
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 February 2019

by M Aqbal BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 May 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/A2525/W/18/3197364

The Cottages Blue House Farm, Main Road, Deeping St Nicholas, Spalding PE11 3DH

- 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 I McDonald against the decision of South Holland District Council.
 - The application Ref H03-1104-17, dated 16 November 2017, was refused by notice dated 9 January 2018.
 - The development proposed is described as: 'Residential Development (Single dwelling with detached double garage) re-application of H03-0407-17'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 Adopted March 2019 (LP) has been adopted since the Council's decision notice was issued. I have therefore made my determination having regard to the new LP, which supersedes the policies of the South Holland Local Plan, 2006. The main parties have been given an opportunity to comment on the new LP, and any responses have been taken into account in my assessment.
3. The application was submitted in outline, with all matters including access, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping reserved for future consideration. The application includes 'Site & Location Plans' Drawing No 01 an indicative drawing. In my assessment of the proposed outline application, I will take this indicative drawing into account.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are whether the proposed development would provide a suitable location for housing, having particular regard to accessibility of shops, services and facilities; and, the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Suitability of the location for housing

5. Policy 1 of the LP sets out the spatial strategy for the district, the aim of this is to direct development towards settlements, which are ranked in terms of their sustainability. This is based on a number of factors, including infrastructure

- capacity and needs, proximity to local shops, services and community facilities and access to public transport.
6. The appeal site is detached from the boundary of the nearest settlement, which is Deeping St Nicholas as shown on the Inset Map¹. Consequently, in planning policy terms the site is in the countryside.
 7. Policy 1 of the LP says that: 'In the Countryside development will be permitted that is necessary to such a location and/or where it can be demonstrated that it meets the sustainable development needs of the area in terms of economic, community or environmental benefits.' There is no clear evidence to show that the development meets this criterion.
 8. There are minimal services and facilities in Deeping St Nicholas to meet the day to day needs of future occupiers. A primary school and a local farm shop are located near the site. Despite a recent consent to extend the range of products to be sold at this farm shop, it would still only offer a limited range of goods. Consequently, future occupants of the proposed dwelling would have to make longer journeys to destinations, containing the full range of services and facilities to serve day to day living in respect of shopping, health and leisure facilities, secondary schools and employment destinations. Cycling and walking would not be a reasonable option for such long journeys.
 9. A range of services can be found in Spalding. The site is opposite a 'request pick up point' for a bus service which travels between Deeping St Nicholas and Spalding. Nevertheless, this bus service operates a limited service. Therefore, it would be unlikely to remove the reliance on private vehicles for daily requirements.
 10. The appellant argues that future occupants could work from home and also choose to use electric vehicles. However, there is no certainty of this occurring. Even though nearby supermarkets may provide delivery services and local employers offer minibus services for employees, such services would not address reliance on car travel in respect of other destinations.
 11. Drawing on all of the above points, the location of the proposed dwelling would be unsuitable for housing in terms of accessibility to shops, services and facilities. Future occupiers of the proposed dwelling would therefore be highly reliant on car travel, resulting in negative environmental effects. Consequently, the proposal would conflict with the spatial strategy in Policy 1 of the LP, which seeks to ensure that development needs of the area are met in a sustainable manner.

Character and appearance

12. The appeal site comprises a parcel of land located to the rear of existing dwellings, which is accessed via a track off the A1175. The site is substantially screened from the wider area by mature conifer hedges. The pattern of development here comprises sporadic clusters of development close to the road. While all matters are reserved for future consideration, from the indicative drawings before me, and having regard to the above context, the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the area. I therefore find no conflict with Policy 2 of the LP which amongst other

¹ Policies Map inset Map No 14 - South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011 20136

things requires that new developments respect the character and appearance of the area.

Other Matters

13. The appellant has referred to an approved development for 66 dwellings at Caulton Fields². I have limited information in respect of this to draw any meaningful comparisons and conclusions. There is also no clear indication of Littleworth Station in Deeping St Nicholas re-opening. These matters therefore do not alter my findings on the main issues.

Planning balance

14. On the evidence before me, the Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, and so paragraph 11 of the Framework is engaged. The proposal for a single dwelling would make only a minimal contribution towards the housing shortfall locally and any associated benefits of the proposal carry only limited weight in favour. The lack of harm to the character and appearance of the area is a neutral factor in the overall balance. On the other hand, the Framework places emphasis on managing patterns of growth to support objectives which include opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use, and mitigating any adverse environmental impacts of traffic. I have found that the location of the proposed dwelling would be unsuitable for housing in terms of accessibility to shops, services and facilities. Future occupants would therefore be highly reliant on car travel, resulting in negative environmental effects, to which I attach significant weight. Therefore, the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits and so the proposal would not represent sustainable development.

Conclusion

15. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Aqbal
INSPECTOR

² Application reference: H03-0331-16