



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 April 2026

by **B Phillips BSc MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 May 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/J0405/W/25/3375483

Land adjacent to Warren House, Warren Road, Little Horwood, Buckinghamshire MK17 0PT

- 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 Mr Roger Samels against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council - North Area (Aylesbury).
 - The application Ref is 25/02049/PIP.
 - The development proposed is a minimum of one and maximum of one dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposal is for permission in principle. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that this is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development. The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages: the first stage (or permission in principle stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle and the second, 'technical details consent' stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed. This appeal relates to the first of these 2 stages.
3. The scope of the considerations for permission in principle is limited to location, land use and the amount of development permitted. All other matters are considered as part of a subsequent TDC application if permission in principle is granted. The Council's objections relate to the location and the lack of access to services and facilities. I have determined the appeal accordingly.

Main Issues

4. As such, the main issue is whether the site is suitable for residential development, having regard to its location, the proposed land use and the amount of development, with specific reference to access to services and facilities.

Reasons

Location

5. Policy S1 of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033 (2021) (LP) sets out the general sustainable development goals of the LP. LP Policy S2 of the Vale of sets out the spatial strategy for the area. This policy seeks to direct the majority of development towards the principal settlements supported by growth at other larger, medium and smaller villages. Development elsewhere in rural areas will be

strictly limited but may exceptionally be permitted in line with the provisions of Policy D5.

6. The site is outside of any settlement boundary and therefore for the purposes of the development plan, the appeal site is located in the open countryside. The development would not conflict with the prevention of sprawl or coalescence between settlements goals of LP Policy S3, however the reference to these requirements is not a closed list, and the policy sets out that development should accord with the settlement hierarchy. Given the location of the appeal site outside any identified 'other settlement' set out at Table 2 of the Local Plan, LP Policy D5, is not applicable. Consequently, the proposal conflicts with the development plan for the area.
7. I conclude that the appeal site is not a suitable location for housing having regard to the development plan for the area. It therefore conflicts with LP Policies S1, S2 and S3 which together seek to direct development towards larger settlements and to strictly control development in the open countryside.

Services and Facilities

8. Even if the site is not physically isolated in that it would be adjacent to numerous other dwellings at Warren Farm, the appeal site is located some distance from the nearest Local Plan identified settlement, the closest of which is Little Horwood. Little Horwood is identified within the LP as a 'smaller village', which has 'relatively poor access to services and facilities', and I observed only contained a public house and church.
9. Moreover, in order to reach this settlement would require traversing unlit rural lanes with no pavements. The highway directly next to the appeal site, Warren Road, is 60mph at this point and, whilst only a snapshot in time, I observed the fast moving traffic discourages any walking or cycling. Great Harwood, which as befitting its 'medium village' designation, possesses greater services and facilities, but is a significant distance from the appeal site, and would also require traversing Warren Road.
10. The train stations at Bletchley and Milton Keynes are also a substantial distance from the appeal site, and there are no convenient nearby bus stops. As such, for future occupiers there would be no safe and convenient access to any services and facilities by any other means than the private car. It is recognised that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, however it is evident that even in this context, the appeal site is not well connected.
11. Whilst an electric charging point may be provided, there is no suggested condition before me that would secure one. Even if this was the case, there is no mechanism before me to guarantee that future occupiers of the site would make use of it. As such there would be limited demonstrable benefit in this regard.
12. Reference is made to development at a different site some distance from the appeal site¹, which would not have the exact same characteristic in terms of their location and distance to various services and facilities. As such, it is not directly

¹ Appeal reference APP/B1930/W/24/3349774

comparable. Similarly, previous approvals² of the conversion of an existing office buildings are not directly comparable to the new build before me.

13. Consequently, I find the proposal would conflict with LP Policy T1, which seeks to ensure that development proposals encourage a modal shift with greater use of more sustainable forms of transport.

Other Matters

14. The Officer Report sets out that the appeal site is located within a red Great Crested Newt impact risk zone. No information is provided on this designation, however as I am dismissing the scheme for other reasons, I have not considered this matter further.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

15. The proposal would result in an additional unit of accommodation which would contribute to the Government's broader objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. The development would make efficient use of the site, as supported by the Framework. The proposal would also result in a short-term economic benefits arising from the construction process. Economic and social benefits are also likely to arise from the occupation of the new dwelling. However, given the quantum of development in this case, each of these benefits would be minor.
16. The proposal would conflict with the housing strategy in the development plan. LP Policies S1, S2 and S3 are broadly consistent with the Framework where it states that the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth. Given the current significant shortfall, the housing strategy policies are not currently providing sufficient housing. As such I give the conflict with this policy minor weight.
17. LP Policy T1 is broadly consistent with the Framework where it states that the planning system should seeks to maximise sustainable transport solutions. As such, the conflict with this policy should be given moderate weight in this appeal.
18. Given the conflict identified above, the development would conflict with the development plan as a whole.
19. The Council confirms that they are unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply and put the current figure at 3.62 years supply. The presumption in favour of sustainable development outlined in Paragraph 11d)ii of the Framework is therefore engaged.
20. The proposal would align with the Framework where it seeks to significantly boost the supply of housing and acknowledges that small-scale developments can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement and be built out quickly. Whilst the scale of the proposal is limited, given the considerable scale of the shortfall identified, this attracts minor weight.
21. The economic and social benefits from the build and occupation of the dwelling as well as support for local services, facilities and the community, including those in other villages would be limited given the size of the development, and their weight in favour of the scheme is also minor.

² Application references 20/01572/APP & 22/03357/APP

22. The development is described as self-build. The Framework supports small sites coming forward for self-build and custom-build housing. However, whilst the Council acknowledge that it is failing in its statutory duty to meet the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding, no mechanism is before me to secure the development as self-build. As such, I cannot give this matter any wight in favour of the proposal.
23. Even if the dwelling would integrate into the surrounding area without causing harm to local character or setting, this lack of harm would be a neutral matter not in favour of the proposal.
24. The proposal would conflict with the Framework where it seeks to actively manage patterns of growth and seeks to maximise sustainable transport solutions. Given the importance the Framework gives to actively managing patterns of growth in support of sustainable transport and sustainable development generally, I give moderate weight to this matter.
25. Consequently, the adverse impacts set out above would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. As a result, the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply.
26. The proposal is contrary to the development plan as a whole and there are no other material considerations of sufficient weight to indicate a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

B Phillips

INSPECTOR