

Change of Use of Land to Caravan Storage Compound at the Lodge Red Hall Lane, Halmer End. Mr Alan Brown

**Application Number:** 12/00042/COU

**LPA's Decision:** Refused under delegated powers on 3 April 2012

**Appeal Decision:** Appeal dismissed

**Date of Appeal Decision:** 4 December 2012

The full text of the appeal decision is available to view on the Council's website (as an associated document to application 12/00042/COU) and the following is only a brief summary.

The Inspector considered the main issue to be:

- (i) whether the development constitutes inappropriate development for the purposes of development plan policy and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- (ii) the effect of the proposed development on the openness of the Green Belt and the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area; and
- (iii) if the development does constitute inappropriate development whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development

In **dismissing** the appeal, the Inspector made the following comments:

- The proposal should be regarded as inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- The proposed use itself is likely to permanently reduce the openness of the Green Belt, both visually and in terms of the presence of structures. He considered it would be contrary to one of the purposes of including land in the Green Belt - safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Given the size, bulk and the light colour of most modern caravans, the introduction of parked caravans, despite their semi permanence, would have a detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- Given the massing, scale and visual appearance of the parked caravans and the associated equipment, he considered they would not merge into the existing environment. They would be much more visible in the landscape.
- The landscape harm could not be adequately mitigated against even with a substantial and appropriate landscaping scheme around the site, given this would take a considerable time to establish and even when established the site would become exposed during the winter months when there is no or reduced leaf cover. The height of any planting would be unlikely to hide the caravans from view. They would be visible to those who use Red Hall Lane and also to those using the footpath which runs from the Lane past the site to the fields beyond.
- He accepted that the proposal would help to diversify the existing business and support economic development and tourism in a rural area and noted that the proposal has the support of the Parish Council and some local people. However, he attached limited weight to these factors. Although they are valid points in support of the proposal they are not unique and could be easily argued and repeated at a number of similar sites in the Green Belt.
- The proposal involves inappropriate development within the Green Belt and is contrary to the development plan and national guidance. He attached substantial weight to the harm arising from inappropriateness and to the adverse impact which would arise in terms of openness of the Green Belt. There would also be additional harm arising from the impact on the countryside and landscape character of the area. The onus rests with the Appellant to establish that there are very special circumstances which justify the grant of planning permission.
- In this case the total weight of the other considerations advanced by the Appellant did not outweigh the totality of the harm. The Appellant has therefore failed to establish very special circumstances.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the decision be noted.**