149

11. Both parties refer to correspondence from the Gypsy, Romany and Traveller Elective Home Education Officer at Staffordshire Council, which supports the proposal on the basis that it would provide a suitable education room. Although no substantive evidence has been submitted to demonstrate a specific need for each of the remaining rooms, the facilities proposed are typical of, and integral to, an amenity building serving a traveller site.
12. While the proposal represents a substantial addition to the original building, this is relative to the modest size of the existing dayroom, and the dimensions of the proposed rooms do not appear excessive for their intended purposes. In these circumstances, individual dayrooms would be unsuitable as they could not reasonably accommodate the extended family as a single unit. There is no evidence before me to indicate that alternative sites exist which could provide an amenity building of an appropriate size. Given the traditional lifestyle and accommodation needs of the traveller community, I am satisfied that the needs the extension is intended to address could not practicably be met elsewhere. I am therefore of the view that there is a demonstrable unmet need for the proposal.
13. In terms of criterion (c), I acknowledge that the appeal site is in a rural area where development would not ordinarily be directed in accordance with the Spatial Strategy set out in Core Policy 1 of the Core Strategy.
14. Nevertheless, the proposal would not result in an increase in the number of pitches or bedrooms on the appeal site. Other than occasional visiting family members, the intended users of the extension already reside on the appeal site and in proximity to the existing dayroom. Consequently, any additional vehicle movements arising from the development would be minimal.
15. The proposal comprises an extension to an existing dayroom within an established traveller site. It would provide the occupants with necessary additional facilities and, in doing so, would limit the need to travel. There is no substantive evidence before me to indicate that the site, or the proposal, would conflict with the criteria set out in Paragraph 13 of the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2024). Furthermore, any effects on the transport network or on highway safety would be negligible. The proposal therefore accords with Paragraphs 110 and 115 of the Framework. Taking these matters together, I conclude that the development would be in a sustainable location for the purposes of Paragraph 155 of the Framework.
16. For the reasons above, the proposal would comply with the criteria set out at Paragraph 155 of the Framework and would therefore not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Given this, and for the reasons set out above, I afford the conflict with Policy GB1 of the Core Strategy limited weight.
17. Given the proposed extension would not be inappropriate development, in this case, there is no need for me to consider its impact on openness.

Character and appearance

18. The proposal includes replacing the timber cladding on the existing dayroom with brick, so that the extended dayroom would appear entirely brick built. On my visit, I observed that brick is not an uncommon material within the immediate locality, with nearby houses and front boundary walls constructed in brick. In addition, there is a reasonably large brick building on the adjoining site. Therefore, while timber cladding can often be associated with rural character, in this context the use of

brick would not appear incongruous. Given the surrounding built form, the proposed brick finish would integrate satisfactorily and would not harm the character or appearance of the area.

19. Despite not being a subservient addition, the proposed extension would follow the height and roof form of the existing dayroom, appearing as a unified part of the building. It would sit between the existing dayroom and a static caravan. Consequently, in views from the canal towpath and adjoining land it would assimilate with the established built form of the caravans. Owing to its single-storey height, the extended dayroom would be largely screened and visually softened in views from the highway by the boundary hedge running along Shaw Hall Lane, which would likely remain in its current form for reasons of privacy.
20. The repositioned caravan, although located at the end of the row of static caravans, would nonetheless read as an integral component of the wider traveller site. It would be well-contained within the existing layout and would be largely screened on its remaining sides by the mature trees and hedgerows that define the boundaries along Shaw Hall Lane and with the adjoining site.
21. For these reasons, neither the extended dayroom or repositioned caravan would appear incongruous or detrimentally impact the visual amenity of the landscape. Accordingly, the proposal would comply with Policies EQ4 and EQ11 of the Core Strategy, which seek to ensure that proposals respect local character and distinctiveness including the intrinsic rural character of the landscape. It would also accord with Policy H6 of the Core Strategy in this regard.

Conditions

22. In addition to the standard time limit, a condition specifying the approved plans is necessary for reasons of certainty.
23. The Council has suggested a condition requiring the external materials of the proposed extension to match the timber cladding of the existing dayroom, and a further condition to prevent the dayroom being used as a separate, self-contained unit of accommodation. However, neither condition is necessary. As set out above, the proposed brick external finish would not cause harm to the character or appearance of the area. Furthermore, should the extended dayroom be used in a manner falling outside the scope of this permission, a further grant of planning permission would be required. Failure to secure such permission would leave the development at risk of enforcement action.

Conclusion

24. I have found the proposed extension would accord with the criteria set out at Paragraph 155 of the Framework and would therefore not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Furthermore, it would not result in any harm to the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, the proposal would not conflict with the development plan taken as a whole.
25. Having had regard to all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed, subject to the conditions set out above.

Hannah Guest INSPECTOR