
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 November 2025

by N Bowden BA(Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28th November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Y9507/W/25/3362628

Land west of Mill Hill, Shoreham-By-Sea, West Sussex

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant approval required under Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).
 - The appeal is made by B & F West against the decision of South Downs National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref is SDNP/25/00360/APNB.
 - The development proposed is a new agricultural barn.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Background and Main Issues

2. Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England), Order 2015 (as amended) (the Order) sets out that agricultural development, which is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture, on units of 5 hectares or more is permitted development, subject to certain restrictions, limitations and conditions. This includes a requirement that, under Paragraph A.2 (2) of Class A, the developer applies to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the siting, design and external appearance of the building, amongst other matters.
3. The Authority has indicated that it is satisfied that the proposed agricultural barn would be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within a unit of 5 hectares or more. Furthermore, it would accord with the limitations of Paragraph A.1 of Class A of the Order.
4. However, the Authority considers that its prior approval would be required as to the siting, design and external appearance of the building. This is due to:
 - the potential impacts on the landscape of the South Downs National Park (SDNP),
 - the flood risk and drainage implications of the proposal, and
 - the proximity of the proposal to the priority habitat of coastal and floodplain grazing marsh.
5. The main issues are, therefore, whether the siting, design and external appearance of the building would be acceptable having regard to those above mentioned issues.

Reasons

6. The entirety of the holding including appeal site is set within the SDNP, the purposes of which are to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area, and to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of National Parks by the public. Where there is a conflict between the two purposes, greater weight should be attached to the conservation purpose.
7. The proposed building is modestly sized for its function, it is set in a secluded position and, as demonstrated by the Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA), has a limited impact on the character and appearance of the area, including the South Downs National Park. Its use of materials and design - set into the landscape - are of note and will invariably ameliorate its effects particularly over the longer term. I have no reason to disagree with the findings of the LVA.
8. The building would, however, be set adjacent to Flood Zone 3 and in proximity to priority habitat of coastal and floodplain grazing marsh. Therefore, whilst I find the appearance of the building to be acceptable, and that its purpose no doubt contributes to the wider maintenance of the SDNP, its location within it means there is a potential conflict between the two purposes of national parks, and I must find that the conservation purposes take precedence.
9. Accordingly, I must concur with the view of the Authority and conclude that further detail is required in order to consider the effects of the proposal on the SDNP. This is not to say that such permission would not be forthcoming, merely that an application is required so as to fully assess the conservation implications of the proposal.

Conclusion

10. The site's location within the sensitive SDNP and the importance of this means that further detail of the proposal is required. Therefore, for the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

N Bowden

INSPECTOR