



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 August 2025

by K Allen MEng (Hons) MArch PGCert ARB

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20TH August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M3645/W/25/3358511

Perry Farm, Leonards Turf Farms, West Park Road, Newchapel, Surrey RH7 6HT

- 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 Mark Beasley against the decision of Tandridge District Council.
 - The application Ref is TA/2024/1156.
 - The development proposed is the installation of cladding and cart shed doors to existing barn, reinstatement of vehicle access and retention of permeable hardstanding around barn.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for the installation of cladding and cart shed doors to existing barn, reinstatement of vehicle access and retention of permeable hardstanding around barn at Perry Farm, Leonards Turf Farms, West Park Road, Newchapel, Surrey RH7 6HT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref TA/2024/1156, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan, EBP Rev A, EFP1 Rev A, EEV1 Rev A, PBP Rev A, PFP1 Rev A, PEV1 Rev A and E-VIS Rev A.
 - 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in accordance with the details shown on the approved plans and application form.

Application for Costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr Mark Beasley against Tandridge District Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, having regard to local and national policy.

Reasons

4. The site falls within land defined as Green Belt. The immediate area is rural, predominantly characterised by large agricultural fields bound by mature hedges and trees. The appeal site comprises an open-sided agricultural barn with an area of loose hardstanding surrounded by a variety of mature planting, set within a larger field. Access is provided by a narrow track through a field gate.

5. The appeal proposal would re-clad the existing barn including the installation of cart doors. It would also reinstate the vehicle access and provide an area of permeable hardstanding.
6. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The Framework further establishes that development in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate, subject to a number of exceptions as set out in paragraph 154.
7. These exceptions include buildings for agriculture, the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building and engineering works provided it preserves the openness and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt. Policies DP10 and DP13 of the Tandridge Local Plan Part 2 Detailed Policies 2014-2029 (July 2014) (TLP) accord with the Framework in this regard.
8. At the time of my site visit, despite its poor state of repair, farm machinery was being stored within the barn. The access, including the field gate had been opened and was passable by vehicles, however there was a solid white line across its junction with West Park Road. Considering the above and the evidence submitted with this appeal regarding the abandonment of the site, I am satisfied that the barn and access were previously abandoned and as such currently have 'nil' use.
9. Whilst the appellant contends that the proposal would be used for agriculture, I have not been provided with any substantive evidence indicating why it is required for agriculture after a lengthy period of abandonment. As such, the proposal would not fulfil the requirements of paragraph 154 a of the Framework.
10. Notwithstanding the above, the barn is an existing building within the Green Belt and the proposal would alter the building without resulting in disproportionate additions. Therefore, the alterations to the barn would meet the requirements of paragraph 154 c of the Framework, which does not require the consideration of openness.
11. Further, the reinstatement of the former access and the retention of the permeable hardstanding would be considered as engineering works in their own right. These elements of the proposal would not conflict with the five purposes of the Green Belt. Consequently, their effect on openness must be considered. Openness is an essential characteristic of the Green Belt that has spatial as well as visual aspects and can be experienced on a large scale within the wider landscape as well as on a small scale within an individual development plot. The openness of the Green Belt is clearly evident around the appeal site and the wider area.
12. Despite the removal of mature vegetation that has already taken place, the field gate and hardstanding would be in keeping with the agricultural character of the area and would be substantially screened within views from the surrounding fields and adjacent highway. With regards to comings and goings, although I am not satisfied with the evidence regarding its current use, I must consider what has been applied for. I acknowledge that the use of the access would be increased compared to recent years when it was disused. However, comings and goings associated with a barn in agricultural use would be limited.

13. Therefore, given the small-scale intervention the access and hardstanding would make, the openness of the Green Belt would be preserved, and these elements of the proposal would accord with the requirements of paragraph 154 h ii of the Framework.
14. Considering the above, I conclude that the proposal would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. It would accord with Policies DP10 and DP13 of the TLP and the associated policies of the Framework which collectively seek to control development in the Green Belt.

Other Matters

15. I note concerns regarding the future use of the barn. However, I have assessed the proposal that has been applied for, and any future change of use would require planning permission. Although the proposal would open up the previously abandoned access, it would provide sufficient visibility splays for safe access and egress such that highway safety would not be compromised.

Conditions

16. Aside from the statutory condition required to set the necessary time limit for development, a condition is required to indicate the approved plans to provide certainty. To ensure the proposal assimilates into the surrounding area, an additional materials condition is necessary to limit the use of materials to those within the approved plans and the application form.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal would accord with the development plan as a whole and the Framework, and therefore the appeal is allowed.

K Allen

INSPECTOR