



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 December 2025

by **P Barton BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 December 2025

Appeal Ref: 6000790

Agricultural Building B at Rose Cottage, Prees Green, Whitchurch, Shropshire SY13 2BN

- 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 Don Carissimo against the decision of Shropshire Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00733/FUL.
 - The development proposed is change of use from agricultural building to residential dwelling and internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the appeal site address given in the Council's Decision Notice, as it better describes the location of the building. I have also added the postcode for completeness.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposed development would be suitable for conversion to residential use, having regard to relevant local plan policies.

Reasons

4. The appeal site consists of a single storey building that I understand was last used for agricultural purposes in 2015. There is no substantive evidence to support the claim that the building has been on the site for around 120 years. It forms part of a small cluster of buildings with a shared access off the A49, which includes a 2-storey cottage and a residential conversion, referred to as agricultural building A. The proposal would see its conversion to a 3-bedroom dwelling.
5. The surrounding wider area, shown as Prees Green on the Ordnance Survey map, consists of sporadically positioned dwellings and other buildings separated by open fields. Therefore, whilst the appeal building is not isolated from the small cluster of adjoining dwellings, it is a considerable distance from a built-up area, isolated from a settlement and located in the countryside.
6. Policy CS5 of the Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy (March 2011) (ACS) strictly controls new development within the countryside and sets out a number of developments that are considered acceptable. This includes the conversion of rural buildings which take account of and make a positive contribution to the character of the buildings and the

countryside. The policy emphasises that open market residential conversions will only be considered where respect for the heritage asset is achieved.

7. Policy MD7a of the Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan (17 December 2015) (SAMDev Plan) expands on ACS Policy CS5. The policy stipulates that new market housing will be strictly controlled outside of Shrewsbury, the Market Towns, Key Centres and Community Hubs and Community Clusters. It adds that in the case for market residential conversions, requiring planning permission, the conversion of buildings to open market use will only be acceptable where the building is of a design and form which is of merit for its heritage / landscape value, minimal alteration or rebuilding is required to achieve the development and the conversion scheme would respect the significance of the heritage asset, its setting and the local landscape character.
8. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) contains a definition of a heritage asset at Annex 2: Glossary. It states “*A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)*”.
9. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) also identifies what are non-designated heritage assets¹, including buildings, sites, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets. A substantial majority of buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not constitute heritage assets. A local planning authority may also identify non-designated heritage assets as part of the decision-making process on planning applications.
10. Paragraph 2.29 of the Council's Type and Affordability of Housing Supplementary Planning Document (12 September 2012) (TAHSPD) describes heritage assets as normally pre-dating 1950, comprising of traditional materials and building methods, being of permanent and substantial construction, and being of local significance and add value to the landscape.
11. Evidence indicates that works were undertaken to the appeal building between November 2023 and January 2024, but the building outline remained unchanged. This involved, amongst other things, the replacement of the perished exterior cladding, the replacement of hardwood roof timbers and framework where necessary, brickwork was repointed and perished bricks were replaced where necessary, the renovation and treatment of the original trusses as well as the replacement of the concrete floor with the incorporation of a damp proof membrane and insulation.
12. I saw that, with the exception of the brickwork to its base, the external cladding and roof gave the building a new appearance. The overall result is a simplistic timber framed building that does not read as a historic structure and holds no architectural value. Moreover, the building is screened from the A49 by a high brick boundary wall, and I could see no value added to the landscape from its presence.

¹ Paragraph: 039 Reference ID: 18a-039-20190723 Revision Date: 23 07 2019

13. The Council's case refers to insufficient evidence relating to the provision of affordable housing to meet local need or an essential rural worker's accommodation. Other than the appellant's wish to make the building a family home, these exceptions contained within ACS Policy CS5 and SAMDev Plan Policy MD7a have not been presented by the appellant in support of their case.
14. For the above reasons, the proposed development would not be suitable for conversion to residential use, having regard to relevant local plan policies. It would be contrary to ACS Policy CS5 and SAMDev Plan Policy MD7a, which include the requirement that open market residential conversions in the countryside will only be acceptable where the building is of a design and form which is of merit for its heritage / landscape value. It would also conflict with the guidance contained within the TAHSPD.

Other Matters

15. A number of approved developments have been brought to my attention, and the Council has responded to these as relating to the conversion of brick and stone built agricultural buildings with architectural or heritage merit. I do not have full details of all these developments before me and whether the circumstances are comparable to the appeal scheme. As such a comparison is of limited relevance in this instance. In any case, I have considered the appeal before me on its individual planning merits.
16. The appellant has referred to a previous proposal at the appeal site and development that is acceptable under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). Nevertheless, this relates to prior approval consent, which considers specific prior approval matters and not the wider planning considerations. Consequently, it is not directly comparable with the appeal scheme, which is seeking full planning permission, and has limited bearing on my findings. Moreover, based on the evidence before me, agricultural building A was granted prior approval under Class Q and considered under those specific prior approval matters.

Planning Balance

17. The Framework states that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the Framework. I give significant weight to the conflict with ACS Policy CS5 and SAMDev Plan MD7a, which are consistent with the Framework in being responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflects local needs. A key qualifying criterion of these policies is that buildings in the countryside subject to open market residential conversions must be considered heritage assets. As a result, I find that there is conflict with the development plan as a whole.
18. The Council has stated that it has a deliverable housing land supply of 4.73 years. Consequently, paragraph 11 d) of the Framework is applicable. Paragraph 11 d) ii) identifies that planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
19. The proposed development would make a positive contribution in the delivery of a dwelling, that would be suitable for occupation by a family. There would also be

associated social and economic benefits during the period of construction and once the dwelling is occupied.

20. However, the limited scale of the development means that I afford the provision of a new dwelling within the context of the current shortfall, along with the other benefits listed above, limited weight in favour of the proposal.
21. Paragraph 83 of the Framework promotes sustainable development in rural areas and housing should be located where it would enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Prees is located some distance to the north of the site and contains a number of services and facilities as well as public transport links. I saw that the route to this settlement was along the fast and busy A49 which was unlit and has limited stretches of footpath. These road conditions would not be an attractive option for cyclists and walkers and those with mobility issues, particularly during adverse weather and during the hours of darkness. Due to a lack of genuine sustainable travel choices, the occupants of the proposed conversion would be heavily reliant on private motor vehicles to access services and facilities on a regular basis. Consequently, I give this factor limited weight in support of the proposed development.
22. A lack of harm or policy compliance in respect of highway safety, living conditions, contamination, flood risk, external appearance, and drainage would have a neutral effect which weigh neither for nor against the proposed development.
23. On the other side of the balance, the proposed development would not be suitable for conversion to residential use, having regard to relevant local plan policies, which would be contrary to paragraph 82 of the Framework. Given the long-lasting nature of converting the existing building in the countryside, I attribute significant weight to this conflict.
24. Therefore, I conclude that the adverse impacts of the proposed development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole. As such the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in paragraph 11 d) of the Framework does not apply.

Conclusion

25. 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. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

P Barton

INSPECTOR