
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 November 2021

by M Bale BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/L1765/W/21/3275387

Adams Farm Cottage, Southend Lane, Soberton SO32 3QB

- 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 Limberline Tyres Ltd & Chambers Southern Properties Ltd against the decision of Winchester City Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00796/FUL, dated 16 April 2020, was refused by notice dated 15 March 2021.
 - The development proposed is erection of stable building; equestrian use of land; provision of gallop beside north boundary; and alternative entrance and access drive via Ingoldfield Lane.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The site is in a rural area, with a scattering of dwellings and other buildings. Ingoldfield Lane, as it passes the site, is enclosed by high hedges limiting views into and across the site, and of the South Downs National Park that lies beyond. However, glimpsed views of the site's open appearance are available through the hedges such that from the lanes, it is clearly associated with undeveloped countryside. The adjoining vehicle repair workshop and associated paraphernalia does not intrude heavily into this, other than immediately outside its own access.
4. A number of the surrounding fields have been divided by post and rail fences and there is evidence of other small timber-clad buildings. Thus, the appearance of the proposed building would be characteristic of many others in the vicinity. There is evidence of other equestrian activity nearby, but there is not a particular concentration within the immediate locality or with strong visual connection to the site, so there would not be any obvious harmful cumulative effects.
5. The proposed building, however, would be sited away from adjoining buildings and established landscape features. While not highly visible, this siting would fail to respect the landscape pattern or minimise visual impact. Only filtered views are likely to be available through the boundary hedgerows, and there would be new screening along the access, but it would nevertheless appear isolated as ad hoc development within the landscape. Coupled with this, the

- wide tarmac entrance leading to a curved drive would have a domestic appearance causing a suburbanising effect on the very rural landscape.
6. While Policy DM12 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 2 2017 (LP) sets a presumption in favour of horse-related development, that is subject to detailed criteria requiring respect for the existing landscape pattern and avoiding scattered development. For the above reasons, the proposal would conflict with these aims, set out in criteria (ii) and (iii) of the Policy.
 7. I note the appellant's criticism of the Council's reason for refusal on the basis of an alleged lack of precision, and that of the lack of reference to the Soberton and Newtown Village Design Statement, and Equestrian Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in the officers report. However, the Council's reasons for refusal have been substantiated in their evidence, including the comments of the Landscape Officer. There is no particular evidence that Council's detailed analysis of the SPD would have led to a different conclusion.
 8. It may also be that no conflict was alleged with a number of key policies of the development plan, including Policy CP19 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy 2013 (CS) relating to development affecting the landscape and setting of the South Downs National Park. However, for the reasons given, I find that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with those aims of LP Policies DM12, DM15, DM16, DM17 and DM23, and CS Policy CP20 that seek to protect landscape characteristics, rural character, local distinctiveness and ensure that development responds positively to its local environment.
 9. I, therefore, conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Bale

INSPECTOR