



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 January 2025

by **O Marigold BSc DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D0840/W/24/3345536

Land North East of Blankednick Farm, Blankednick, Ponsanooth, Truro, Cornwall TR3 7JN

- 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 and Mrs Griffin against the decision of Cornwall Council.
 - The application Ref is PA22/09118.
 - The development proposed is formation of track (part retrospective) and construction of pump shed.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Since the appeal was made, a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has been published. Although I have made my determination against the updated national policy context, the relevant changes to the Framework are not fundamental to matters which are determinative to the outcome of this appeal.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site consists of a field within countryside, on the slope of a steep sided valley. Historically, the field was divided by a Cornish hedgerow. The stub of this hedgerow remains, but otherwise the field appears as a single parcel of land. The proposal seeks to create a stone-surfaced track running across and through the field, works for which have already commenced. Also proposed is a gate and granite posts, together with a pump building to provide water to the site.
5. The site is within the St Gluvias Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). The Cornwall Character Area Study, August 2023, and the Perranarworthal Local Landscape Character Assessment identify that the medieval pattern of fields bounded by hedges contribute to the distinctiveness of the landscape hereabouts. The largely open, undeveloped nature of the appeal site has a positive effect on the landscape.
6. Given its small size and discrete location, the pump shed would not appear out of place in the field. However, the track would have a hard surface and vegetated bunding, and be of appreciable length. Its curved and sinuous alignment, and somewhat built-up form, would cut across the field, encroaching into it and

conflicting with the broadly horizontal contours of the valley. For similar reasons, it would not reflect the roughly linear route of the historic field boundary. As such, the track would appear out of place with the distinctive pattern of the countryside here. This would harm the character of the landscape, regardless of its degree of public visibility.

7. The existing landform, together with trees and vegetation, would limit the extent of public visibility of the track. It would be seen against the wider backdrop of the field. Nevertheless, I saw that glimpses of the proposal and its effects would be obtainable from the public road, and on the lower slopes of the Right of Way through Cosawes Holiday Park, opposite the site. Additional landscaping cannot be relied upon to screen the proposal, particularly in winter months when foliage is reduced. In any case, this would not overcome my concerns regarding landscape character.
8. The submitted plans show the removal of items on the land including fuel tanks, containers, a caravan and tipped material. I have few details of their planning status, but they are mainly located around the existing buildings. As a result, whilst their removal may be beneficial to the landscape, this does not outweigh the permanent harm that the proposal would cause.
9. For the reasons given above, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore conflict with policies 2, 12 and 23 of the Cornwall Local Plan, adopted November 2016; policies 9 and 15 of the Perranarworthal Neighbourhood Plan (NP), made December 2022; and Policy C1 of the Climate Emergency Development Plan Document, adopted February 2023. These require development to respect, maintain and enhance the landscape character of the area, including AGLVs. However, NP Policy 7 relates to farm diversification schemes, which do not include the proposal, and so no conflict with this policy arises.

Other Matters

10. Reference has been made to the suitability or otherwise of an alternative route that the track could take, along the western edge of the field. Nevertheless, this does not form part of the proposal before me and so it does not affect my conclusions. I understand that a previous route to the site through adjacent land was sold off, leaving the buildings without vehicular access. Even so, such actions do not provide a good reason to justify the harm that I have identified above. I note concerns about the Council's handling of the application, but my decision has focused on the planning merits of the proposal.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

11. For the reasons given, I have found conflict with the Development Plan as a whole. The material considerations in this case do not indicate a decision other than in accordance with the Development Plan. This leads me to conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

O Marigold

INSPECTOR