



# Appeal Decision

Hearing held on 5 February 2009

by **Brian G Meardon** BA DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State  
for Communities and Local Government

The Planning Inspectorate  
4/11 Eagle Wing  
Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Temple Quay  
Bristol BS1 6PN

☎ 0117 372 6372  
email: [enquiries@pins.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@pins.gsi.gov.uk)

Decision date:  
19 February 2009

## Appeal Ref: APP/M1710/A/08/2081329

### Upper Woodside, Woodside Lane, Farringdon, Alton, GU34 3EX

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs J M Olivier against the decision of East Hampshire District Council.
- The application Ref 24439/017/FUL, dated 24 April 2008, was refused by notice dated 2 July 2008.
- The development proposed is a manege with associated landscaping.

### Decision

1. I allow the appeal, and grant planning permission for a manege with associated landscaping at Upper Woodside, Woodside Lane, Farringdon, Alton, GU34 3EX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24439/017/FUL, dated 24 April 2008, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
  - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
  - 2) All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the details and specification of the landscaping scheme for the site as shown on plan ref: 1036-101 shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the completion of the manege, and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the local planning authority gives written approval to any variation.

### Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the manege on the local landscape within the proposed South Downs National Park.

### Reasons

3. Upper Woodside stands on a hillside against a wooded skyline in undulating countryside characterised by large arable and pasture fields punctuated by hedges and trees. Refurbished and new-built stables lie on the other side of Woodside Lane. Lower down the lane is Lower Woodside where there is also stabling and a manege.
4. Policy GS3 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan aims to protect the countryside for its intrinsic character and beauty. C5 acts against development which would harm local landscape features such as trees, hedgerows and open

spaces. Upper Woodside is a little over a kilometre beyond the boundary of the East Hampshire Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); within or adjacent to the AONB, policy C1 indicates that permission will not be granted for development harmful to its special character and landscape quality unless essential for its economic and social well-being. Policy C12 relates to equestrian uses and provides for permission to be granted where, among other considerations, it would be sited within an existing group of buildings and would not harm, by itself or in combination with existing equestrian establishments, the character of the local landscape.

5. The Local Plan indicates at para 1.18 that within the proposed South Downs National Park, policies would include those applicable to the AONB. The locality of Upper Woodside lies within the designated National Park, the Order for confirmation of which is awaited following public inquiries. The Council's policies reflect national guidance in PPS7 *Sustainable Development in Rural Areas* which aims to give the highest level of protection to landscapes most valued for their scenic beauty. At the same time, the PPS acknowledges the popularity of equestrian activities in the countryside and that policies should be supportive of such enterprises that maintain environmental quality and countryside character.
6. The manege would be used for private equestrian purposes by the appellants in conjunction with their stabling at Upper Woodside. A number of locations were considered and are reviewed in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) accompanying the proposal. In the light of this and my own appraisal, it is apparent that a site behind the thatched cottage and closer to the stables (site C) would entail a build-up of land and loss of some woodland; a location at the tennis court (site E) would be exposed in relation to the bridleway passing the property and, to be of sufficient size, would involve land outside the ownership of the appellants. Creation of a manege parallel to the lane and counter to the contour (site D) would entail substantial remodelling of the land and as a consequence would be visually harmful to the locality.
7. Of the options reviewed, I consider the site proposed for the manege to be the most sympathetic to the topography hereabouts. While it would be about 140m from the house and not close to the stables at about 110m distance, and would be nearer to the buildings of Lower Woodside, the manege would fall within the envelope of these two substantial groups of buildings and have a reasonable relationship with them.
8. The proposed manege would not feature in long distance views. It is clear, moreover, having walked the footpath beyond Upper Woodside, that having regard to the topography, trees and hedging the manege would be virtually indiscernible from this countryside due to the site's location on the downslope below the house.
9. The site lies at a low-point in the field below the house. While the creation of the 60m x 20m riding surface would entail some alteration to the landform, the degree of cut and fill would not be significant. At the corner of the field by the lane the land would be raised by 0.6m while up the slope there would be a cut-in of 1.4m. At the far corners of the riding surface, the re-profiling would entail a cut-in of 0.5m and a raising by 1.4m respectively. The manege would be

enclosed by 1.2m high post and rail fencing and encircled by indigenous planting to supplement the existing hedges.

10. Having regard to the screening by these hedges and the new planting, I consider that the re-grading of this field corner for the manege would be readily assimilated into the local landscape without harm to its character or visual qualities. In near views from the lane, the manege would not feature to any material extent as a consequence of the existing natural screening and bank coupled with the further planting to be undertaken. I am in no doubt that were the manege placed further up the slope nearer the house (site A), it would entail greater cut and fill and be much more exposed in the local landscape.
11. While the manege would be glimpsed when approaching over the brow of the lane beyond Lower Woodside, it would to a considerable extent be masked by the containing hedging. Although in plan-form the surface would be a contrasting small enclosure in the context of the larger fields prevailing in the area, I do not consider that this would be easily read 'on the ground' as the enveloping hedging would give the impression of a localised clump of vegetation which would not be out of keeping with the landscape.
12. I conclude that the proposal would sustain a recreational activity based on established stabling in a manner which would not be damaging to the quality of the local landscape and would therefore be compatible with the aims of relevant Local Plan policies and objectives for the envisaged National Park.
13. All other matters raised have been taken into account but these do not affect my decision. Reference was made to a number of maneges in the AONB, some of which have been granted planning permission while others seemingly may be unauthorised. If nothing else, they indicate that equestrian uses are not uncharacteristic in the AONB. The examples cited however have not been influential in my decision to allow the appeal which flows from my assessment of the present proposal on its own merits.
14. In allowing the appeal and imposing the standard implementation condition, a landscaping condition is also included. I have modified the condition suggested by the Council so as to secure the implementation of the planting scheme submitted with the application as shown on plan ref: 1036-101, such a measure being a necessary ingredient to the acceptability of the development.

*Brian G Meardon*

Inspector

## APPEARANCES

### FOR THE APPELLANTS

- Mr I Ellis BA MRTPI - Southern Planning Practice Ltd, Youngs Yard, Churchfields, Twyford, Winchester SO21 1NN
- Mr L Fanshawe - Terra Firma Consultancy, Cedar Court, 5 College street, Petersfield, Hants GU31 4AE
- Mr and Mrs J M Olivier - Upper Woodside, Woodside Lane, Farringdon, Alton, Hants GU34 3EX

### FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY

- Mr A Whitty BA DipTP MRTPI - District Team Leader, East Hampshire District Council
- Mr S D'Este Hoare - Principal Landscape Officer, East Hampshire District Council

### DOCUMENTS PUT IN AT THE HEARING

- Document 1 - Notification letter of the hearing
- Document 2 - East Hampshire Local Plan extract: para 1.18
- Document 3 - South Downs Management Plan: extract
- Document 4 - Letter from Middleton & Henry Equine Veterinary Practice

### PLANS

- Plans A (i) – (vi) - application plans