



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 July 2025

by J Symmons BSc (Hons) CEng MICE

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W4705/W/25/3361693

Hope Farm, Green Lane, Baildon, Shipley, West Yorkshire BD17 5AR

- 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 M Pix against the decision of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/03825/HOU.
 - The development proposed is the construction of proposed garage and stable block.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the development description shown on the application form in the above header as no evidence has been provided to show a change has been agreed. Notwithstanding this, as the term 'curtilage' is not a 'use' of land, nor does it describe an act of development, for correctness, I have deleted the reference to this in the development description.
3. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) was published in December 2024. The Council refers to this revised Framework in its appeal statement but incorrectly details the wording of the exception shown in Paragraph 154 g). Similarly, in the appellant's appeal statement, incorrect wording of exception g) of Paragraph 154 was also detailed. For correctness, the parties were given the opportunity to comment on the correct wording, and I have considered the responses provided in my determination of the appeal. I have also referred to the revised Framework and used its paragraph numbering where relevant.
4. The appellant indicates that the appeal site benefits from a January 2020 granted planning permission for the conversion of the adjacent barn to a single dwelling, LPA Ref: 19/04832, and that this was commenced in 2022. While not directly referred to as a 'fallback' position, the granted permission is used to demonstrate that the proposal would have a similar impact on the Green Belt and character and appearance of the area. However, the Council advises that this permission has lapsed and has submitted photographs dated 23 August 2023 and 28 November 2024 in support of this. The appellant provided no evidence to dispute this or any substantive evidence to demonstrate the granted scheme commenced in 2022.
5. On my visit, I saw that some external works were being undertaken at the appeal site in the form of fencing, walling and ground and access works. However, the extent of these works was significantly different to those shown on the provided

granted permission's drawing¹. Neither was any compelling evidence presented to show the works completed were directly related to the granted scheme. The works do not represent commencement of the granted scheme and accordingly the permission has lapsed. As the granted scheme does not have a theoretical possibility of being undertaken, it does not constitute a fallback which can be used to help justify the proposal. I have therefore not considered this further in the appeal.

Main Issues

6. The application was submitted using the Council's 'Householder Application for Planning Permission for works or extension to a dwelling' service. In the decision notice, the third reason for refusal details that the proposal was outside the residential curtilage of the existing dwelling on Hope Farm and the use of a Householder Application was not appropriate. However, it is evident that the Council validated the application, considered its planning merits and issued its decision. Little substantive evidence has been provided to show the Householder Application prevented the Council from satisfactorily determining the application. Moreover, as the appeal has been undertaken using the written representation procedure and not as a householder appeal, this has given the Council a further opportunity to make comments on the application. As such, I have not considered the Householder Application reason for refusal.
7. Consequently, the main issues in the determination of the appeal are:
 - whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and any relevant development plan policies;
 - the effect of the proposal on the openness and purposes of the Green Belt;
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area; and
 - if it is inappropriate, whether any harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, would be clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to the very special circumstances required to justify the proposal.

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development

8. The appeal site is a modest-sized and quite isolated farmstead to the end of Green Lane. It has a number of buildings including a farmhouse with detached garage, separate barn and stables and some hardstanding. Access is via a driveway from the lane. The appeal site is in the Green Belt.
9. The proposal would consist of a detached triple garage with attached stable building. It would be built next to the existing barn and to the front and partly over the existing stables and some of the existing hardstanding.
10. Within the Green Belt the Council has a general presumption against inappropriate development and a requirement that proposals will not harm the distinctive identity of Bradford's countryside. A number of policies in the Replacement Unitary

¹ Proposed Barn Conversion, Hope Farm, reference 2864.2, dated October 2019 by John and Jennifer Wharton Architect Designers

Development Plan for the Bradford District, 2005 (RUDP) and Bradford District Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2017 (Core Strategy) set out very special circumstances where development in the Green Belt would be supported.

11. This approach is broadly consistent with the general aims of the Framework which details the great importance the Government attaches to Green Belts with the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy being to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. However, the Council acknowledges that the exceptions to inappropriate development in the Green Belt are more limited in the policies in the RUDP than those in the Framework. The Council therefore confirm that greater weight should be attached to the provisions set out in the Framework. I see little reason to disagree and accordingly have considered the proposal on this basis.
12. The Framework states at Paragraph 154 that construction of new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate development which is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. However, this is subject to a number of exceptions.
13. In terms of Paragraph 154 of the Framework exceptions, the appellant details that the proposal would comply with exceptions (c) '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; (d) 'The replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces close'; (e) 'limited infilling in villages' and (g) 'limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt'.
14. With respect to exception c), the appellant contends that the proposal would be in the residential curtilage of the farmhouse and as such would represent an extension to it. However, even with the grouping of the existing buildings, the proposal would still be quite distant from the farmhouse and, while it would be within the redline boundary land which is owned by the appellant, there is no convincing evidence presented that the existing barn and stables are ancillary or normal domestic adjunct to it. Indeed, from my visit, the existing barn and stables are distinctly separate with no obvious intimate association to the domestic use of the farmhouse. There is therefore little to suggest the existing barn and stables are part of the residential purpose and therefore residential curtilage of the farmhouse. Taking these facts together, and with no compelling evidence to the contrary, the proposal would not represent an extension or alteration to the farmhouse.
15. The appellant contends that the grant of planning permission for a single storey rear extension, LPA Reference 22/02876/HOU, demonstrated the Council had acknowledged the appeal site as being within the residential curtilage. However, details of this scheme have not been provided for comparison. From its development description it would appear, unlike the proposal before me, that the extension was directly next to the farmhouse and related to its domestic functioning. As such this granted scheme is not directly comparable to the proposal and does not change my view that the existing barn and stables are not ancillary buildings to the farmhouse.

16. Further to this, no substantive evidence has been provided to show the proposal would represent an extension or alteration to either the existing barn or stables. Even if one of these were considered, the proposal's large size and scale in comparison to the existing barn or stable building would be a disproportionate addition. This view is supported by the individual building volumes set out in the provided volume assessment. This states that the proposal would be 417 cubic metres (m³) compared to the stated pre-1948 volumes of 1236m³ for the barn and 56m³ for the stables. This shows the significant increase in size the proposal would have over these buildings. While the appellant contends that the volume calculation shows the proposal's increase in building size over that of the existed pre-1948 was not disproportionate, this was based on combining the volumes of buildings within the residential curtilage of the farmhouse. However, as detailed above, I do not agree with the extent of the residential curtilage and the calculation is not appropriate for assessing the proposal. Consequently, the proposal would not meet exception c).
17. In relation to exceptions d) and e), the proposal would not replace a building. It would also, due to its distance from the settlement boundary of Baildon and neighbouring dwellings, and its positioning to the end of the existing buildings, not appear as being in a village or infilling a gap between buildings. The proposal would therefore not meet either of these exceptions.
18. Regarding exception g), the proposal would redevelop an area which is shown on the existing layout plan as predominately covered by enclosed animal pens and by a small stable building. However, there is little evidence that the animal pens were used as part of the stables and, with no evidence to the contrary, in all likelihood these would have been related to the farm's agricultural use. The Framework's definition of previously developed land excludes land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings. As such, the proposal would not be classed as previously developed land and the exception is not applicable.
19. For the above reasons, the proposal would fail to comply with exceptions c), d), e) and g). There is no suggestion that the proposal would meet any other exception in the Framework and accordingly, the proposal would be inappropriate development.

Openness and Purposes

20. Openness is identified in the Framework as one of the Green Belt's essential characteristics and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that this is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects.
21. In spatial terms, the proposal would have a footprint and volume that would lead to an overall spatial loss of openness. Visually, the proposal would be a large addition in a prominent position. It would increase the scale and massing of the built form and would be more noticeable and distracting in the public views across the landscape. Considering these aspects against the size of the existing farmstead buildings and the Green Belt as a whole, the proposal's harm to openness would be moderate.
22. The Green Belt also serves a number of purposes including preventing urban sprawl and encroachment into the countryside. While the proposal would be contained in an area that has been used for agricultural purposes, it would increase the extent and prominence of the farmstead's buildings. This would increase urban sprawl and cause further building encroachment into the countryside. Taking these

impacts in the context of the size of the existing farmstead buildings and the Green Belt as a whole, it would only moderately harm the purposes of the Green Belt.

23. Overall, the proposal would cause moderate harm to the openness and purposes of the Green Belt.

Character and appearance

24. The site lies on the edge of the Rombalds Ridge Landscape Character Area and is identified in the Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) dated October 2008 as being in the 'mixed upland pasture'. This area sits below the upland pasture and has a remote, rural and open landscape character. It has a rolling landform, some isolated farmsteads and is partly used for the agricultural practices of cattle and sheep grazing.
25. The proposal would be a similar height and length to the existing retained part of the stables and have a lower and stepped roof height to that of the existing barn. However, due to its small separation with the existing barn and more forward building line to the existing stables, the proposal would create a significantly larger building frontage. Even with its proposed stone and traditional built form, the increased scale and massing would appear as an overly dominant feature within the landscape. It would erode the rural and open character of the Rombalds Ridge Landscape Character Area and visually harm the existing public views.
26. While reference is made that the proposal would have a less visual impact than two existing static caravan sites in the Rombalds Ridge Landscape Character Area, this does not justify the harm the proposal would cause. Furthermore, the proposal would, with its larger building scale and massing, also be significantly more visually harmful than the less imposing existing concrete slab and dilapidated fencing.
27. The proposal would therefore harm the character and appearance of the area, and would be contrary to Policies DS1, DS2 and EN4 of the Core Strategy and Paragraphs 135, 159 and 187 of the Framework. These seek, amongst other matters, for new development to be to a good design, visually attractive, sympathetic to local character, contributes positively to the landscape setting and enhances the natural and local environment.

Other Considerations

28. The proposal would provide additional stables and a more practicable and usable garage to that previously permitted as part of the barn conversion. It would also allow continual enjoyment of the farm by the appellant's family. However, no compelling evidence has been provided to show the proposal is required for the family's enjoyment or as detailed previously, that the barn conversion permission has not lapsed. As such these do not attract weight in favour of the proposal.
29. While the proposal would provide some economic benefits to the area during construction, this would only be for a temporary period. No evidence has been presented to show the proposal would provide any further economic, social or environmental benefits. These aspects therefore attract limited weight in favour of the scheme.
30. It is advised that the proposal would not have any impact on the existing road infrastructure, public rights of way and would meet the current building regulations. It would also clear some existing dilapidated fencing and some unsightly debris.

However, while I see little reason to disagree with any of these aspects, they are neutral factors which do not weigh in favour of the proposal.

Planning Balance

31. The proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area and would be inappropriate development. Although only moderate harm to the openness and purposes of the Green Belt has been found, Paragraph 153 of the Framework states that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness.
32. The other considerations put forward in favour of the proposal have limited weight and do not clearly outweigh the identified harm to character and appearance and the Green Belt. Therefore, very special circumstances necessary to justify the development do not exist.

Other Matters

33. The appellant advises that the planning application was essentially a resubmission of a previously refused application and that new reasons for refusal were raised even though the only difference between the applications was the inclusion of a new supporting statement. Furthermore, the appellant suggests the Council's decision shows an unreasonable barrier to development within the Green Belt. However, it is clear from the Planning Officer's Report that the Council considered the planning merits of the proposal against policies within the development plan and Framework and reached a balanced and substantiated conclusion.
34. The appellant raises concern that the Council did not consider the planning application in a positive and proactive manner. However, these matters have no bearing on the planning merits of the case.

Conclusion

35. For the reasons given above, and taking into account other matters raised, the appeal should be dismissed.

J Symmons

INSPECTOR