



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 September 2025

by **L Wilson BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/F2415/W/25/3367323

Walnut Farm, 45 North End, Hallaton, Leicestershire LE16 8UJ

- 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 Mrs Gill against the decision of Harborough District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00955/FUL.
 - The development was originally described as proposed tractor shed/carport.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Background and Main Issue

2. The appeal follows a previously refused planning application and dismissed appeal which sought permission for a tractor shed located within the adjoining paddock. The proposal sought to address the previous reasons for refusal.
3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, having regard to the Hallaton Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. Walnut Farm comprises a working farm. The appeal site is accessed from North End and contains an attractive rendered and thatched dwelling with a recently converted large annex and also outbuildings.
5. As the proposal is in a conservation area, I have had special regard to section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act). The CA is characterised by a mix of dwelling types which vary in terms of materials, scale and architectural design. The historic road layout and green spaces contribute to the CA's rural character.
6. The building would be adjacent to the identified important open space identified in the Hallaton Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2031 (NP). Furthermore, the open space towards the west of the site has been identified, in Policy ENV8 of the NP, as an important view that makes a positive contribution to the setting and character of the village.
7. It is not uncommon to have working farms and their associated buildings within the confines of a village setting. The proposed building would be located on part of the site which already contains numerous buildings, rather than open land and would be located with a backdrop of other buildings in the village. Furthermore, the proposed materials would be in keeping.

8. However, the proposed development would result in a large agricultural building which is not a characteristic feature of this part of the CA. Taking into account the height and width of the proposed building, it would be significantly greater in scale than the existing structures. Whilst the proposal would be slightly to the east of identified important view 10, due to the size of the proposed building, it would be a prominent structure when viewed from this viewpoint and the nearby open space and path. It would also be visible from North End. Consequently, due to the siting, height and massing of the proposed building, the proposal would fail to respect the character and appearance of the area and not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA.
9. The appellant has drawn my attention to the recently constructed red brick cottage located nearby and invited comments on its design and appearance. However, my role is to determine the appeal based on the planning merits and impacts of the proposed development before me. In any event, I do not consider the dwelling causes harm or provides justification for the proposed development.
10. For the reasons set out above, I find that the proposal would fail to respect or enhance the character or appearance of the CA and would not respect the character of the surroundings. Paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 213 goes on to advise that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.
11. Given that there are a mix of buildings in the CA and this part of the site currently contains buildings, I find the harm to be less than substantial in this instance. Within the less than substantial categorisation, the amount of harm would be at the lower end of the spectrum. Nonetheless, mindful of my statutory duties, this is a matter to which I attach considerable importance and weight. Under such circumstances, paragraph 215 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
12. The appellant sets out that the farm operates a wide range of machinery and farm implements that need to be stored in a secure location close to the main farmhouse. At present the highlighted items are stored in various locations. They state that the new building would, along with the existing car port, enable them to house under cover all the tractors and farm machinery in a secure environment and in close proximity to the farmhouse. Thus, the appellant considers that the proposal would be an improvement to the appearance of the immediate surroundings as it would tidy up the site and screen some of the more modern houses behind. Furthermore, they state that all built development would be removed from the important open land retaining its green and verdant appearance. Nonetheless, the public benefits are not sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified.
13. Given the above, I conclude that, on balance, the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA and would cause harm to the character and appearance of the local area. Therefore, the development would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act, paragraph 215 of the Framework and

conflict with Policies HC1 and GD8 of the Harborough Local Plan 2011 to 2031 (2019) and Policies HBE 1 and ENV 8 of the NP. These seek to conserve or enhance heritage assets, and less than substantial harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Furthermore, development should respect the context and characteristics of the individual site, street scene and the wider local environment, and ensure that key views can continue to be enjoyed. As a result, the proposal would not be in accordance with the development plan.

Other Matters

14. The appellant sets out that they would have been open to discuss amendments that may have overcome the Council's concerns, but they were not given the opportunity to. Furthermore, rural crime continues to rise, and the farm has been subject to crime in recent years. The other matters highlighted do not outweigh the harm identified above.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, having considered the development plan as a whole, the approach in the Framework, and all other material considerations, the appeal does not succeed.

L Wilson

INSPECTOR