



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 September 2025

by A Phillips MPlan BA CertHE MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W3520/W/25/3369285

Potash Farm, The Street, Brundish, Suffolk IP13 8BL

- 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 3, Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).
 - The appeal is made by Mr Neil Hadingham against the decision of Mid Suffolk District Council.
 - The application Ref is DC/25/01745.
 - The development proposed is Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed change of use of agricultural buildings to dwellinghouses (C3) and for building operations reasonably necessary for conversion. Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q - Conversion of agricultural building to 1 no dwellinghouse.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Background and Main Issues

2. The appeal relates to the conversion of an agricultural barn at Potash Farm into one two storey dwelling, with the additional fenestration added to the existing building. Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q(a) of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) permits development consisting of a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from a use as an agricultural building to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses). Class Q(b) of the GPDO permits building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building or Class Q(c) of the GPDO permits building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building.
3. The Council refused the proposal on the basis that there was insufficient evidence to conclude that the building in question was being used for agricultural purposes and was part of an established agricultural unit on the 24 July 2023. On this basis, the Council has concluded it does not comply with Q.1 (a) of the GPDO.
4. The Council has also refused the application on the basis that there is not up to date information in relation to bats (a protected species). Therefore, the proposal could have a detrimental impact upon this protected species and thus biodiversity.

Reasons

Is the building used for agricultural purposes on an established agricultural unit

5. The part of the building in question at the time of my visit appeared to being used for both domestic and agricultural purposes. The attached other half of the original barn has previously been converted. It is noted from the site history that the wider site has had a yoga/pilates studio allowed, as well as what appears to be holiday

lets. The land immediately surrounding the building in question at the time of my visit was being used for the storage of agricultural machinery and to the northwest/rear of the building was a grass field with direct access from Potash Farm.

6. The Council puts forward the argument that the building in question was not being used for agricultural purposes in either December 2022 or on the 26 May 2023. However, from the evidence before me, including the letter from Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs the site was an established farm unit at that time.
7. There is insufficient evidence before me to prove that the site covered under this proposal was not part of an agricultural unit on the 24 July 2023.
8. On this matter, I am satisfied that the site complies with Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the GPDO in so far as Q.1 (a), as the site did form part of an agricultural unit on the 24 July 2023.

Ecology - Bats

9. The Council's ecologist required further information regarding bats. This was primarily due to the potential for bats to be using the barn for roosting, as well as the surrounding area being a bat friendly environment. It is accepted that the decision maker has a requirement to ensure that protected species are safeguarded during construction works via suitable avoidance, mitigation or compensation measures.
10. The appellant has provided an ecology survey by Eco-Check Consultancy Ltd dated 06/09/2022, which concluded that there was negligible bat roost potential on site. However, this survey is now significantly out of date and on this basis is only given limited weight. There is a strong possibility that the chance of potential roosting bats has changed within the past three years. Without definitive proof otherwise, by means of a recent survey, I cannot be convinced that the proposal would not lead to significant harm to a protected species.
11. On this issue I therefore conclude that the proposal does not meet the requirements of Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q, Q2.1 of the GPDO that allows further information under the provision of paragraph W of this Part to assess impact and risk.

Other Matters

12. I have had regard to the duties contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in so far that it relates to schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the GPDO.
13. Potash Farm House is a Grade II Listed Building and is located to the southeast of the barn proposed for conversion. It is noted and accepted the Council's assessment that the building proposed for conversion is not a curtilage listed building.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

A Phillips

INSPECTOR