



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 October 2025

by **G Bayliss BA (Hons) MA MA MRTPI IHBC**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6th November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/W/25/3363526

**Charity Farm, Beancroft Road, Marston Moreteyne, Central Bedfordshire
MK43 0QF**

- 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 James Lloyd, Bruce's Doggy Day Care, against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - The application Ref is CB/23/03776/FULL.
 - The development proposed is the erection of an outbuilding, car parking area and fencing to facilitate the use of the site as dog care facility (Bruce's Doggy Day Care).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal site lies near to Charity Farmhouse, a Grade II listed building. Although the Council has not highlighted any particular concerns in relation to the heritage significance of this building and the proposed development, Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, (the Act) requires the decision maker, in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest. I have therefore included this as a main issue.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposal on the significance of a Grade II listed building; and
 - The effect of the proposal on highway safety, with particular regard to access arrangements and parking provision.

Reasons

Significance

4. The appeal site forms part of a hedged field on the southern side of Beancroft Road alongside and shares an access with existing buildings associated with Charity Farm. Charity Farmhouse (listed building Ref.1321646) is described in the list description as an early 17th century house constructed in timber frame with brick infill covered with colourwashed render and has a clay tiled roof. It mentions

that the main part of the building is of two storeys with the gable end facing the road, and describes the L-shaped plan, the arrangement of openings and architectural features. For the purposes of this appeal, the building's significance is mainly derived from its age, form, function and historic features. It forms part of an historic farmstead with associated buildings mainly enclosing a farmyard to the south of the house. This farmstead is set within an agricultural landscape, and this is the environment in which the listed building is experienced and appreciated. Although many historic buildings associated with the farmstead appear to have been substantially rebuilt or replaced, the farmyard arrangement contributes to the significance of the listed building.

5. The appeal site lies to the south and east of the farmyard, and the development would comprise new low-rise buildings partly on the site of an existing stable, an area of car parking and several enclosed dog fields. The Council considers that the proposed buildings would not dominate the appearance of the listed building or the existing outbuildings, and that the development as a whole would retain the open, rural character of the site. Having reviewed the evidence and seen the site, there is little to suggest any harmful impact arising from the proposal on the contribution that the setting makes to the significance of the listed building, and I see no reason to disagree with the Council.
6. I therefore conclude that the proposal would have no harmful effect on the significance of a Grade II listed building. It would therefore comply with the Act as well as Policy HE3 of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan (2021) (CBLP) and the relevant sections of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which seek to underpin the statutory requirements.

Highway safety

7. Vehicular access to the appeal site would be via an existing access to the former farmyard and its surrounding buildings which appear to include some commercial units. Both parties explain that this existing access is onto the old alignment of Beancroft Road, close to the junction with the more recent alignment of Beancroft Road, a road subject to the national speed limit (the main road).
8. The original proposal sought to provide dog daycare facilities for up to 60 dogs at any one time. Of these, it was proposed that 48 dogs would be transported to and from the site by three 'dog busses' and that the remaining dogs would be dropped off and picked up by customers during the day. A total of 6 full-time staff would be on the site. The appellant considered that the proposal as originally submitted would generate 60 traffic movements per day.
9. Following the Council's concerns in relation to highway safety and parking provision, the appellant has indicated that a condition could be attached to an approval to require that dogs are only transported by dog bus with no public access. The appellant suggests that this condition is used on some of their other trading sites and has operated successfully. Therefore, under the revised proposal, at full capacity it is predicted that there would be four buses and two additional staff vehicles generating 12 traffic movements each day.
10. Although the appellant is now intending for most dogs to be transported by dog bus, I do not feel assured that some customers and visitors would not visit the site in their own vehicles. Such visits may be made by owners wishing to transport their own dogs, to collect them part-way through the day to suit their needs or to

inspect the facilities. Although the appellant suggests that these stringent controls are used on other sites, I have little evidence of this, including the circumstances of these sites and whether the access is suitable in all other aspects in these other situations. It would therefore seem unreasonable and impractical to prevent others visiting. Nor would it appear to be enforceable as it is not clearly explained how visits would be controlled or any mechanism through which the Council could limit the number of customers to the site. I therefore consider that the appellant underestimates the number of vehicle trips to the appeal site, and the numbers could be significantly more than stated.

11. The Council's Highways Officer (HO) advises that the existing site access has poor visibility in both directions along the main road and that the proposal would cause an intensification of the use of the junction between the old and new alignments of Beancroft Road. The HO is particularly concerned with the view looking right (south) which is currently obstructed by vegetation and considers that drivers exiting the appeal site will not have sufficient visibility of vehicles turning left off the main road. The appellant suggests that the view to the south of the junction could be improved by attaching a condition to any approval to require some trees within the adopted highway land to be felled. However, undertaking this work and the long-term maintenance of this vegetation would not appear to be in the control of the appellant. Furthermore, the HO suggests that a chevron sign would then be needed in this area to clearly delineate the line of the main road to prevent drivers traveling north continuing along the old road. Again, the provision of this signage would not appear to be in the control of the appellant, and I have no assurance that such a sign would be appropriate or desirable to the Highways Authority.
12. The appellant appears to accept that the visibility at this junction falls short of that required for the current speed limit and is relying on a range of measures within the highway, secured by a planning condition, to improve visibility and mitigate risks to drivers. In addition to the above proposed works, other suggestions include repositioning the Give Way line at the junction, a possible reduction in the speed limit along the main road to 40mph, as well as amended road markings and changes to signs in the immediate vicinity to bring about the required reduction in speed.
13. The HO advises that a reduction in the speed limit along this part of the main road is not within the appellant's control and would require a separate process to the planning decision. In any event, the HO advises that a reduction in the speed limit would not be supported as the prevailing 85th percentile speeds are higher than the Authority's intervention level for considering such a reduction. The HO also suggests that taking account of the sweeping bends, the rural environment and absence of built frontage or roadside activity, there would be no reason for a driver to reduce their speed and that the proposed measures would not be effective. The appellant has submitted little evidence to counter this view.
14. Therefore, the proposal would be reliant on a range of off-site measures, predominantly within highway land, which do not appear to be within the control of the appellant, and in many cases may not to be desirable or achievable. The number of required off-site works is symptomatic of the extent to which the access is unsuitable for the proposed use and clearly indicates to me the unacceptability of the appeal scheme.

15. I have concluded that there is a realistic prospect of more vehicles visiting the site than the appellant anticipates, and therefore the level of car parking proposed is likely to be insufficient for the development. Overspill parking may occur on the old alignment of the road which could affect the flow of vehicles and further obstruct driver visibility at the junction with the main road.
16. In relation to the appeal Ref. APP/P0240/W/23/3333240, the Inspector appeared to be mainly considering a view from the junction to vehicles approaching in the offside lane, rather than the nearside lane which is critical to the decision before me. Also, it appears that in that decision vehicles would be approaching at a slow speed. In relation to the appeal Ref APP/P0240/W/18/3205542, the Inspector did not appear to consider that the intensification of the proposed use was significant. In the case before me, there is likely to be a marked intensification in vehicular movements. Based on the limited information provided, neither case suggests to me that the appeal before me should be determined other than on the specifics of this case, including its site context.
17. The access and junction arrangements at the appeal site may be pre-existing and serve other businesses on the premises and I am advised that there are no recent, recorded safety concerns. However, the evidence suggests that the existing access is substandard and the risk to drivers would increase through an intensification of the use of the junction which would be over and above the existing and extant uses at the wider site.
18. The Council appears satisfied that the proposal complies with other local plan policies including employment generation, ecology, landscaping and noise. I have also taken account of the proposed site enhancements which may contribute positively to the local environment. I recognise that there also appears to be significant demand for the facility, and that dog walkers often travel by car to walk their dogs meaning that the proposed use may not generate a significant number of additional private vehicle movements in the area. Nevertheless, despite all the positive and worthwhile aspects of the scheme asserted, I am not satisfied that, based on the information before me, that the proposal would not lead to conditions of danger and inconvenience to users of the highway.
19. I therefore conclude that the proposal would have a harmful effect on highway safety, with particular regard to access arrangements and parking provision. It would conflict with CBLP Policies T2 and T3 which require that development must not have a detrimental effect on highway safety and must provide appropriate access and parking. It would also conflict with the Framework which seeks to ensure that safe and suitable access can be achieved for all users.

Conclusion

20. Although I have found no harm in relation to the significance of the listed building this is a neutral matter which weighs neither for nor against the proposal. For the above reasons, and having taken all other matters raised into account, there are no material considerations that indicate that the proposal should be determined otherwise than in accordance with the development plan as a whole. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Bayliss

INSPECTOR