



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 June 2025

by S Edwards BA MATCP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/H1705/W/25/3362169

19 Wote Street, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 7NE

- 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 S Barlawar against the decision of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/02636/FUL .
 - The development proposed is described as “Change of use of land and the erection of a raised deck with guarding/screen to the front of the restaurant”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The proposal affects listed buildings and a conservation area, and I have therefore had special regard to sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on:
 - The effect of the proposal on the visual amenity of the area and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Basingstoke Town Conservation Area and the special interest of nearby listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets, as derived from their settings; and
 - The effect of the proposal on pedestrian safety.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site is centrally located within Basingstoke commercial precinct, and lies within the Basingstoke Town Conservation Area (CA) which, with its diverse mix of architectural styles and rich collection of historic buildings, reflects how the settlement has evolved over the centuries as a market town.
5. The proposed development would enable the creation of an external seating area and level access for a restaurant located within a modern building, which does not positively contribute to the significance of the CA. The site's immediate surroundings however include a number of historic buildings, including the Haymarket Theatre and 12 Wote Street, both listed at Grade II. The significance of

these two buildings is primarily derived from their special architectural and historic interest.

6. Built originally as the Corn Exchange in 1865, the Haymarket Theatre is an example of what the Basingstoke Town Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) describes as listed buildings dating from this period, which are generally characterised by their strong architectural or consciously designed appearance, often located at key visual points in the streetscape. Its rich architectural detailing is typical of the exchanges that were purpose-built around the middle of the nineteenth century as structures devoted to commercial activity and to embody the prosperity of the town.
7. 12 Wote Street (no 12) was constructed in the early nineteenth century as a house, but was subsequently converted into a shop and remains in commercial use, and is defined by its pleasing, plainer character. By virtue of their special architectural and historic interest, these two Grade II listed buildings make a substantial contribution to the significance of the CA, and form key components of the views along Wote Street identified within the CAA, particularly from Market Square.
8. The Council has also referred to non-designated heritage assets sited within proximity to the appeal site, which are formally identified in the CAA as 'notable structures' making a positive contribution to the overall character and sense of place of the CA. Though limited information has been presented in that respect, there is no doubt that 9 Wote Street (no 9) adds to the significance of the CA, by virtue of its architectural detailing.
9. This part of Wote Street is pedestrianised and relatively wide. Within that sensitive historic context, the proposed development would, due to its height, overall size and inappropriate design, appear unduly prominent within the street scene, causing harm to its visual amenity. It would harmfully intrude into the settings of the Haymarket Theatre and no 12, thus eroding the ability to appreciate the special interest of the Grade II listed buildings and no 9 as a NDHA. This would be detrimental to their significance. It follows that the proposed development would also cause harm to the significance of the CA as a whole, as it would unduly stand out as an intrusive feature, which would interrupt views along Wote Street. Additionally, the raised nature of the proposal and the topography along Wote Street would, in certain views, only serve to exacerbate the excessive height, scale and undue prominence of the proposed enclosure.
10. My attention has been drawn to other outdoor seating areas which have been approved elsewhere within Basingstoke Town Centre. However, in the absence of further details regarding these particular schemes, I cannot be certain that they represent a direct parallel to the proposal before me. Furthermore, these are sited within different streets, where the context is inevitably different. The display of fruit and vegetables further down Wote Street is of a more informal nature and is not comparable to the appeal proposal. Accordingly, very limited weight can be ascribed to these examples.
11. Given the above, the appeal scheme would cause harm to the visual amenity of the area and fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Basingstoke Town CA, but also the special interest of the Grade II listed Haymarket Theatre and no 12, and of no 9 as a NDHA, as derived from their settings. It would

therefore conflict with Policies EM10 and EM11 of Basingstoke and Dean Local Plan - Adopted May 2016 (BDLP), Basingstoke Town Conservation Area Appraisal and the Heritage Supplementary Planning Document (March 2019). Amongst other things, these seek to ensure that development proposals are of a high quality and positively contribute to the appearance and use of streets and other public spaces, but also conserve or enhance the quality of the borough's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.

12. Policy EM1 relates to the impact of development proposals on the landscape and as the site lies within Basingstoke Town Centre, this policy is considered of limited relevance to this appeal. Consequently, I find no conflict with Policy EM1 of the BDLP.

Pedestrian safety

13. Concerns have also been raised by the Council regarding the obstruction which the proposed development would cause to pedestrians, as well as wheelchair and mobility scooter users. Wote Street appears to be well used, given its location within the commercial precinct, but as it is pedestrianised, there is space for users to move relatively freely. Undoubtedly, the appeal scheme would reduce the width of this pedestrianised environment. However, the street is relatively wide and despite the space that would be occupied by the outdoor seating area, I find it unlikely, having regard to the available evidence, that it would impede the flow of users to an unacceptable degree.
14. For these reasons, the proposal would cause no harm to pedestrian safety and I thus find no conflict with Policies EM10 and CN9 of the BDLP. These notably seek to ensure that development proposals provide safe, suitable and convenient access for all potential users.

Heritage Balance

15. The harm which would be caused to the significance of each individual designated heritage asset would be less than substantial, and would be sited towards the low end of that scale. The harm therefore has to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, in accordance with paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework. There would be some public benefits associated with the proposal, which would support the economic activity within the town centre and improve access for wheelchair users, though I am not certain that, having regard to the presented evidence, this could not be achieved by other means and in a way that would be less harmful. This reduces the weight I ascribe to this consideration. It is also argued that the appeal scheme would enhance the public realm. However, overall, the harm which I have identified would not be outweighed by the presented public benefits.

Conclusion

16. Whilst I have found no harm with regard to pedestrian safety, this is outweighed by the harm which the proposal would cause to the visual amenity of the area and heritage assets. There are no material considerations, which indicate that the appeal should be determined, other than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Edwards

INSPECTOR