



Penderfyniad ar yr Apêl

Ymweliad â safle a wnaed ar 30/03/22

gan **P J Davies BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI**

Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru

Dyddiad: 11/05/2022

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30/03/22

by **P J Davies BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Date: 11/05/2022

Appeal Ref: CAS-01538-P5L2M2

Site address: Isfryn, Pontyglasier, Crymych, Pembrokeshire SA41 3SA

The Welsh Ministers have transferred the authority to decide this appeal to me as the appointed Inspector.

- 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 Mrs Lucie Parkes against the decision of Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority.
 - The development proposed is change of use of stables to tourist accommodation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. This is whether the proposal complies with planning policies relating to the countryside and the conversion of buildings.

Reasons

3. The appeal site lies within a small, isolated group of dwellings and farms, outside any defined settlement and in the open countryside for the purpose of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan 2 (LDP). The surrounding area has attractive rural qualities derived from the informal and sporadic nature of existing development, and the prevalence of hedges and trees along a rural country lane. The proposal relates to a stable block that is set back off the lane within the curtilage of an existing dwelling / smallholding, and close to a glamping business also owned by the appellant. The stable is constructed from roughcast render blockwork and timber with a corrugated metal sheet roof.
4. LDP Policy 7 contains several criteria that control development outside identified centres. Criterion c) says that the conversion of an appropriate building to a range of uses will be acceptable in principle, with market housing being given priority in residential conversions. Paragraph 4.45 of the reasoned justification for Policy 7 (with reference to Technical Advice Note 23 'Economic Development') clarifies that existing rural buildings are generally those with a form, bulk and general design in keeping with their surroundings. In the National Park, these are considered to be those that make a positive contribution to

the character of the area through their intrinsic architectural merit or their setting in the landscape. Factors to consider include their interest and charm arising from their functional requirement, layout and proportions, type of building materials used, and the display of local building methods and skills. In this case, the appeal building is a nondescript purpose-built stable block of little architectural merit. The materials and building methods used in its construction are modern and its functional requirement relates to an ancillary purpose for the existing smallholding and dwelling, rather than any traditional rural or community function, such as agriculture or religion. Although well maintained and having limited visual impact, in essence, the building appears as a contemporary semi-domestic adjunct to the existing dwelling and smallholding. In the context of LDP Policy 7 it does not contribute positively to the character of the area, and neither is it an appropriate building within the meaning of the policy.

5. I acknowledge that the simple form and appearance of the building would be retained, and that the small-scale nature of the proposal would not result in any adverse effects on the wider special qualities of the National Park. I also accept that the proposal would be secluded and well-screened. However, Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (PPW) is clear that in line with sustainable development and national planning principles, the countryside must be conserved, and wherever possible, enhanced for the sake of its ecological, geological, physiographic, historical, archaeological, cultural and agricultural value and for its landscape and natural resources (paragraph 3.38). It is also clear that new building in the open countryside away from existing settlements must continue to be strictly controlled (paragraph 3.60). LDP Policy 7 is consistent with these objectives.
6. I understand that the proposal is made in the context of the existing tourism business situated in the meadow to the north of the appeal site, and I have had regard to the advice in PPW insofar as the economic advantages of tourism are concerned. However, the proposal would make only a modest contribution to the rural economy which would not be outweighed by the fundamental conflict with PPW and LDP Policy 7.
7. Taking all of the above into consideration, I conclude that the proposal would fail to comply with planning policies relating to the countryside and the conversion of buildings.

Other Matters

8. There is some discussion as to the suitability of the appeal site for market housing in the context of LDP Policies 7 and 40. These prioritise the re-use of buildings for such purposes over self-catering to assist with the delivery of affordable housing. Nonetheless, as I have found that the proposal would not relate to the conversion of an appropriate building, it is not necessary for me to consider this any further.
9. One of the Authority's reasons for refusal relates to biodiversity, specifically the effects on bats due to insufficient survey material. A Bat Activity Survey Report carried out in June and July 2021 was submitted with the appeal. This indicates that the appeal building is not a bat roost. The proposal would therefore be unlikely to have an adverse impact on bats and in the absence of any other evidence to the contrary, this is not a determining issue in this appeal.
10. My attention is drawn to other planning consents for proposals considered under LDP Policy 7c) that relate to a corrugated iron garage and a domestic garage. However, it would be rare for the circumstances of different buildings in different locations to be exactly the same, and I have therefore determined this appeal in its specific context and on its own merits.

Conclusions

11. For the above reasons, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.
12. In reaching my decision, I have taken into account the requirements of sections 3 and 5 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. I consider that this decision is in accordance with the Act's sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers' well-being objectives.

P J Davies

Inspector