



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 January 2023

by J D Clark BA (Hons) DpTRP MCD DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/N2345/W/22/3307766

Land adjacent to Eaves Green Lane, Goosnargh, Preston, PR3 2FE

- 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 Mr Tom Cowell against the decision of Preston City Council.
 - The application Ref 06/2022/0248, dated 23 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 12 April 2022.
 - The development proposed is building to form cover over 1no. equestrian menage approved under App ref:- 06/2019/1043 Resubmission of application 06/2021/0283.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Planning permission has been granted on the appeal site for a building to form livery stables with associated hardstanding; an agricultural building for the storage of animal feed; an equestrian menage with associated lighting; hard surfacing to form an extension to an existing access; and post and rail fencing to form boundary treatment with gates and associated landscaping¹. The development appears to have been implemented in part but the menage has not yet been constructed. The proposed building would cover the menage to create an all-weather equestrian arena.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The character of the area is that of open countryside interspersed with groupings of buildings. The appeal site comprises an area of land on the western side of Eaves Green Lane, close to a track that includes a public footpath/bridleway. There is a group of buildings further away to the north of the appeal site and another grouping of buildings to the south-east of the site on the other side of Eaves Green Lane. The proposed building would be erected on the western side of the appeal site, close to open fields, with the stables and access to Eaves Green Lane to the east.
5. The proposed building would be considerably larger than the building currently under construction and shown on the submitted plans. Also, whilst it would physically relate to the new equestrian facility being constructed through the

¹ Planning Application Ref: 06/2019/1043.

approved planning application, it would adjoin open fields to the west and therefore appear visually dominant in the landscape and from Eaves Green Lane and the adjacent footpath/bridleway. Therefore, although the building would occupy the space that would be taken up by the menage, it would represent an extension of the built form closer to open countryside and visibly prominent from the road and footpath/bridleway.

6. I note that the building would be no larger than the size that is required by the British Horse Society and would be commensurate with the footprint of the approved menage. It would also be constructed in a mix of timber and metal cladding aimed to minimise its impact in the landscape. However, the proposal would be a very large building in the countryside, close to open fields and would appear very prominent and intrusive in the countryside.
7. Consequently, the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. As such this would be contrary to the aims of Policy 13 of the Core Strategy² which, whilst recognising the role that equestrian facilities amongst other things, plays in the rural economy, states that such development must be managed sensitively so as to protect the open aspects of the countryside and minimise the impact on the landscape. The policy therefore directs such proposals to the urban fringe. Furthermore, the proposal would be contrary to Core Strategy Policies 17 and 21 and Local Plan³ Policy EN9 in that it would harm the character and appearance of the local area and fail to integrate into the landscape.

Other Matters

8. The Council states that the planning approval for the menage and stables referred to above was considered as a farm diversification enterprise and therefore satisfied the requirements of the Council's SPD for Rural Development⁴. The proposed building would enable the menage to be available all year round and used for schooling which the appellant claims would ensure the long term attractiveness and viability of the business. However, from the evidence before me the approved scheme was considered a viable form of farm diversification as required by the SPD. In any event, no compelling evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that the equestrian business, as a form of farm diversification, can only be viable with an indoor riding arena or covered menage.

Conclusion

9. The proposed development conflicts with the development plan when considered as a whole and there are no material considerations, either individually or in combination, that outweighs the identified harm and associated development plan conflict.
10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J D Clark

INSPECTOR

² Central Lancashire Adopted Core Strategy Local Development Framework, July 2012.

³ Preston Local Plan 2012-26 Site Allocations & Development Management Policies, Adopted 2 July 2015.

⁴ Central Lancashire Rural Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Final Version October 2012.