



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 December 2025

by **R Kent BA (Hons) MTP DipM MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3940/W/25/3365871

Bourne Works, High Street, Collingbourne Ducis, Wiltshire SN8 3EQ

- 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 Mr Vic Wheeler against the decision of Wiltshire Council.
 - The application Ref is PL/2024/07166.
 - The development proposed is described as a “new dwelling.”
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. As part of the appeal, the appellant provided a flood risk assessment (FRA). An amended Block Plan 04460-00 revision F was submitted with the FRA updating the existing and proposed site levels. The Council has had the opportunity to review the FRA and amended plan and as a result has withdrawn its second reason for refusal. I have determined the appeal on the basis of the amended plan.
3. The two main parties have also had the opportunity to comment on the implications of the Environment Agency’s updated flood mapping dataset (NaFRA2) on the appeal. No relevant issues have been drawn to my attention as a result of this update.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - whether the development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Collingbourne Ducis Conservation Area; and
 - whether the proposed development would preserve the settings of the grade II listed buildings known as 48 High Street and Hope Cottage.

Reasons

Conservation Area (CA)

5. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA.

6. The Collingbourne Ducis CA was designated in 1974¹. It derives its significance from its generally linear character with thatched cottages and houses fronting the main road through the village. Whilst some dwellings in the CA have tiled roofs, the steeply pitched roofs of the thatched cottages are distinctive and contribute to the significance of the CA. The mix of render, brick and flint building materials used in many of the buildings is a defining characteristic of the CA. A watercourse, The Bourne, runs through the centre of the village and with its tree lined, grassed embankments contributes to the spacious, rural character and appearance of the CA.
7. The appeal site is situated on High Street at the entrance to Bourne Works. To the south is a small, one and a half storey grade II listed cottage, 48 High Street. Whilst set back from the road frontage and behind the adjoining grade II listed Hope Cottage (also referred to as 49 High Street), it is visible from High Street when passing the site. As a consequence, the view of No 48 and its steep sided, pyramidal thatched roof which is currently obtained across the site contributes positively to the character and appearance of the CA.
8. The site currently comprises an area of grass fronting High Street and a hard surfaced car park. A short section of wall separates the grassed area from the car park. Although the parking area does not make a positive contribution to the significance of the CA, the grassed area on the frontage with High Street, especially when combined with the vegetation on the adjoining land to the north and the green embankments of The Bourne, forms part of the verdant frontage to High Street. As a result, it contributes positively to the character and appearance of the CA and thereby its significance.
9. The proposed single storey dwelling would straddle the existing green space and parking area and result in a reduction of the grassed open area. It would be set at right angles to High Street with its main entrance facing southward onto the Bourne Works access. The proposed clay tiles and brick and flint walls would reflect the character and appearance of some other dwellings in the CA, and the details of their use could be secured by condition if the appeal is allowed. However, the shape and form of the proposed roof with a large flat section along its entire length would be jarringly at odds with the steeply pitched roofs of the houses adjoining and opposite the site which make up the prevailing character of the CA.
10. Regardless of how discernible the area of flat roof would be from ground level, the single storey nature of the proposed building with its large area of flat roof would not reflect the distinctive character or appearance of the two storey, ridge roofed Hope Cottage and Ducis House or the steeply pitched pyramidal thatched roof of No 48 between which it would be sited. Although there are examples of other dwellings in the CA which have gable ends facing the road, the building would nevertheless appear as a discordant addition to High Street.
11. The discordant effect would conflict with the expectation in the Wiltshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2024 that the building form and roofscape of new development should be articulated to respect and maintain the characteristics of the local setting.

¹ Collingbourne Ducis Conservation Area Statement September 2002

12. The proposed dwelling would project back from High Street into the site parallel to the Bourne Works access road. As a consequence, it would reduce the gap across which views of No 48 are currently obtained from High Street. From what I saw on my site visit, this would result in a narrowing of the view currently gained of No 48. Whilst the view is not a protected vista, this would further detract from the character and appearance of the CA.
13. Although a small area of grassed amenity space would be retained between the dwelling and High Street which would provide an opportunity for some limited soft landscaping, this would not overcome the harm which would be caused to the character and appearance of the CA by the discordant effect I have identified.
14. I am aware of the mix of buildings within the CA and walked around much of the CA during my site visit taking careful account of the pattern of development within it. Whilst Bourne Works comprises a number of utilitarian industrial and commercial buildings and the scheme is proposed to provide a visual 'bridge' between the style of those buildings and the listed buildings to the north, I am not aware of their planning context or the development plan policies which applied at the time of their construction. Although a small number of dwellings in the CA have had flat roof extensions, I am not aware of the full details of those developments. They do not however reflect the prevailing character of the roofscape in the CA as a whole.
15. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) makes clear that not all elements of the CA necessarily contribute to its significance and that is the case with the existing buildings referred to above. Moreover, each proposal should be considered on its individual merits and these other structures do not justify the erosion of the CA which would be caused by the proposed dwelling.
16. For the reasons given, the proposed new dwelling would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA as a whole and would cause harm to its significance. The level of harm would be in the middle of the spectrum of less than substantial harm and, in accordance with paragraph 215 of the Framework, should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. That balancing exercise must take place in the context of the Act which sets a strong presumption against a grant of planning permission for development that would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a CA. I return to this matter in the heritage balance below.

Setting of listed buildings

17. Section 66(1) of 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.
18. The grade II listed 48 High Street² derives its significance primarily from its origins as a small, traditional thatched cottage dating from approximately the eighteenth century. Its steep, thatched roof, which is near pyramid in form, gives it a distinctive character and appearance. It is experienced in views from High Street, the footpath along The Bourne and from the access road into Bourne Works.

² List Entry Number: 1180600

19. Having regard to Historic England's guidance³, whilst part of the view of the listed building is across the existing hard surfaced car park and views are further interrupted by vegetation, the open nature of the appeal site contributes to the significance of the heritage asset by allowing it to be appreciated from High Street and the footpath along The Bourne.
20. For the reasons I have already found in respect of the CA, the proposed dwelling would not reflect the character of No 48 and would reduce the visibility of No 48 from High Street and the footpath. This would have a negative effect on the ability to appreciate the significance of the listed building.
21. Whilst the distinctive pyramidal thatched roof of No 48 might still be partially visible above the proposed dwelling and the listed building would still be visible through a gap from the Bourne Works access road, the proposal would nevertheless distract from the views of the listed building. Its setting would not be preserved as a result.
22. The grade II listed Hope Cottage⁴, lies beyond No 48 and adjacent to High Street. It has significance as a pair of two, two storey mid-eighteenth century cottages constructed of coursed flint and brick dressings with a thatched roof. Its significance is appreciated in views from High Street and the footway along The Bourne including across the grassed area on the western part of the site. Although dense vegetation adjacent to the northern boundary of the site would screen the building from Hope Cottage, the siting, form and design of the proposal would compete with the view of the asset from the south and west and detract from the appreciation of it.
23. Future planting in the proposed amenity space would be insufficient to overcome the harmful effect of the building on the ability to appreciate both Hope Cottage and No 48.
24. As with the effect on the CA, the level of harm caused to the significance of 48 High Street and Hope Cottage through the development within their settings would be in the middle of the spectrum of less than substantial harm. In accordance with paragraph 215 of the Framework this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. I turn to this matter in my heritage balance below.

Heritage balance

25. The proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the character and appearance of the CA and the ability to appreciate the grade II listed 48 High Street and Hope Cottage.
26. The Council can only demonstrate 2.42 years' supply of deliverable housing sites which is well below the minimum level required. The proposal would have the public benefit of providing an additional dwelling in a sustainable location towards meeting the Council's significant shortfall in housing land supply. Recognising that the Framework highlights that small sites such as this can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement in the area and are often built out relatively quickly, this would be a moderate public benefit. It attracts moderate weight in favour of the proposal. The use of previously developed land (PDL) is also a public benefit. Whilst only a small area of PDL would be redeveloped and the benefit would therefore be modest, it nevertheless carries substantial weight.

³ 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3

⁴ List Entry Number: 1035953

Although the development might enhance biodiversity on the site, it has not been demonstrated how this would be achieved and this therefore carries limited weight as a public benefit.

27. Whilst the level of harm caused to the heritage assets would be in the middle of the spectrum of less than substantial harm, it is nevertheless given considerable importance and weight. I am not persuaded that the public benefits of the development, even when taken cumulatively, would provide the clear and convincing justification for the harm that the proposal would cause to the significance of the heritage assets, the conservation of which the Framework requires me to assign great weight.
28. In conclusion, the proposal would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Collingbourne Ducis CA and would fail to preserve the setting of the grade II listed 48 High Street and Hope Cottage. It therefore conflicts with Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) Core Policies 57 and 58 which require that development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment. It would also conflict with the Framework's policies to conserve and enhance the historic environment.

Other Matters

29. The site falls within the catchment of the River Avon Special Area of Conservation. Regulation 63(1) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 indicates that the requirement for an Appropriate Assessment is only necessary where the competent authority is minded to give consent for the proposed development. Therefore, given my conclusions on the main issues, it is not necessary for me to consider this matter in any further detail.
30. The FRA concludes that the proposed building would be sited on land above the predicted flood level of The Bourne. Notwithstanding this, it indicates that flood resistance and resilience measures would be required. Permeable paving would be used for the proposed hardstanding which would reduce the surface water run-off generated by the proposal. I am satisfied that these requirements could be secured by condition if the appeal were to be allowed. The Council considers that the FRA provides sufficient evidence to address flood risk concerns associated with the proposal. I have found no sound reason to arrive at a different conclusion.

Planning balance

31. As the Council can only demonstrate 2.42 years supply of deliverable housing sites, consideration of the presumption in favour of sustainable development is required in accordance with paragraph 11 d) of the Framework.
32. Set against the harm I have identified, the proposal would have the benefit of providing an additional dwelling in a sustainable location which attracts moderate weight in favour of the proposal. In accordance with the Framework, the benefit of reusing PDL within the settlement carries substantial weight. The enhancement of biodiversity, from the evidence before me, carries limited weight in favour of the scheme.
33. The harm caused by the proposal to the designated heritage assets results in conflict with WCS Core Policies 57 and 58. Whilst the Council's housing land supply shortfall means that the WCS is deemed to be out of date for the purposes

of the Framework, paragraph 232 of the Framework however makes it clear that due weight should be given to existing policies according to their consistency with the Framework.

34. The Framework has policies for conserving and enhancing the historic environment. As WCS Core Policies 57 and 58 are broadly consistent with the Framework, the conflict with them carries substantial weight in this appeal and results in conflict with the development plan when read as a whole.
35. Notwithstanding the Council's housing land supply shortfall, applying footnote 7 to paragraph 11d) i. of the Framework, the conflict with the Framework's policies for conserving and enhancing designated heritage assets provide a strong reason for refusing the proposed development. As a consequence, paragraph 11 d) ii. of the Framework is not engaged.
36. The Framework is a key material consideration and conflict with its policies carries substantial weight against the proposal. Taken together, the benefits of using PDL; providing an additional dwelling to the housing land supply; and the proposed biodiversity enhancements are insufficient to outweigh the harm arising from the proposal and the resulting conflict with the development plan.

Conclusion

37. The proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole and the material considerations, including the Framework, do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

R Kent

INSPECTOR