



Appeal Decision

Hearing (Virtual) held on 16 May 2023

Site visit made on 17 May 2023

by William Cooper BA (Hons) MA CMLI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 June 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/J3720/W/23/3316514

Old Pastures Farm, Stratford Road, Hampton Lucy, Warwick CV35 8BQ

- 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 Mr N Mauro, Valefresco Ltd against the decision of Stratford-on-Avon District Council.
 - The application Ref: 21/02292/FUL, dated 25 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 12 August 2022.
 - The development proposed is the erection of 119,682sqm of horticultural polytunnels for protected cropping of salad and Chinese vegetables; installation of an attenuation basin for the collection of surface water run-off and associated irrigation purposes; and all associated landscaping works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for an award of costs was made by Mr N Mauro, Valefresco Ltd against Stratford-on-Avon District Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. The description in the banner heading above is taken from the appeal form and decision notice in the interests of precision.
4. As the proposal relates to the setting of listed buildings and conservation areas, I have had special regard to sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
5. The emerging Hampton Lucy Neighbourhood Development Plan is yet to be examined, finalised and adopted, and so carries limited weight. For the purposes of this decision, I refer to relevant policies of the adopted Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy 2011 to 2031 (CS) which is part of the local development plan.

Main Issues

6. The main issues in this case are:
 - Whether the proposal would a) preserve the setting of: the Grade I listed building Charlecote Park and its Grade II* listed Registered Park and Garden (the RPG), the Grade I listed building St Peter Ad Vincula church,

the Grade II* listed buildings Alveston House and Hampton Lucy House, and the Charlecote and Hampton Lucy Conservation Area; and b) preserve the significance of the Enclosed Romano-British farmsteads 255m north-west of Old Pasture Farm Scheduled Monument; and

- The effect of the proposal on local landscape character.

Reasons

Heritage assets

7. The appeal site is a field located within the Old Pastures Farm (the farm), and its access. It sits within an area of relatively open arable farmland that gently slopes towards the meandering River Avon. Hedging stretches along much of three sides of the appeal site's boundary, including some hedgerow trees. The appeal site is adjacent to a public footpath that runs through the farm, from Hampton Lucy village to the riverbank towards the farm's south-western end. Some existing polytunnels used for growing crops are situated on the other side of the footpath from the northern boundary of the appeal site. A cluster of farm buildings including cold store, offices and packing shed, and seasonal workers' accommodation adjoins the north-western corner of the appeal site. Also, a reservoir with raised, black liner-clad banks is situated to the west of the site.
8. Most of the designated heritage assets identified in the first main issue are located within the Charlecote and Hampton Lucy Conservation Area (CA), which is beyond the appeal site, to the east. The Alveston House listed building is situated within the Alveston Conservation Area, which is some distance to the west of the appeal site. The south-eastern corner of the appeal site lies within around 50m of an area of land, shaped approximately like a leg of lamb, that forms the westernmost extent of the Charlecote Park RPG. Various other heritage assets under the first main issue are located within around 1km of the appeal site and, apart from the SM, also beyond the farm.
9. The Charlecote and Hampton Lucy Conservation Area (the CA) covers older parts of Hampton Lucy village and the RPG, with a stretch of the River Avon curving through it. Among the CA's heritage assets are the Grade I listed building Charlecote Park and its Grade II* listed RPG, the Grade I listed building St Peter Ad Vincula and the Grade II* listed Hampton Lucy House.
10. The Charlecote Park listed building and its footpath network are situated at the corner of the curve of the River Avon. The combined footprint of these building and footpath elements resembles a crossbow shape. The approximately east-to-west axis that starts with the long path to the front door of the country house reads on plan as the bolt of the crossbow configuration. This axis continues from the dining room windows of the house across a stretch of the RPG's parkland on the other side of the river, down the tree-lined West Avenue of trees, and to river valley countryside landscape beyond. This siting and configuration powerfully articulate the strong interrelationship between Charlecote Park house, its location at a 'fulcrum' point on the River Avon, and the RPG.
11. The RPG comprises a deer park and formal gardens that were landscaped in the eighteenth century by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, with formal gardens and pleasure grounds dating from the nineteenth century located around Charlecote

Park house. Within the RPG there are, among other things tranquil views of open lawned areas, lines and groups of trees, and the rivers Avon and Dene. Also, the listed Park bridge, West Lodge and West Gate catch the eye within the West Park part of the RPG.

12. Various views across the RPG lead on to more distant views across the countryside situated to the west. Among these is a principal vista down the tree-lined West Avenue views that leads to the countryside beyond. This vista culminates in the Welcombe Hills and their landmark Victorian stone Obelisk¹, in the distance. As indicated by the Parkland Management Plan for Charlecote Park, this vista is a clever trompe-l'oeil which brings a seemingly infinite quality to the avenue. This important vista is noticeable from the dining room of Charlecote Park house, the parterre in front of it and from the avenue itself. The line of this vista crosses the southern part of the appeal site.
13. Charlecote Park is a large country house that dates from the sixteenth century, and was restored and extended in the nineteenth century. It has red and blue brick walls with ashlar dressing and tile roofing. Its wealth of ornate historic architectural detailing includes the following. Across a combination of elevations are turrets with ogival caps, quoins, coped gables with finials, octagonal chimney stacks, balustrades, mullioned and transomed windows, pilasters and entablature, animal carvings and motifs of the Lucy family arms. Also, the country house's opulent interior includes fine ceiling plasterwork, rich wood panelling, marble fireplaces, and wall and ceiling paintings. These elements contribute to the architectural splendour and charisma that help make the Grade I listed Charlecote Park country house one of the best examples of nineteenth century Elizabethan Revival style.
14. Also, the servants' quarters and nursery help illustrate the historic functionality of Charlecote Park house. And the operation of Charlecote Park by the National Trust as a historic property open to visitors helps facilitate appreciation by substantial numbers of the public of its history, including its association with the Lucy family, over around half a millennium.
15. Consequently, the Charlecote Park listed house and its RPG embody evidential, historical and aesthetic values. The above contributes to both the special interest of this listed building and its RPG, and the significance of the wider Charlecote and Hampton Lucy CA.
16. The St Peter Ad Vincula listed building is a limestone walled church with slate and lead roofing. Dating from the early nineteenth century, it was designed by distinguished church architects Rickman and Hutchinson. Its rich Gothic style includes crenellated parapets, buttresses with crocketed pinnacles and much carving. Its west entrance has a deep gabled portal, with stiff-leaf carving and the Lucy family arms. The perimeter trees and high brick southern boundary wall of its churchyard, together with its cul-de-sac location off Church Street contribute to the relatively secluded, leafy character of its setting within Hampton Lucy village.
17. The Hampton Lucy House listed building is a Georgian former rectory, once the residence of the Reverend John Lucy, that dates from the eighteenth century with nineteenth century additions. Now a house, it has two storeys plus attic, brick walls with ashlar dressings, and a hipped tile roof with brick stacks. It

¹ The Grade II listed Obelisk approximately 150 metres west of Welcombe Bank Farm.

also has a balustraded parapet and central segmental-headed panel with the Lucy Arms.

18. Beyond the Charlecote and Hampton Lucy CA, the Alveston House listed building is situated around 1km to the west of the appeal site, in the Alveston Conservation Area. It is set within spacious, verdant grounds that adjoin the River Avon. It is a two-storey Restoration country house with attic and basement, dating from the seventeenth century, with eighteenth century alterations. It has brick walls with ashlar dressings, a Doric porch with frieze, sash windows and a hipped tile roof.
19. The Enclosed Romano-British farmsteads 255m north-west of Old Pasture Farm Scheduled Monument (the SM) is located in fields on the other side of the public footpath on the farm from the appeal site. Aerial photographs indicate a complex series of rectangular enclosures with an adjacent track way, paddocks and other ancillary structures and ditched features, buried in the fields.
20. In reaching my findings on special interest, I have also had regard to the following. Evidence to indicate recreational use of countryside west of the RPG by residents of guests of Charlecote Park in the eighteenth century is limited. And in any case, such focus apparently shifted to other areas of Charlecote in the nineteenth century². As such, I do not consider this factor to be part of the special interest of the RPG, insofar as relates to this appeal case.
21. For the St Peter Ad Vincula, Hampton Lucy House and Alveston House listed buildings, there is not a demonstrably integral landscape design intent to connect the heritage asset with the appeal site in historic interest terms, that is comparable with Charlecote Park's West Avenue vista. Also, over more recent years the appeal site's host farm has been evolving as a modern arable farming operation. This evolution has included introduction of an area of polytunnels and a reservoir, some more modern farm buildings and accommodation, and continued use of larger scale field sizes than was historically so prior to field rationalisation. As such, while the host farm is mainly a relatively visually unobtrusive patchwork of arable fields, its resemblance to 'old pastures' is lessened. In this respect, the legibility of the associative historic relationship between Old Pastures Farm and the Lucy estate is reduced.
22. Also, the historic architectural charisma of the St Peter Ad Vincula, Hampton Lucy House and Alveston House listed buildings draws the eye to them within their more immediate environs. Moreover, landscape elements including intervening vegetation, landform and separation gaps limit intervisibility between a) St Peter Ad Vincula, Hampton Lucy House and Alveston House listed buildings, and Charlecote Park listed building and RPG, and b) the St Peter Ad Vincula, Hampton Lucy House and Alveston House listed buildings, and the appeal site. And while eye-catching from the RPG, the tower of St Peter's church is located around 90 degrees round from the direction of the appeal site, and so the two are not readily visually connected.
23. Given this combination of factors, I cannot agree that the special interest of the St Peter Ad Vincula, Hampton Lucy House and Alveston House listed buildings, insofar as relates to this appeal, includes a) intervisibility with the Charlecote

² As set out in the letter from National Trust Planning Adviser Chris Lambart to the Council, dated 12 November 2021.

Park listed building and RPG, and b) views of countryside to the west of Charlecote Park listed building and RPG.

24. Taking the above together, I consider the special interest of the designated heritage assets under the first main issue, insofar as relates to this appeal, to be as follows. The special interest of the RPG is primarily associated with the legibility of its historic designed landscape from formal layout to the more informal look of Capability Brown's eighteenth century design, through to the renewed nineteenth century emphasis on formality. From within the RPG, this includes suitably harmonious views of countryside beyond it, to the west.
25. The special interest of the Charlecote Park listed building is primarily associated with the legibility of its country house architecture and identity, which evolved from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. Moreover, the special interest of both the Charlecote Park RPG and listed country house includes the articulation of the house and grounds' principal axial thrust. This is noticeable in the linear vista along West Avenue, that leads to countryside beyond, as viewed from the parterre, the avenue and the country house's adjacent dining room, through its windows.
26. The special interest of the St Peter Ad Vincula listed church is primarily associated with the legibility of its nineteenth century Gothic village church architecture. The special interest of the Hampton Lucy House listed building is primarily associated with the legibility of its Georgian rectory architecture and its proximate relationship to the St Peter Ad Vincula church. Furthermore, I consider the significance of the Charlecote and Hampton Lucy CA, insofar as it relates to this appeal, lies in its range of historic architecture and landscape, reflecting this CA's evolution from the sixteenth to nineteenth century. This encompasses the distinct historic character of its three parts, which are the village of Hampton Lucy, the estate village of Charlecote, and the core country house and parkland of Charlecote Park.
27. The special interest of the Alveston House listed building is primarily associated with the legibility of its Restoration country house architecture. And the significance of the SM lies in its articulation of a complex series of enclosed Romano-British farmsteads.
28. As an open field on an arable farm, bounded by some hedgelines and trees, the appeal site has a plain open character, and a mix of matt brown and green rural tones. As such, it blends in with the relatively visually harmonious, open rural appearance of much of its farmland environs located between Charlecote Park House and RPG, and the river bounding the north-eastern side of Alveston village. Albeit within the context that the existing polytunnels north of the appeal site contrast with the prevailing plain and undeveloped arable character of the locality. As such the appeal site contributes positively to the mainly harmonious visual composition of the rural setting of the Charlecote Park listed house and RPG. This is perceptible from various viewpoints on that property within the Charlecote and Hampton Lucy CA, the appeal site and near them.
29. Landscape elements in the area include intervening vegetation, landform and separation gaps, in the RPG, open countryside and villages beyond it in the north of the Charlecote and Hampton Lucy CA. This combination of elements substantially visually separates the appeal site from the St Peter Ad Vincula, Hampton Lucy House and Alveston House listed buildings, and from much of the Charlecote and Hampton Lucy CA.

30. And in the vicinity of where the appeal site is closer to the 'leg of lamb' shaped north-westernmost part of the CA, the relative lack of designated footpath access for visitors within the Deer Sanctuary part of the RPG, together with intervening trees, shrubs and hedging in the landscape go some way to limit views of the appeal site beyond this part of the CA. Also, the historic architectural charisma of the St Peter Ad Vincula, Hampton Lucy House and Alveston House listed buildings, and character of their grounds mainly contains their visual draw to their more immediate environs. As such, I find that in heritage terms the appeal site does not materially contribute to the setting and significance of the St Peter Ad Vincula, Hampton Lucy House and Alveston House listed buildings.
31. The proposed development would entail just under 12 hectares of proposed polytunnels. This would almost quadruple the footprint of polytunnels on the farm, within the countryside west of the Charlecote Park RPG. This substantially increased polytunnel mass, up to a height of 7m would appear as swathes of pale white-ish coloured polythene-covered structures. The plasticity of their polythene covering, repetitive geometry of their profile, and any lighting would further draw attention to the polytunnels' mass. As such, the proposed development would result in a visually jarring contrast with the prevailing openness and harmonious blend of matt brown, green and blue-gey hues of the arable landscape and wider countryside, west of Charlecote Park RPG and the Charlecote and Hampton Lucy CA.
32. The presence of the existing polytunnels nearby on the farm would not acceptably visually assimilate the proposal within the local landscape. Instead, the cumulatively enlarged mass of polytunnels would contrast discordantly within the prevailing open countryside area that is mainly free from structures.
33. Furthermore, the expanse and height of the polytunnels in such close proximity to the hedgeline with trees along the eastern boundary of the appeal site would likely invite concern about branch and twig drop onto the polythene covered polytunnels below, with potential pressure for future removal or disfiguring pruning of trees along this boundary. This would likely lessen the scope for existing vegetation to help filter views of the polytunnels.
34. Consequently, the appeal proposal would disrupt and erode the relatively harmonious, open rural character that prevails in the countryside west of Charlecote Park House and RPG.
35. As a result of the above combination of factors, the proposed development would adversely impact designated heritage assets, as follows. At Charlecote Park, it would visually disrupt views down the West Avenue that lead to the countryside beyond. This would clash with and distract from articulation of Charlecote Park's house and grounds' principal axial thrust. Furthermore, it would spoil the trompe-l'oeil and disrupt the seemingly infinite quality of the view down the avenue. This would be noticeable from various viewpoints in the RPG on the parterre and along the avenue, and from the listed country house's dining room, through its windows.
36. Also, the proposal's reduction of the visual harmony of the countryside west of the CA would distract from the RPG's historic designed landscape, as experienced from various other viewpoints in the RPG. These would be within areas with designated access for visitors in West Park and grounds north of

Charlecote Park country house, more so from late Autumn for Spring when leaf-fall from trees and other shrubs in the landscape lessens their filtering effect. Given the relative lack of designated footpath access for visitors within the Deer Sanctuary, the volume of people experiencing these impacts from within this part of the RPG would be much more limited. Nevertheless, for the above reasons, the proposed development would result in a combination of adverse impacts on the setting and significance of the RPG.

37. Consequently, the proposed development would noticeably distract from appreciation of the RPG's historic designed landscape. Also, it would detract from the identity of the Charlecote Park listed country house, and the principal axial thrust of this listed building and its RPG. Thus, the proposed development would, in heritage terms, have a negative effect on the setting of these heritage assets and the Charlecote and Hampton Lucy CA.
38. Regarding the St Peter Ad Vincula church and Hampton Lucy House listed buildings, I find that the legibility of their historic architecture and locational inter-relationship would endure. Also, the legibility of the historic architecture of the Alveston House listed building would endure. As such, the proposed development would have a neutral effect on the setting of these listed buildings.
39. Regarding the SM near the appeal site, the appellant has submitted the report of a geophysical survey of the appeal site (GS) that was undertaken by their archaeological consultant³, since the Council's decision. The GS report sets out the following. Anomalies other than those consistent with modern activity and agricultural usage of the proposed development area are limited to a) a single faint, curving ditch-like of uncertain origin and b) a single anomaly possibly identifying an area of burning. No anomalies have been recorded which might relate to the SM. The GS report concludes that the archaeological potential of the proposed development area is low.
40. In the light of this, the appellant's heritage consultant sets out⁴ that the GS results are a good indication of nothing of archaeological significance on the appeal site. And that further archaeological investigation such as trial trenching or a watching brief could be secured by planning condition. I see no reason to disagree with these expert views about the SM. Thus, I find that subject to a suitable archaeological works programme that could be secured prior to commencement by planning condition, the proposal would not harm the heritage significance of the SM.
41. Regarding various parties' concerns about the potential impact of a couple of areas of tree line and cluster planting on the farm, beyond the appeal site⁵ on the RPG's boundary and views, I find as follows. I do not see a compelling rationale for the stated intention in the Landscape Masterplan to undertake tree and cluster planting to 'mimic' the RPG's parkland planting style beyond this parkland 'where appropriate'. That said, given the variety of tree and shrub planting patterns and forms in the locality, there may be potential for some additional visual filter planting on the farm beyond the appeal site, without distracting from the integral character of the RPG. As such, I anticipate that it would be possible to address concern about the potential for new planting to

³ Geophysical Survey by Headland Archaeology, dated December 2022.

⁴ In the Archaeology and Heritage Statement of Case by BSA Heritage, dated February 2023.

⁵ As shown on the Landscape Masterplan drawing submitted by the appellant.

- distract from the RPG's boundary and views in a detailed planting scheme, under planning condition, were the appeal to be allowed.
42. However, notwithstanding this, while the proposed landscaping would go some way to filter and soften the appearance of the proposed development over time, the estimated approximately 15 years planting establishment period is a substantial time during which the full extent of proposed moderation of the identified impacts on heritage assets would not be experienced. Also, the efficacy of the proposed planting would be less than certain because the planting would be subject to potentially unpredictable environmental conditions. Therefore, overall the proposed landscaping would not prevent significant adverse impact on the setting and significance of the Charlecote Park listed building and RPG.
43. Moreover, the dedicated commercial and future food production case presented by the appellant, and the planting establishment time period cited indicate that the proposed polytunnels would likely be established for some appreciable time. Thus, the potentially reversible nature of the development would not avoid identified adverse impacts on heritage assets.
44. Thus, notwithstanding the identified absence of heritage harm to the St Peter Ad Vincula, Hampton Lucy House and Alveston listed buildings, and the SM, I find as follows. For the reasons described above, the proposal would negatively impact on the setting and significance of the Grade I listed building Charlecote Park and its Grade II* listed RPG, and consequently negatively impact on the setting and significance of the Charlecote and Hampton Lucy CA.
45. Paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation. Given the scale and substance of the proposal, I find the harm to the Charlecote Park listed building and its RPG, and the Charlecote and Hampton Lucy CA to be less than substantial in this instance, but nonetheless of considerable importance and weight. Under such circumstances, paragraph 202 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against public benefits of the proposal.
46. The proposed development would contribute to and promote achievement of strategic national food resilience and security objectives, and lower 'food miles' with associated environmental benefits. It would contribute to supply of fresh salad and Chinese vegetables, with associated dietary health benefits in the population. Also, the proposal would contribute to the farm's productivity and competitiveness. This would help sustain the business, and its potential to invest in future innovation in resource-efficient food production and farm re-wilding. The proposed landscaping would provide some additional hedge and tree cover, with associated environmental benefits. And the proposal would help sustain, and create additional, jobs on the farm, and potentially within its supply chain. Together the above would provide associated socio-economic benefits during and after construction and installation of the polytunnels.
47. The above together amounts to a substantial combination of public benefits. However, this does not outweigh the great weight given to the conservation of the Grade I listed building Charlecote Park, its Grade II* listed RPG and the Charlecote and Hampton Lucy CA, and the less than substantial harm to their significance that I have identified.

48. As such, the proposed development would conflict with Policy CS.8 of the CS which seeks to ensure that development protects and enhances the district's historic environment. Furthermore, it would not accord with the approach of the Framework in respect of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, with great weight given to the asset's conservation.

Landscape character

49. The appeal site is located within farmland that is part of the Terrace farmlands landscape (TFL) sub-type of the Avon Valley depicted in the Warwickshire Landscapes Guidelines (WLG).
50. During my visit to the area, I saw that the locality of the appeal site which makes up part of the TFL mainly comprises arable farmland between Charlecote Park and Alveston village. The landscape's visually harmonious blend of matt brown, green and blue-grey tones, framed by the lush, meandering River Avon corridor and views of hills and tree belts beyond, contribute to the scenic qualities of this locality. And within the context of the openness of the farmland and associated sense of 'big skies', silhouettes of hedgelines and tree belts of varying height and form are also part of the mix, with Half Moon Spinney adding further variety.
51. The elements of a flat, open intensively farmed landscape on fertile river terrace soils that are included within the WLG's characterisation of the TFL are recognisable 'on the ground' in locality of the appeal site. However, while an area of polytunnels and some farm buildings exist near the appeal site, the relative absence of buildings and 'industrial horticulture' structures, and not their presence, is one of the distinctive characteristics of this part of the TFL.
52. In terms of the cumulative scale of increase in polytunnel presence that would occur within mainly open farmland, the proposed development would, together with the existing nearby polytunnels increase the footprint of polytunnels from the size of approximately six adult football pitches to that of approximately 23 adult football pitches. Furthermore, the pale white-ish colour, plastic character, repetitively geometric profile and any lighting of the proposed 7m high polytunnels would draw attention to their mass. This would jarringly contrast with and erode the distinctive openness and harmonious blend of rural tones in the arable landscape and wider countryside between Charlecote Park and Alveston.
53. The cumulatively enlarged mass of polytunnels would contrast discordantly with the prevailing local landscape character in this part of the countryside. I therefore cannot agree that the existing polytunnels would help to acceptably assimilate the proposed development within the local landscape. Also, while the proposed planting would go some way to soften the appearance of the development over time, its efficacy would be less than certain, due to potentially unpredictable environmental conditions. Moreover, the proposed moderation of impacts on landscape character would not be fully experienced during the substantial 15 year planting establishment period.
54. Thus, the substantially increased scale of polytunnel mass proposed would perceptibly push the local landscape towards a more 'industrial' farming character. Together with the erosion of distinctive openness and harmonious

blend of rural tones, this would noticeably erode the character of this part of the countryside within the TFL.

55. These adverse impacts would be perceptible from a range of viewpoints in and around the rural area between Charlecote and Alveston. These include from public footpaths through the host farm, off Stratford Road and between Ferry Lane and Wellesbourne Road, and through gaps in hedging on Stratford Road and Snitterfield Street. Together these adverse impacts would be experienced by a combination of local and visiting pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. This would include those of the above using the countryside for recreation, including appreciation of the local environment.
56. These adverse impacts on local landscape character identified under this second main issue would be in addition to heritage-related impacts identified under the first main issue which have a landscape dimension in terms of distraction from appreciation of the Charlecote Park RPG's historic designed landscape, and detracting from the principal axial thrust of the RPG.
57. Together the dedicated commercial and future food production case presented by the appellant, and the planting establishment time period cited indicate that the proposed polytunnels would likely be established for some appreciable time. Thus, the potentially reversible nature of the development would not avoid the identified adverse impacts on local landscape character for some appreciable time.
58. Also, that the appeal site is not within an area of landscape designation, does not negate the importance of achieving development that recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, as set out, among other things in paragraph 174b) of the Framework.
59. Therefore, I conclude that the proposal would harm local landscape character. As such, it would conflict with Policies CS.5 and CS.9 of the CS which together seek to ensure that development complements local character and distinctiveness.

Other Matters

60. Some local residents have expressed concerns about flood risk, highway safety and biodiversity which go beyond the reasons for refusal. As I am dismissing this appeal on other grounds, it is not necessary for me to consider these matters further in this instance.
61. I appreciate the appellant's professional dedication to agri-tech innovation and producing salad and vegetable crops of local and UK provenance. Also, I understand that some members of the local farming community regard the proposed polytunnels as modern farming structures suitable for the location.
62. Nevertheless, as set out above, I have determined that the public benefits of the proposal are insufficient to outweigh the less than substantial harm that would be caused to the significance of designated heritage assets. Accordingly, I confirm that overall the benefits of the proposal are insufficient to outweigh the significant totality of heritage and character harm that would arise from the identified adverse heritage and character impacts, given the scale, extent and appearance of the proposed development in this open countryside setting.

Conclusion

63. The proposed development would be contrary to the development plan and Framework and there are no other considerations which outweigh this finding. Accordingly, for the reasons given, the appeal fails.

William Cooper

INSPECTOR

APPEARANCES

FOR THE APPELLANT:

John-Paul Friend
Wendy Hopkins
Ben Stephenson

LVIA Ltd
Brodie Planning Associates Ltd
BSA Heritage Limited

FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:

Charlotte Dicks
Richard Greenway
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Senior Planner
Greenway Landscape Architects
Conservation Officer

INTERESTED PARTIES:

M Andrews
Nikki Carpenter
Claudia Clemente
Carol Matthews
David Tucker

Local resident
Local resident
National Trust
Hampton Lucy Parish Council
Local resident/Alveston Villagers' Association

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED AFTER THE HEARING

1. Tree Preservation Order No. SDC 72.