



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 April 2024

by S D Castle BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 MAY 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/A3655/D/24/3336847

Howards Farm, Stockers Lane, Kingfield, Woking GU22 9DB

- 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 A Simpson against the decision of Woking Borough Council.
 - The application Ref PLAN/2023/0801, dated 13 September 2023, was refused by notice dated 24 November 2023.
 - The development proposed is construction of a home office designed as a traditional granary.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for construction of a home office designed as a traditional granary.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have taken into account the revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') published in December 2023. While there have been changes to paragraph numbers since the previous iteration, the parts of the Framework most relevant in this case have not significantly changed. I am satisfied, therefore, that the revised version of the Framework does not raise new considerations necessitating further submissions from the parties.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. Howards Farm is a Grade II listed building located on the northern side of Stockers Lane. Whilst the appeal site was originally a larger historic farmstead located in an open rural setting, the site is now surrounded by the urban development of Woking. The dwelling at Howards Farm is located centrally within its plot, set behind the adjoining dwellings at Kingfield Gardens and Howards Farm Cottages.
5. Whilst the semi-detached dwellings at Kingfield Gardens form a distinct grouping in the street scene, there is significant variety in the layout and architectural styles of the buildings surrounding the site. Indeed, Howards Farm itself represents a significant design break in the street scene, separating the distinct groupings of Howards Farm Cottages and Kingfield Gardens. There is little relationship between Kingfield Gardens and

Howards Farm Cottages given their differing alignments, architectural forms, and the intervening farmhouse. In this varied context, the position of the proposed building slightly forward of the adjacent garage would be comfortably assimilated within the street scene.

6. Under section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, special regard is to be given to the desirability of preserving the setting of a listed building. Furthermore, the Framework acknowledges that harm to the significance of such buildings can occur as a result of development within their settings.
7. The Farmhouse is believed to date from circa 1600 and represents a legible example of a vernacular house, which reveals regional structural framing techniques, a distinctive central hearth plan-form, evolving modes of domestic heating and early forms of fenestration. The significance of Howards Farm as a heritage asset lies partly in the evidential value of its historic fabric, but also in the building's illustrative value with regard to the social history of the locality, and its aesthetic value as a charming and characterful structure in its own right.
8. The proposed ancillary building has been designed to evoke a traditional timber framed granary with brick nogging panels built over staddle stones. The appellant has provided evidence of historic granary buildings of similar design within Woking and the surrounding area. There is also historic mapping that indicates agricultural buildings were previously sited forward of the original farmhouse. There would be sufficient space between the front elevation of Howards Farm and the proposed building to ensure the farmhouse is not harmfully obscured or encroached upon. As such the ancillary building would harmonise with the traditional agricultural vernacular character of Howards Farm, sitting comfortably within its setting. Accordingly, the proposal would not harm the setting or significance of the designated heritage asset.
9. Overall, the development would represent high quality design that respects the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) and the Framework. Taken together, amongst other things, these policies require development to respect and make a positive contribution to the street scene and character of the area. The development would also comply with the Council's Woking Design Supplementary Planning Document (2015) which seeks to promote good design.

Conditions

10. I have considered the conditions suggested by the Council against the requirements of the PPG and the Framework. The conditions I have included have been subject to some alterations to improve clarity and ensure consistency with the Framework and PPG.
11. In addition to the standard timescale condition, I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant plans as this provides certainty.
12. In the interests of the character and appearance of the area, and to protect the setting of a designated heritage asset, it is necessary to attach a condition in relation to the materials to be used externally on the building.
13. In the interests of the character and appearance of the surrounding area, amenities of surrounding residential occupiers, and to protect the setting of a

designated heritage asset, a condition restricting the use of the building to incidental and ancillary purposes is necessary.

14. In the interests of drainage, a condition securing sustainable drainage is necessary.

Conclusion

15. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations, indicate otherwise. The proposal would accord with the development plan when read as a whole. There are no other considerations that would lead me to depart from determining the appeal in accordance with the development plan.
16. For the reasons above, the appeal is allowed subject to the conditions in the attached Schedule.

S D Castle

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions attached to Appeal Decision
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- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby authorised shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and details unless otherwise required by the conditions below:

2308HO_R0_000 Existing Location Plan

2308HO_R0_001 Proposed Block Plan

2308HO_R0_100 Proposed Elevations

2308HO_R0_106 Proposed Ground Floor Plan
- 3) No above ground development shall commence until details, samples and a written specification of the materials to be used in the external elevations and roof of the building hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out and thereafter retained in accordance with the approved details.
- 4) The building hereby permitted shall not be first occupied/used until surface water drainage works have been implemented in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The surface water drainage works shall be retained thereafter in accordance with the approved details.
- 5) The development hereby permitted shall only be occupied/used for purposes incidental and/or ancillary to the use of the main dwelling on the site identified as Howards Farm on the approved plans.