



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 October 2020

by Paul Cooper MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N2535/W/20/3257140

Land south of Ingham Road, Stow, Lincolnshire LN1 2DG

- 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 C Marshall against the decision of West Lindsey District Council.
 - The application Ref 141143, dated 1 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 3 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is Outline planning application to erect up to 4no. dwellings with access to be considered and not reserved for subsequent applications.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The application is made in outline with means of access to be determined at this stage. The appellant has also submitted an indicative site layout and I have had regard to this in determining the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is whether the location of the appeal site is suitable in terms of local and national planning policy.

Reasons

4. Policy LP2 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (2017) (The LP) identifies levels of settlement hierarchy across the local planning authority areas. Tier six is small villages and Policy LP4 seeks to control development in that tier and provides a sequential test for development sites and also states that the development sites should be in an appropriate location. Policy LP2 states that an appropriate location is one that does not conflict with local or national planning policy as a whole and would also retain the core shape and form of the settlement, not harm the character and appearance of the settlement or surrounding countryside.
5. Policy LP26 of the LP also looks to ensure that development preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the area and specifically should not result in ribbon development or extend linear features of the settlement. These are not defined in the policy but ordinarily mean the building of housing in a continuous row along a road in or out of the settlement as opposed to roads contained within the settlement.

6. The appeal site is a section of a large agricultural field on the south side of Ingram Road, set back from the highway. There is a dwelling to the western boundary of the site. The site is visible from the main road.
7. Whilst there is a dwelling to the western edge of the site, the dwellings would create a continuation of the village, extending the village from the traditional settlement. The appeal site is not an infill plot, and would alter the shape of the village as it would create ribbon development along Ingham Lane effectively into an agricultural field and would introduce a physical barrier that would impact upon view across the open land beyond, and as a result, have a negative impact on the appearance of the village as a whole from the loss of open views and the loss of part of an agricultural field that does not lend itself to residential development.
8. Policy LP4 also refers to the expected growth level of Stow as a settlement, indicated as a level of 17 dwellings. From the evidence provided by the Council, this has already been met by dwellings completed and under construction, as well as existing approvals, and therefore the appeal proposal is contrary to that policy.
9. I have been provided with the details of a community consultation exercise which has been carried out to meet the requirements of clear local support as set out in Policy LP2. This has not been carried out by the organisation of drop-in sessions due to COVID restrictions, but by calling at properties to present the application, the creation of a newsletter, and a letter drop. Included in this community exercise was a simple yes/no comment card to reflect whether the development would be suitable. It appears that the response was favourable, but the doorstep visits required a decision to be made at that point. In addition, it appears that a number of responses were from addresses outside the village.
10. A Neighbourhood Plan is also in the process of being drawn up but carries no weight at present but has also carried out a survey that showed that residents did not wish to see additional development other than that allocated with the Local Plan. Also, in addition, it would appear that the sequential test requested as part of Policy LP2 to identify appropriate sites has not been carried out.
11. Whilst a consultation exercise has been carried out that appears to show support for the development, I find that the visual harm caused to the village by the development, and its undoubted location as ribbon development that would extend the envelope of the village outweighs the support for the development that has been demonstrated.
12. Overall, the appeal site would not be an appropriate location for residential development and would not be in accordance with policies LP2 and LP4 of the LP and policy LP26 with regard to character and appearance and ribbon development.

Other Matters

13. I have also been referred to other developments in the village. I do not have the full details in support of the applications for planning permission before me and I can therefore attach only limited weight to the extant permissions. In any event I must determine this appeal on its own merits and such weight as

can be given is not sufficient to overcome the harm to the character and appearance of the village and the wider countryside.

14. The presumption in favour of sustainable development raised by the appellant in regard to the National Planning Policy Framework does not change the status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. The degree of consistency of the relevant Local Plan policies that I have identified with the Framework means that I can attach significant weight to those policies.
15. The proposals would offer four new dwellings with the accompanying social and economic benefits of new housing, but these are proposed to be open market dwellings and meet no affordable need. The dwellings would provide an additional four housings unit to meet housing need. These factors do favour the proposal, however, given the size of the contribution (four dwellings), the scale of this benefit would be limited and not be significant.
16. The Council has not raised the issue of access to the site in their reasons for refusal and I have no reason to contradict those findings, therefore I will not assess the matter further.

Conclusion

17. Therefore, for the reasons given above, and taking into account all other matters, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Paul Cooper

INSPECTOR