



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 December 2025

by Sharon Bennett -Matthews Solicitor (Non-Practising)

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18th March 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/W/25/3373108

The White Horse Mill Road, Husborne Crawley, MK43 0XE

- 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 T Mould of Safari Braai Shack Ltd against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - The application reference is CB/25/01824/FULL.
 - The development proposed is described as “Single-storey timber structure for additional dining capacity (retrospective).”
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the description of development on the appeal form in my decision set out above for clarity, removing words not relating to acts of development.
3. The application form states the development has been completed. I observed during my site visit that the single storey timber structure has been erected and is being used as an additional dining area associated with the White Horse Public House. My determination of the appeal, however, has been based on the plans that were submitted with the planning application on which the Council based its decision.
4. The site lies within the Husborne Crawley Conservation Area. Accordingly, I have had regard to the duty under s 72 (1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 (the Act) which requires that special attention is paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Main Issues

5. The main issues in this case are the effect of the proposal on:
 - the character and appearance of the White Horse public house and, linked to that, whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Husborne Crawley Conservation Area;

- the living conditions of the occupants of neighbouring residential properties and in particular the residents of No. 3 Mill Road with reference to noise, odour and disturbance.

Reasons

Preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA

6. The White Horse is a two-storey public house situated within a generous corner plot on Mill Road and constitutes a prominent architectural feature within the Husborne Crawley Conservation Area (CA). The White Horse public house adjoins the B5704, which forms the main route through the village of Husborne Crawley. The main building comprises white painted masonry, dark coloured timber windows, a tiled, steep pitched gabled roof and large, visually prominent chimney stacks, which form visually prominent features of the roofscape.
7. The White Horse includes external areas used ancillary to the operation of the public house, including parking and outdoor seating areas. There is also an existing single-storey timber building with a pitched roof to the rear of the public house. Beyond this, the site adjoins open fields, giving this part of the site a more open and rural character.
8. Although the White Horse public house is not a listed building, the CA itself is characterised by a mix of mostly historical and architecturally distinctive residential buildings, some of which are Grade II listed buildings. The buildings vary in terms of their age and form and are typically arranged with generous separation distances. This reflects the village's historic development and rural setting. The retention and use of traditional external materials including brick and render is a positive contributor to the character and appearance of the CA and its significance as a heritage asset.
9. The development comprises a single storey timber clad structure with a flat roof, UPVC double glazed doors and windows. Whilst the extension is located to the rear of the public house and limited in size, scale and mass, it would be visible from the main road, the road junction and from School Lane. I find that the design, proportions and form of the proposed development, is at odds with that of the host building. Moreover the substantial amount of UPVC framing, particularly on the elevation facing School Lane, fails to respect the character of the existing building and the traditional and historical buildings with the wider CA. Due to its position, the development forms a prominent and incongruous feature in the street scene that detracts from the character and appearance of the White Horse public house and wider CA.
10. The appellant indicates that the proposal is reversibly constructed and would comprise a lightweight design. I have had regard to the Council's concerns that the structure would appear temporary and would not relate well to the host building. In that respect the extension does not achieve a high quality of design and fails to respond positively to the distinctive character of the White Horse public house and buildings within the wider conservation area. On that basis the proposal would not meet the statutory requirements of the Act as set out above.
11. I recognise that there is a substantial timber outbuilding on site which the appellant claims has existed for some time. However, this building is a separate structure

with the functional appearance of an outbuilding and is not attached to the building. Moreover, it has a pitched roof and a simple design. Its timber finish does not justify the timber finish of the extension nor the extensive UPVC framing. I note that some properties in the area do have UPVC windows. However, I am not aware of the circumstances in which these windows were granted planning permission and in any event they relate to smaller windows that are proportionate to the buildings on which they are situated.

12. Given the limited size of the extension and the wider context of the CA the level of harm caused to the CA is less than substantial, at the lower end of the scale. In these circumstances the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
13. The development provides additional restaurant seating and is therefore of economic benefit to the appellant. I note that the premises have changed hands five times in as many years and that demand for seating is high particularly in the summer with potential clientele previously having to be turned away because of lack of space. However, there is limited evidence before me of the viability of the business or the degree to which the extension contributes to it financially. Whilst I acknowledge that the proposal could provide a greater offering to patrons there is no convincing evidence before me to demonstrate the extension is necessary to secure future of the business. This limits the weight I can give the matter as a benefit of the scheme. Furthermore, I am not convinced that a similar benefit could not be achieved from a development which better reflected the character and appearance of the building.
14. On the other side of the balance, the Framework requires that great weight should be given to the heritage asset's conservation. Accordingly, the benefits set out do not outweigh the harm to the heritage asset.
15. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposal, by virtue of its scale, siting, design and materials, fails to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of White Horse public house and would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the CA. Accordingly, the development is contrary to Policies HQ1 and HE3 of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan (the Local Plan) which require development to be the highest possible quality; respond positively to their context and where possible, preserve, sustain and enhance the special character, significance and appearance of the heritage asset in terms of scale, form, proportions, design and materials.

The effect of the development on the living conditions of neighbouring properties particularly the Occupier of No. 3 Mill Road

16. The submitted plans indicate double doors on three sides of the extension and the appellant acknowledges that the extension could be opened up, particularly in the summer months. Given the very close proximity of the development to the neighbouring property 3 Mill Road, there is potential for significant noise, odour and disturbance from the dining room to be experienced by neighbouring residents. I note that the premises are open until late into the evening, 23.00 on weekdays and 23.59 on Saturdays, and on that basis any undue noise or odour could cause significant harm to the residents living conditions.

17. No noise or odour assessment has been submitted with the application and on that basis, I cannot be sure what, if any, the noise and odour impacts of the proposal are. I have taken into account the Council's suggested conditions which would require noise and odour surveys within 3 months of the date of the permission. However, I cannot be satisfied that any required mitigation measures would be reasonable or could be satisfactorily achieved without additional alterations to the building or without requiring further conditions.
18. I acknowledge that the appellant was willing to submit a noise survey during the course of the planning application. However, given the application was to be refused for character and appearance reasons, the Council did not wish to encourage wasted expense. Whilst I understand the position of both parties in that regard, even had surveys been provided, the appeal would still have been refused for the reasons set out in the first main issue.
19. I have noted the appellant's contention that an odour survey is not required. Nevertheless, a food server area has been added to the kitchen and given the Council's concern about the ventilation system, the limited detail available and the close proximity of the neighbouring dwelling, in my view such a survey is necessary to ensure that the living condition of the neighbouring resident are not unacceptably harmed.
20. On the basis of the limited evidence before me I am not satisfied that the proposal would not result in unacceptable harm to the living conditions of nearby occupiers, particularly those at No.3 Mill Road. In that respect, the development is contrary to Policy HQ1 of the Local Plan which requires that there is not an unacceptable adverse impact upon existing uses, including impacts on noise and air quality; and Policy CC8 which states that development proposals which are likely to cause pollution (which includes noise and odour) will only be permitted where measures can be implemented to minimise the impacts of pollution to an acceptable level without compromising quality of life.

Other Matters

21. No. 3 Mill Road, a two-storey house constructed with white rendering over a timber frame and a half-hipped clay tile roof, is a Grade II listed building dating from the 17th century with later alterations. The public house, and the extension, lie within the setting of the listed building.
22. Section 66 (1) of the Act requires that when considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, special regard is had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
23. There is little information before me as to what the main parties consider to be the special interest of the listed building. From all I have seen and read, that interest, or significance, lies in the age of the building and in its architectural detailing and its evidential value regarding the development of the settlement. Very little, if any, of its significance is derived from the appeal site which is part of its setting. The listed building can be most readily seen and appreciated from the road immediately in front of it. In that regard, the proposal does not interfere with the ability to appreciate the heritage asset. Accordingly, while the proposal has resulted in a limited degree of a change to the setting of the heritage asset, I am satisfied that it has not caused harm to the setting or significance of the listed

building. On that basis, the proposal meets the statutory requirements of the Act and of the Framework.

24. The site is also within the setting of a Grade I Registered Park and Garden (RPG). However, given that the extension lies to the rear of the public house and is not visible from the RPG I am satisfied that there is no harm to the setting of the heritage asset or its significance.
25. The appeal site lies within the Green Belt. I am satisfied that the proposal represents a limited extension to an existing building and would not result in disproportionate development or harm to the openness or purposes of the Green Belt having regard to the tests of the Framework. On that basis the proposal is considered not inappropriate development in the Green Belt and thereby complies with the relevant policies of the Framework.
26. Neighbouring residents have drawn to my attention to structures and alterations to buildings within the site which they consider to be unauthorised. Concern about the wider use of the site in terms of noise and parking impacts has also been raised. These are matters for the Council and do not have a bearing on my considerations in this appeal.

Conclusion

27. For the reasons given above, the development is contrary to the development plan when considered as a whole. There are no material considerations which indicate that the proposal should be allowed contrary to the development plan. Therefore, having had regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Sharon Bennett-Matthews

INSPECTOR