



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 February 2024

by C Shearing BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th February 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3825/W/23/3324123

Tanglewood Equestrian, Forest Grange, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 6HX

- 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 and Mrs Goodman against the decision of Horsham District Council.
 - The application Ref DC/22/2125, dated 8 March 2023, was refused by notice dated 2 May 2023.
 - The development proposed is erection of a detached barn and laying of hardstanding.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of a detached barn and laying of hardstanding at Tanglewood Equestrian, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 6HX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DC/22/2125, dated 8 March 2023, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following condition:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan, 'Proposed Hay Barn' PRR1, 'Proposed Barn PRR2', and Block/ Site Plans annotating Extent of Hardstanding and Proposed Barn.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development in the banner heading above is taken from the Council's decision notice and the appeal form, which include reference to a hardstanding. I have removed the reference to the application being retrospective, since this is not a description of development. I observed, however, that the development has been started.
3. During the course of the appeal the revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published. There are no substantive changes relevant to the appeal before me and therefore no interested parties would be prejudiced by my consideration of the 2023 version of the Framework.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the barn is appropriate to its countryside location, having regard to whether alternative buildings could be used for its intended purpose.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is outside the boundaries of any built up area designated by the local plan, and is in the countryside for policy purposes. Policy 26 of the HDPF¹ requires, among other things, that a proposal be essential to its countryside location, and meet one of four criteria including providing for quiet informal recreational use. Policy 29 supports equestrian related development, subject to criteria which include the need to demonstrate that the re-use of existing buildings on site for related equestrian use is not appropriate, before new or replacement buildings are considered.
6. An existing stable block exists to the east of the appeal site. This is a low level, elongated building with shallow pitched roof and stable doors, as well as some space for hay storage. The stable has been extended with a tall lean-to, which accommodated a horse truck and a car at the time of my site visit. Some other machinery was being stored outside it to the rear.
7. A planning condition relating to the stables² limits the way it can be used and binds it to be used in connection with a residential property further to the east. Although there is no restrictive condition linking the lean-to to that property, it is directly adjoining and attached to the stable block. On this basis the appellant suggests those structures could not reasonably be used for the purposes of storage associated with their equestrian facility. I have no strong reason to doubt this is the case.
8. While most hay is presumably stored off site at present, Policy 29 refers to alternative existing buildings on the site, and it is not unreasonable to require storage of hay and machinery close to where it is intended to be used. There is not evidence of other buildings on the site which should be re-used for the required purposes, and I have no reason to believe that a storage facility for hay and machinery is not essential for the equestrian facility.
9. For the reasons given, the barn would be appropriate to its countryside location. Based on the evidence, and having considered the other areas of assessment in the Officer's Report, I find the proposal would comply with policies 26 and 29 of the HDLP, set out above, when read as a whole. The proposal would also comply with the Framework insofar as it supports a prosperous rural economy.

Other Matters

10. Part of nearby Forest Grange Manor is grade II listed. This is a substantial house and former school with ornate external detailing. Paraphernalia associated with its use, including parking areas and outbuildings, exist close to the main building and its wider setting includes the fields and woodland beyond, which provide the context in which the building is experienced. Given the simple design, scale and timber construction of the barn, it appears typical of this agricultural and equestrian landscape and would preserve the setting of the listed building. For the same reason and through supporting the use of the land, the proposal would conserve and enhance the landscape setting of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Landscape.
11. There is not substantive evidence of the relationship between the use of the appeal site and the property of Tanglewood, and in any event that is not the subject of this appeal. I note concern for earlier works on the site which may

¹ The Horsham District Planning Framework (excluding South Downs National Park) November 2015

² Planning Permission CG/33/94

have required planning permission. However, my considerations must relate to the development that is the subject of this appeal. Any other alleged breaches of planning control are a matter for the Council to investigate.

12. The level of consultation is also a matter for the Council and the appellant has clarified the notices served. As such I have no strong reason to find that the statutory requirements were not achieved. The level of information submitted and the supporting drawings are adequate for the assessment of the appeal.

Conditions

13. Planning conditions should be considered in light of the tests set out in the Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. As the development has commenced, it is not necessary to impose a standard time limit condition. However, a condition is imposed requiring compliance with the supporting plans in the interests of certainty and as the barn is not yet complete.
14. It does not meet the tests of necessity or reasonableness to restrict any windows and doors of the barn and, as above, should any planning breaches occur, these would be a matter for the Council. No further conditions have been suggested and none are considered necessary.

Conclusion

15. For the above reasons, the development is compliant with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations of sufficient weight that would lead me to a decision other than in accordance with it. The appeal is therefore allowed.

C Shearing

INSPECTOR