



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 August 2025

by **G Roberts BA (Hons) MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D0840/W/25/3364159

Carsluick Farmhouse, Carsluick, Godolphin Cross, Cornwall, TR13 9RJ

- 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 David Ball against the decision of Cornwall Council.
 - The application Ref is PA24/04844.
 - The development proposed is conversion of redundant agricultural building to a dwellinghouse.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for conversion of redundant agricultural building to a dwellinghouse at Carsluick Farmhouse, Carsluick, Godolphin Cross, Cornwall TR13 9RJ, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref PA24/04844 and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions listed in the Annex to this decision.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have adopted the site address from the application form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the appeal site is a suitable location for the proposed development having regard to development plan policy and the character and appearance of the building and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises an existing agricultural barn located to the south west of the main complex of buildings that form Carsluick Farmhouse. At the time of my site visit the barn was largely empty other than for some storage and appears from the evidence before me to be redundant. It comprises a single storey largely timber barn with a concrete floor and mono pitch roof. There is an area of hardstanding to the north east which leads to a grassed track and field gate that runs in a north easterly direction to meet a private lane that serves the farm complex.
5. The private lane links with the main road to the south east of the appeal site with the settlement of Godolphin Cross located a short distance along this road to the north east. The appeal proposal involves the conversion of the existing barn to a 1 bedroom dwelling. No extensions or substantial structural works are proposed. The alterations to the barn include new windows and doors and the possible replacement of the metal roof to enable insulation to be provided to meet Building

Regulations. The external timber cladding would be retained, renewed and existing gaps fitted with timber cladding to match existing.

6. New internal insulated walls would be provided, a common feature on conversions, to comply with Building Regulations. The Structural Surveys submitted with the application show that the barn is in a good condition and suitable for conversion. No other external works to the site layout are shown other than the provision of Cornish Hedging. This would run along the western and southern curtilage of the site and link with existing Cornish Hedging on the access track (driveway). An area of parking and turning is shown to the north east of the barn and a small garden to the south west, the latter enclosed by the proposed Cornish Hedging.
7. The spatial strategy for the area is set out in policy 2 of the Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010-2030 (CLP). In relation to housing the policy seeks to manage the location and scale of new development, with the emphasis on housing development being accommodated through a Site Allocations Document or Neighbourhood Plan for the identified main towns, through specific eco-communities and for areas outside the main towns through Neighbourhood Plans, infill, rounding off and previously developed land.
8. Within the open countryside new housing is subject to policy 7 of the CLP. The latter states that the development of new homes within the open countryside will only be permitted where there are special circumstances, with part 3 stating that this will include the reuse of suitably constructed redundant, disused buildings that are considered appropriate to retain and would lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting. The building should also have an existing lawful use and be 10 years old.
9. Policy S3 of the Breage Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017–2030 (NDP) relates to development in the open countryside and sets out the exceptions where this will be supported, which includes the reuse of appropriate redundant buildings as outlined in policy 7 of the CLP. This must be read in conjunction with policy H4 which relates to the conversion of buildings for housing in the open countryside.
10. Policy H4 states that conversions will be supported where the building is redundant and its loss would not result in a reduction in employment or the provision of community facilities; the building is suitable for conversion and would not require substantial re-building; the design takes account of the important characteristics of the building; there is no significant harm to the character and appearance of the area; the site is enhanced including sensitive boundary features in keeping with the locality such as Cornish Hedging; and where there is no significant impact on the landscape character, designated or undesignated.
11. The criteria to policies 7 and H4 are, therefore, broadly similar and are consistent with paragraph 84 c) of the NPPF which states that planning decisions should avoid the development of ‘isolated’ homes in the countryside unless one or more of the circumstances listed apply, including c), where *“the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting.”*
12. In relation to policies 7 and H4 the existing barn is suitable for conversion, no substantial rebuilding is required and the alterations to the building are modest and would retain and enhance the original design, materials and appearance. The Council’s Statement of Case (CSOC) accepts that the barn is 10 years old and that

it is appropriate for conversion. Whilst the CSOC contends that the barn is not of historic value, the criteria to policies 7 and H4 do not limit conversions just to buildings of historic value and the criteria separately support conversions where the building is redundant. Even so, the timber barn is a traditional feature of the agricultural landscape and is worthy of retention.

13. The loss of the barn would not lead to a reduction in employment or the provision of a community facility. The changes to the barn would also not cause any significant harm to the character and appearance of the building or to its landscape and countryside setting, or location within an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). This finding is based on my observations on site and the fact that the external alterations to the barn are modest.
14. I accept that the appeal site is within the open countryside but as the site is located at the end of a private lane, public views of the proposal would be limited. Those views that exist are from the main road to the south of the appeal site. However, as I observed from this road, they are long distant views over two fields, boundary hedging and trees. There are glimpsed views of the barn from the road, but as the external alterations are modest and would be sympathetic to its traditional design and construction, the appearance of the barn as converted would not be dissimilar to existing. Consequently, the proposal would relate positively to its countryside and rural setting.
15. In addition, the proposal involves extending existing Cornish Hedging from the access (driveway) along the southern boundary of the main curtilage. This would assist in screening the proposed garden and parking areas, as well as mitigating and softening any long distant views from the main road. The introduction of new Cornish Hedging would, in line with policy H4 of the NDP, result in a sensitive boundary feature that is common to the area.
16. Overall, the appeal proposal would not be out of keeping with its landscapes and countryside setting. For these reasons, the proposal would not result in any harm to the AGLV or to the key characteristics of the Cornwall Character Area CCA06 Hayle to Helston Hinterland. It would, therefore, comply, with policies 12 and 23 of the CLP and policy H6 of the NDP through securing a high quality design, by sustaining and enhancing local character and protecting and enhancing the landscape and natural environment. It would also comply with policy C1 of the Climate Emergency Development Plan Document (DPD) insofar as this seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment.
17. Policies 7 and H4 and the NPPF also require proposals to enhance their immediate setting, albeit there is no definition of 'enhance' in any of these policy documents. The external works to the barn would enhance the traditional and rustic appearance of the barn. They would also improve the condition of the barn. Its reuse would prevent it from falling into disrepair, which could have a harmful impact on its rural setting. The existing Cornish Hedge on the access track would be extended along the southern and western curtilage of the appeal site. This new feature on its own would, in my view, enhance the immediate setting of the proposed dwelling in that it would mitigate for any long range views and provide a solid but traditional boundary feature between the new curtilage and the field to the south. It would also secure biodiversity net gains and potentially wildlife habitats or ecological benefits.

18. The Council contend that the Cornish Hedging would take time to establish. I do not agree. The submitted plan shows a traditionally designed and constructed Cornish Hedge with an open soil top for the growth of grass or similar planting. The structure itself would have an instant visual impact with the growth likely to take some months to mature. Any proposed landscaping will take time to mature, and I can't see why the grass or planting on the top of the Cornish Hedge would be any different. Moreover, Cornish Hedging is a strong cultural and heritage feature of rural areas and provides important wildlife habitats and local distinctiveness. It is a feature that reflects and can improve the landscape and local character of an area, benefits that are recognised in the Cornwall Design Guide.
19. Turning to 'domestication' there is no reference to this within the NPPF, the CLP or the NDP. The only reference is found in the Chief Planning Officer's Advice Note: Barn Conversions/Replacement dwellings in the countryside (CPO Note). This is not a statutory document but assist in interpreting part 3 of policy 7. The CPO Note does not preclude domestication but seeks to ensure that it does not erode the rural setting of the site and has regard to its visual impact and the mitigation that would be secured by new landscaping and boundary treatments. The note also seeks to balance any harm from domestication against the enhancements that the development will secure.
20. The proposal would secure a number of enhancements which combined would be significant. As I also confirmed earlier, there are only long distance public views of the barn and in those views the visual impact of the proposal, even with domestic paraphernalia in the small garden, would be modest and well screened by the new Cornish Hedging. Consequently, any domestication of the curtilage would be limited.
21. The Council have also referred to policies C1 and T1 of the DPD. The DPD has, of course, been prepared in conformity with the CLP, having regard to the NPPF as a material consideration. The Council contend that the appeal proposal would not be acceptable as it is outside a defined settlement and would not be accessible or sustainable.
22. I concur with the Appellant that policies C1 and T1 are general provisions seeking to encourage a range of transport modes to support new development. In the 'Conformity Grid', within the appendices to the DPD, policy C1 is shown as being in conformity with policy 2 of the CLP and further develops the requirements of that policy. Policy T1 refers to the requirement for new development to be designed and located so as to minimise the need to travel. This is reflected in paragraph 9.6 which states that new developments provide the opportunity to influence a behaviour change and achieve the necessary modal shift through, in particular, locating new development in areas well connected to public transport, walking and cycling, as far as possible. The 'Conformity Grid' also states that policy T1 conforms with policy 27 of the CLP in developing the principles for sustainable transport.
23. The DPD does not refer to the conversion of redundant barns or the special circumstances for new 'isolated' housing in the open countryside. Neither does it state that policies C1 and T1 supplement, replace or supersede policies 7 or H4, or paragraph 84c) of the NPPF. In addition, paragraph 2.33 of the CLP states that the plan seeks to ensure that development occurs in the most sustainable locations in order to protect the countryside from inappropriate development. It continues by

stating that the approach to sustainable new development is set out in policy 3 of the CLP, but continues by recognising that there may be the need for some new housing in the countryside. In these locations, the focus will be on the efficient use of existing buildings to meet those needs. Both policies 7 and H4 relate to the special circumstances where new housing will be permitted in the open countryside and where development, if acceptable, will not therefore be 'inappropriate'.

24. In relation to policy 21 of the CLP this states that in order to ensure the best use of land, encouragement will be given to sustainably located proposals, that, amongst other criteria, use previously developed land or buildings provided they are not of high environmental or historic value. The supporting text at paragraphs 2.128 to 2.131 (inclusive) provide justification for the policy. These state that the intention is to ensure the best use of land and as such it should be safeguarded as it is a valuable resource. It continues by stating that policy 3 will assist in the delivery of a sustainable balance of development with NDP's and the Site Allocations Document (SAD) identifying sufficient land to meet those needs locally but at the same time prioritise the use of previously developed land (pdl). The NDP's and SAD should also consider the need for greenfield land to meet future housing needs against the provisions of policy 21.
25. Based on the above, the policy is consistent, in my view, with paragraphs 124 and 125 of the NPPF seeking to promote the effective use of land and buildings to meet the need for new homes and other uses, and make use as much as possible of pdl. The policy is not intended to apply to 'isolated' redundant barns in the open countryside as this is covered by policies 7 and H4. I am, therefore, not convinced that policy 21 is directly relevant or that it any way conflicts with or seeks to restrict the positive support provided for barn conversions by policies 7 and H4, and also paragraph 84 c).
26. Even so, the appeal site is well related to Godolphin Cross, where the NDP has established development boundaries, as it is one of the main villages serving the Parish. New development in the form of infill, rounding off and pdl is permitted within and adjoining this settlement which includes a Primary School and bus stops that provide regular services. The edge of the village is some 500 metres or 8 to 10 minute walk from the appeal site. Whilst part of the route is on the main road, the latter is a short distance, relatively straight and level with good visibility, and has grassed verges to provide refuge. For cyclists, the route would be safe and easy and take 2 to 3 minutes.
27. Notwithstanding my earlier findings, for the above reasons, the appeal site would, in my view, be reasonably accessible to the village. It would also be reasonably connected to public transport and provide the opportunity for trips to be made by this mode of transport.
28. Accordingly, I find that the appeal proposal would comply with policies 1, 2, 7, 12, 21 and 23 of the CLP, policy H4 of the NDP, policies C1 and T1 of the DPD and the corresponding policies of the NPPF.

Other Matters

29. The appeal site is located within the Tregonning and Gwinear Mining District World Heritage Site (WHS). Paragraph 202 of the NPPF states that there are a range of heritage assets from those of local value to those of the highest significance, such as WHS, which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value

(OUV). In considering the impact on the significance of such assets paragraph 212 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, the more important the asset the greater the weight should be.

30. Paragraph 5.14 of the CSOC states that the appeal site does not contain any features which would be key attributes of the WHS. As such, they found that the proposal would not have any harm on the OUV of the WHS. A similar finding is set out in the Appellants Heritage Statement. There is no evidence before me that would lead me to reach a different view, and I therefore concur with those findings.
31. The appeal site falls within the zone of influence of the Fal and Helford Special Area of Conservation (SAC) where a financial contribution is sought from all new dwellings to fund agreed mitigation measures. Paragraph 4.23 of the CSOC confirms that the Appellant has already signed an undertaking pursuant to section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 and paid its contribution. I am satisfied therefore that this undertaking accords with policy 22 of the CLP, which relates to mitigation of recreational impacts from development on European Sites.

Conditions

32. The Council has suggested various conditions that I have considered against the advice in the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) chapter on the 'Use of planning conditions'. I have also had regard to the Appellants Final Comments.
33. Conditions relating to compliance with the approved plans, for the submission and approval of details of any boundary treatment, potential contamination, remediation and verification and ground instability, are all necessary and reasonable in the interests of proper planning, public safety and the residential amenities of future occupiers, to minimise health risks to future occupiers and to protect controlled waters, ecology and other receptors from contamination.
34. Turning to the second part of suggested condition 8 and the whole of condition 9, the PPG states that permitted development rights should only be removed in exceptional circumstances. I am satisfied that in this case those exceptional circumstances exist and that it would be reasonable to remove the permitted development rights set out in both conditions. These restrictions would protect the visual amenities of the area and assist in maintaining its character and distinctive landscape qualities and setting. I have also added a materials condition.

Planning balance and conclusions

35. The appeal proposal would secure the reuse of an existing redundant barn and make full use of a building that is suitable and appropriate for conversion. Whilst it would only secure one new dwelling it would respond to the recognised housing crisis in Cornwall and assist the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes as set out in paragraph 61 of the NPPF. It would also increase spend on local services and facilities. Combined, I attach moderate weight to these benefits.
36. In relation to the development plan, the appeal proposal would comply with policy 7 of the CLP and policy H4 of the NDP, and would also be compliant or would not be at variance with policies 1, 2, 7, 12, 21 and 23 of the CLP. It would also comply with the general aims and objectives of policies C1 and T1 of the DPD. As a

consequence, I find that the appeal proposal would comply with the development plan, when read as a whole.

37. As the Council can no longer demonstrate a five year supply of housing land paragraph 11 d) ii of the NPPF is engaged and requires planning permission to be granted unless *“any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.”*
38. As the appeal proposal would not result in any adverse impacts, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies and planning permission should be granted.
39. For the reasons given above and having taken all other matters raised into account, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

G Roberts

INSPECTOR

Annex – Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location & Block Plans 2303-PL-00-01; Floor Plan and Elevations as Proposed 2303-PL-01-02; Landscaping plan & typical hedge section 2303-PL-00-02.
- 3) No development hereby permitted shall commence until an assessment of the site to identify any ground instability has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with any recommendations within the submitted assessment. If instability is identified on the site during the initial assessment, or at any time during construction works, no works shall proceed until a scheme for on-site investigations, an assessment to identify the extent of unstable ground and the measures to be taken to avoid risk to buildings, the associated land and future users when the site is developed, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details, and it shall be completed before the development hereby permitted is first occupied.
- 4) No development shall commence until an assessment of the risks posed by any contamination has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This assessment must be undertaken by a suitably qualified contaminated land practitioner, in accordance with British Standard BS 10175: Investigation of potentially contaminated sites - Code of Practice and the Environment Agency's Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination (CLR 11) (or equivalent British Standard and Model Procedures if replaced), and shall assess any contamination on the site, whether or not it

originates on the site. The assessment shall include: (a) survey of the extent, scale and nature of contamination; (b) the potential risks to: - human health; - property (existing or proposed) including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland and service lines and pipes; - adjoining land; - ground waters and surface waters; - ecological systems; and - archaeological sites and ancient monuments.

- 5) No development shall take place where (following the risk assessment) land affected by contamination is found which poses risks identified as unacceptable in the risk assessment, until a detailed remediation scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include an appraisal of remediation options, identification of the preferred option(s), the proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria, and a description and programme of the works to be undertaken including the verification plan. The remediation scheme shall be sufficiently detailed and thorough to ensure that upon completion the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to its intended use.
- 6) The approved remediation scheme in condition 5 shall be carried out and upon completion a verification report by a suitably qualified contaminated land practitioner that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development is occupied.
- 7) Any contamination that is found during the course of construction of the approved development that was not previously identified shall be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. Development on the part of the site affected shall be suspended and a risk assessment carried out and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Where unacceptable risks are found remediation and verification schemes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These approved schemes shall be carried out before the development is resumed or continued.
- 8) Prior to the erection of any gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure within the development site hereby approved, details of the height, appearance and siting shall first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The boundary treatment shall then only be provided in accordance with the agreed details. Notwithstanding the provisions of Class A, Part 2, of Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (or any order revoking, re-enacting or modifying that Order), no erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of any gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure shall be carried out on site without the express grant of planning permission.
- 9) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (or any order revoking, re-enacting or modifying that Order), no development within Classes A, B, C, D, E and F of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the said Order shall be carried out

without an express grant of planning permission, namely: The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of the dwellinghouse; The enlargement of the dwellinghouse consisting of an addition or alteration to its roof; Any other alterations to the roof of the dwellinghouse; The erection or construction of a porch outside any external door of a dwellinghouse; The provision within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse of any building or enclosure, swimming or other pool required for a purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse as such, or the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of such a building or enclosure; Hard surfaces incidental to the enjoyment of a dwellinghouse.

- 10) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be to match existing or otherwise be as shown on the approved plans.

End of Annex