



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: 17 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/H1705/W/25/3370674

**Little Bowlings Farm, Goddards Lane, Sherfield on Loddon, Hampshire
RG27 0EL**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant Permission in Principle.
 - The appeal is made by Executors of the Estate of K Gaiger against the decision of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/02378/PIP.
 - The development proposed is demolition of the existing equestrian buildings and erection of a minimum of 2 dwellings and a maximum of 4 dwellings and associated landscaping.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposal is for Permission in Principle. This is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development. This has two stages. The first establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle. The second stage, for Technical Details Consent (TDC), is when the detailed development proposals are assessed. This appeal relates to the first of these two stages.
3. The scope of the considerations at this stage is limited to location, land use and the amount of development. All other matters are considered as part of a subsequent TDC application if Permission in Principle is granted. In this case, permission is sought for between two and four dwellings, and I have determined the appeal on this basis. Although plans, elevations and sketches of the proposal have been provided to me, I have treated these as being illustrative of only one way that the site could be developed.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposal and its location, land use and amount would be acceptable having regard to the character and appearance of the area, including the Sherfield on Loddon Conservation Area (CA) and the setting of Carpenters Farmhouse (the Farmhouse), a Grade II listed building.

Reasons

5. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) requires that I have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building and its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest. Section 72 of the same Act requires that I pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA.

6. The site is adjacent to and slightly within the CA, which covers the historic village core, the village green, and some wider areas. Relevant to the appeal, the significance of the CA is the rural character of its buildings, spaces and street scenes. The Farmhouse is a two-storey timber-framed brick dwelling, dating from the 16th and 17th centuries. It includes adjacent barns that are identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal (July 2003) as being notable. For the purposes of this appeal, the significance of the Farmhouse is its age and attractive, agricultural appearance.
7. The CA extends on a spur along Goddards Lane to encompass the Farmhouse, its outbuildings and another dwelling, Bowlings, all of which terminate long views along Goddards Lane. These form a group of buildings separated from the village by countryside. This separation contributes positively to the rural character and experience of this part of the CA. It also forms part of the setting of the Farmhouse. The appeal site adjoins small housing developments at Little Paddock and Little Bowlings. The site consists of buildings, some open-fronted, as well as hardstanding and a paddock, all used for equestrian purposes, within the gently rolling landscape on the edge of the village.
8. There is no dispute that the appeal site constitutes previously developed land. The existing equestrian buildings are utilitarian in appearance, but such structures are an expected part of rural areas. The buildings and paddock, and their equestrian use, give a broadly agricultural character and a distinctly countryside feel to the site and its surroundings. As such, they make a small but positive contribution to the character of the area. It is proposed to demolish the existing buildings on the site and erect between two and four dwellings.
9. The Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) found that until vegetation becomes established the proposal would result in very slight adverse effects on the character of the landscape. In respect of the visual impacts, the proposal would be seen from public viewpoints such as footpaths, Goddards Lane and Little Paddock. Adverse effects were found by the LVA to be slight to neutral, with views from some points reduced over time by planting, with some beneficial effects. However, in my view this understates the harmful visual impacts of the proposal.
10. Moreover, close to Goddards Lane, the buffer of countryside between Little Paddock and Bowlings and its garden is already limited. The design and form of the proposal is a matter for TDC stage. Its built form, for example as two dwellings, could well be smaller in height and mass than the existing equestrian buildings. Nevertheless, even if the proposed dwellings were to have a 'barn like' design, they would inevitably have a residential appearance, as would the garden areas such as to the rear. The paraphernalia associated with residential use, for example outdoor seating and parked cars, would further add to this domestic appearance.
11. Consequently, as residential development, the proposal would effectively extend the village further towards Bowlings and The Farmhouse. In domesticating the buffer, the development would erode the separate, agricultural character of the Farmhouse. As a result, it would diminish the experience of its setting, and therefore its significance, and that of the CA.
12. For the reasons given above, the proposal and its location, land use and amount would harm the character and appearance of the area, the CA as a whole and the setting of the Farmhouse. Accordingly, it would conflict with policies EM1, EM10

and EM11 of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (May 2016), and policy D1 of the Sherfield on Loddon Neighbourhood Development Plan (March 2018). These require development to positively contribute to local distinctiveness, to enhance the landscape, and to at least preserve heritage assets, including the rural setting of Sherfield on Loddon. For the same reasons, the proposal would not accord with the Act.

13. In accordance with paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), I give great weight to the harm to the designated heritage assets and their significance. In the language of Framework paragraph 215, this harm would be less than substantial, and so should be weighed against public benefits.
14. The Council cannot demonstrate a sufficient supply of deliverable housing sites, as confirmed in appeal decisions at Bramley¹ and Burghclere². The development at Headley³ did not involve heritage assets. In this case, the policies in the Framework that protect designated heritage assets provide a strong reason for refusal. As a result, the tilted balance of Framework paragraph 11(d) is not engaged.
15. The proposal would nevertheless add to the supply of housing, at between two and four dwellings, to which I give limited positive weight. Future occupiers would make positive social and economic contributions. It would also have economic benefits, for example to local businesses and the building industry. The proposal would make more efficient use of land, on a site that is close to the services within the village. It may well also have ecological benefits. I give these factors additional limited positive weight. Nevertheless, I conclude that the public benefits would not outweigh the harm to the designated heritage assets.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given, I have found conflict with the Development Plan as a whole. The material considerations in this case, and the weight I give to them, do not indicate a decision other than in accordance with the Development Plan. This leads me to conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

O Marigold

INSPECTOR

¹ PINS reference APP/H1705/W/24/3350575

² PINS reference APP/H1705/W/24/3350581

³ LPA reference 24/02973/PIP