



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 October 2025

by O Marigold BSc DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 November 2025.

Appeal Ref: APP/H1705/W/25/3369915

Land at Wolverton Road, Baughurst, Tadley, Hampshire RG26 5JH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for outline planning permission
 - The appeal is made by Mr William Magill against the decision of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00804/FUL.
 - The development proposed is for erection of a sustainable self-build dwelling with associated landscaping and biodiversity enhancements.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed, and planning permission is refused.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal results from the failure of the Council to determine the planning application within the prescribed period. As a result, there is no formal decision notice. However, the Council's Statement of Case sets out the reasons why it would have refused planning permission had it been empowered to do so.
3. During the appeal, the appellant submitted a planning obligation by way of a revised Unilateral Undertaking (UU), dated 20 September 2025. This seeks to secure the delivery of a landscape masterplan, biodiversity enhancement measures and highway visibility splays. The Council has commented on this, and I shall take the UU into account.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area,
 - whether the proposal would accord with the spatial strategy of the Development Plan, and
 - whether occupiers of the proposal would have reasonable access to shops, facilities and services.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

5. The site consists of a triangular section of undeveloped, sloping land. The site lies on the edge of the village of Baughurst, where the built-up area gives way to open

countryside. It is within the Wolverton Landscape Character Area (LCA) as identified in the Basingstoke and Deane Landscape Character Assessment, May 2021. The LCA is characterised by a mosaic of medium to small-scale mixed farmland, together with woodland, a strong hedgerow structure and enclosure by copses. Although now sub-divided, the site was formerly part of a larger field. As undeveloped green countryside, the appeal site reflects the wider LCA, and positively contributes to its character.

6. The proposal seeks to erect a two-storey dwelling, together with an access drive from Wolverton Road. The dwelling has been designed to appear as a farmhouse, with an H-shaped footprint, and a position partially set into the gradient. Extensive planting is proposed within the wider site, including a traditional orchard, native wildflower meadow and enhanced boundary treatments. The landscaping masterplan includes land outside of the application site but within the appellant's control. Its measures would be securable through the UU and the Council's Landscaping Team did not object to the proposal.
7. Even so, the pattern of development along Wolverton Road includes ribbons of dwellings along the highway. The transition between the countryside and the village is clearly defined by the edge of the adjacent dwelling and its garden. As such, the proposal would result in the permanent encroachment of large-scale built form beyond the current development limit and into the countryside. For these reasons, it would undermine the attractive, rural character of the site and of the surrounding area. Furthermore, the angled, set back position of the dwelling would not particularly reflect the linear pattern of development along the appeal site side of Wolverton Road.
8. On the submitted plans, a defined curtilage area has been drawn closely around the proposed dwelling and driveway. However, this would leave an awkwardly shaped area of land between the curtilage and the southern hedgerow. The proposal would also formalise the uncharacteristic division of the plot from the wider field. In any case, it would result in the residential use of large parts of the site. Even with planning controls, such as in respect of external lighting, the domestic paraphernalia associated with residential use, together with the creation of the necessary visibility splays at the site access, would add to the harmful suburbanising impacts of the proposal.
9. As identified by the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), the proposal would be visible from a number of public viewpoints. These include those from Wolverton Road, Violet Lane and from Public Rights of Way (PROWs). These include a long-distance path, the Brenda Parker Way. From these viewpoints (1 to 8), the LVIA acknowledges that the proposal would have adverse effects of moderate to large significance before mitigation.
10. Although some of the mitigation and planting has already been installed, it may take many years for this to take full effect. Landscaping cannot be relied upon for screening, particularly in winter months when foliage is reduced, and nor can its survival in the long term be guaranteed. Even with the proposed mitigation, the LVIA identifies that the proposal would still cause slight or moderate adverse visual effects, particularly from the PROWs.
11. For the reasons given above, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. As a result, it would be contrary to policies EM1 and

EM10 of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (BDLP), adopted May 2016. These require development to be sympathetic to the character and visual quality of the area, to enhance the landscape and to respect the environment. I give this conflict substantial weight, reflecting the similar aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).

Spatial Strategy

12. BDLP policy SS1 outlines the Council's strategy for housing delivery. The site lies adjacent to but outside of the defined Settlement Policy Boundary (SPB) for Baughurst. As such, relevant to this appeal, the strategy only supports development where a countryside location is essential or where it accords with other BDLP policies. One such policy is SS6, which permits new housing outside of SPBs, but only where certain criteria apply.
13. Of its criteria, only SS6(e) is relevant here. This permits dwellings of a scale and type that would meet a specific local need, where agreed in consultation with the Parish Council. The proposal has been designed to be adaptable, and to cater for the needs of the appellant and his family as they age, including the provision of a lift and a carer's annex. The Parish Council did not comment on the appeal planning application, but the ward profile projects an aging population in the area. The Neighbourhood Steering Group has identified some support for new housing, and options for this are constrained by emergency planning zones.
14. Even so, I have little evidence that a specific size or type of dwelling has been agreed locally as being necessary. The Council's Housing Supplementary Planning Document, July 2018, highlights a Borough-wide need for smaller homes for older people to downsize into. In this context, it has not been shown that the proposed large dwelling would accord with any such local needs. The general need for housing in the area is a matter which I will consider below. However, this does not amount to the specific, agreed need required by policy SS6(e). I therefore take a different view on this point to the Inspector at Burghclere¹, although in that case the circumstances were somewhat different.
15. Policy SS6(e) makes other requirements including that proposals must respect the landscape and be sympathetic to its character. I have already found that this would not be the case. A countryside location has not been identified as being necessary for the proposal and nor have other Local Plan policies been shown to provide sufficient justification for it. Consequently, for the reasons given above, the proposal would not accord with the spatial strategy of the Development Plan, conflicting with BDLP policies SS1 and SS6. I give this conflict substantial negative weight, reflecting the aim of the Framework to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Services and Facilities

16. BDLP policy CN9 seeks to minimise the need to travel, improve accessibility to services and to promote the use of sustainable transport modes. This is to achieve more sustainable travel behaviour and to support a transition to a low carbon future.

¹ APP/H1705/W/24/3356722

17. The site is on the edge of Baughurst and is close to Heath End and Tadley. There is no dispute that the site is not isolated. Within a ten-minute walking distance from the site, the facilities available include a public house, convenience store, village hall, leisure centre and a school. Further services are available within a ten-minute cycling distance, such as two larger supermarkets, a church, and infant and junior schools. The bus stop at Heath End Road, not too far away from the appeal site, provides regular services to and from other destinations, for example Basingstoke and Thatcham.
18. To access these facilities, occupiers would need to use local roads. Wolverton Road here has no pavements or street lighting. However, it is only a relatively short distance to the junction with Baughurst Road, where highway conditions improve. Furthermore, in the vicinity of the appeal site Wolverton Road is wide and has grass verges in places, providing a degree of separation for pedestrians. My weekday lunchtime visit represents a snapshot in time, but use of Wolverton Road did not feel particularly discouraging for pedestrians or cyclists.
19. These factors differentiate the proposal from the more restricted environment and facilities considered in appeals at Sherfield on Loddon² and Charter Alley³. As such, in respect of this issue, these examples are not comparable to the appeal site. Even if occupiers of the proposed dwelling would be reliant on private vehicles, for example people of limited mobility, the Framework recognises that opportunities for sustainable transport will vary between urban and rural areas. Although in a rural location, the site is a relatively short distance away from the facilities and services identified, thus avoiding the need for lengthy car journeys.
20. For these reasons, I conclude that occupiers of the proposal would have reasonable access to shops, facilities and services. It would therefore comply with BDLP policy CN9 and with the Framework in this respect. Consequently, this issue is neutral in the planning balance.

Other Considerations

21. The Council accepts that it cannot currently demonstrate an adequate supply of housing land, calculated to be below three years' supply. Accordingly, it is necessary for me to determine whether the adverse impacts of the proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits inherent in providing an additional dwelling to assist the Council in addressing its undersupply, as set out in Framework paragraph 11. BDLP Policy SD1 makes similar requirements.
22. I have found conflict with BDLP policies EM1, EM10, SS1 and SS6, which are broadly consistent with the Framework. Against that, the proposal would make a positive contribution to the supply of housing, including by freeing up the appellant's current home. Future occupiers of the proposed dwelling would make social and economic benefits to the area, and the property would be built to high environmental standards. However, due to the proposal being for only a single dwelling, such benefits attract only limited weight.
23. The proposal is for self-build accommodation. An exemption from the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) condition has been claimed on this basis. That said, the proposal includes measures, secured by the UU, that would increase BNG by 135%, and

² APP/H1705/W/24/3336735

³ APP/H1705/W/25/3363048

120% in respect of hedgerows. It would also have other ecological benefits. I give these factors additional limited positive weight in the planning balance. There is no dispute that the Council has met its duty under the Self and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 to grant permission for sufficient plots for the relevant period. Nevertheless, I give further limited positive weight to the self-build benefits of the proposal.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

24. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that applications for planning permission, and therefore appeals, must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
25. Given the harm that I have identified, for the reasons given above, the adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole. It follows that the proposal would also conflict with BDLP Policy SD1.
26. For the reasons already stated, I have found conflict with the Development Plan as a whole. The material considerations in this case, including the Framework, do not indicate a decision other than in accordance with the Development Plan. This leads me to conclude that the appeal should be dismissed, and planning permission refused.

O Marigold

INSPECTOR