The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 July 2017

by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 7 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/A2525/W/17/3172052
Off Pipwell Gate, Moulton Seas End, Spalding PE12 6LU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs N Gibbons against the decision of South Holland District Council.
- The application Ref H13-1189-16, dated 17 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 25 January 2017.
- The development proposed is a residential development (single storey dwelling).

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. There are two main issues. These are a) the principle of the proposed development with specific regard to its location and b) the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Principle of Development

3. The appeal site is an irregular parcel of land to the south side of Pipwell Gate which is a winding narrow rural lane that runs south east from the village. Being detached from the main built up part of the village by some degree and surrounded by agricultural land, the appeal site is part of the open countryside in both character and planning terms.

4. Outline planning permission is sought for the proposed development with all other matters reserved for future consideration. The appeal site is some considerable distance from the nearest settlement, part of a ribbon form of development that extends out of the village. Whilst development of the appeal site would not be isolated from other dwellings, it would be so from services on which residents would rely for day to day living. Moulton Seas End itself has a very limited range of services and as such, in terms of wider choice, employment and leisure, residents would likely have to travel further.

5. Access to the village and settlements beyond is via narrow, mostly unlit rural roads without segregated footways. I have not been advised of any public transport options that would benefit the proposed development or any formal or practical public rights of way network that is available. Residents would

likely therefore rely on the private car for meeting day to day needs. This is the least sustainable travel option. Whilst the scale of the proposed development means such journeys would be limited, this is an argument that could be used too often to justify sporadic isolated new dwellings in the countryside.

6. For these reasons, the proposed development would represent a departure from one of the fundamental principles established by the Framework[1] which is to promote sustainable patterns of development by restricting isolated dwellings in the countryside. In effect, they should be directed to those areas that have ready access to a range of services that can be accessed via sustainable means.

7. The proposed development would also be contrary to saved Policies SG1, SG2, SG4 and HS7 of the Local Plan[2]. These Policies seek to ensure, amongst other things, that new development follows sustainable principles, it is served by a choice of transport modes and it is restricted in the countryside to that which is essential to a specified and demonstrated need.

Character and Appearance

8. The appeal site does have some development on it in the form of some small scale agricultural type utilitarian storage buildings. It is at the far end of a low density ribbon form of development extending out of the village either side of the winding narrow rural lane known as Pipwell Gate. It is located to the side elevation of Number 56 Pipwell Gate and surrounded by agricultural fields. In use and appearance terms it bears more of a functional and visual relationship to the countryside than any residential use.

9. Whilst the final design of the proposed dwelling is not currently before me, the development of the site for residential purposes would introduce a further urban form and associated residential garden which would extend the existing ribbon development, encroaching further into the open countryside. I note the existing development on the site but its use and appearance is distinctly more rural than urban.

10. It is for this reason that the proposed development would not be appropriate for the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, it would fail to accord with saved Policy SG4 of the Local Plan which seeks to, amongst other things and along with the Framework; protect the intrinsic beauty and character of the countryside.

Other Matters

11. It appears clear from the evidence that the Council is unable to demonstrate the supply of housing sites as required by the Framework. The proposed development would provide a single dwelling which would add to housing choice and mix locally as well as sustaining some employment in the local construction industry courtesy of the physical works on site. However, a single dwelling would make a very limited contribution to undersupply and the economic benefits would be equally limited for the same reason. These benefits would therefore be weak against the nature of the environmental harm

[1] The National Planning Policy Framework 2012
[2] South Holland Local Plan 2006

that I have found. To such an extent that they would be significantly and demonstrably outweighed.

12. The Council have stated that Moulton Seas End is proposed to be identified as a Minor Service Centre as part of the emerging South East Lincolnshire Local Plan. Be this as it may, I have not been provided with any further detailed evidence as to the relevant stage of this plan and in any event the siting of the appeal site relative to the village would not change. Neither therefore do my findings in respect of the main issues.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR