
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 October 2016

by H Porter BA(Hons) PGDip IHBC

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

Decision date: 14 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3940/W/16/3156334

Wayside, 12 Chittoe Heath, Bromham SN15 2EH

- 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 & Mrs C J Seed against the decision of Wiltshire Council.
 - The application Ref 16/04791/OUT, dated 12 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 21 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as 're-development of land by the erection of four two-storey dwellings with garages; formation of new access drive'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The application was submitted in outline form with access to be considered. Matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale are reserved for subsequent consideration. I have dealt with the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the location of the proposed dwellings in relation to social, community, employment and other facilities.

Reasons

4. The appeal site currently accommodates four chalet units on a rectangular portion of land set back from the lane-side frontage of Chittoe Heath. The site is located at the end of a small cluster of residential buildings just off the Devizes Road, set within a landscape of woodland and open fields. Although sited within a pocket of residential development, the location is well outside the nearest settlement boundaries defined in the Wiltshire Core Strategy, adopted January 2015 (the WCS) and is within the category of open countryside.
 5. Core Policies 1 and 2 of the WCS set out a settlement strategy with the aim of locating development where it is best served by a range of facilities. Development outside the settlement boundaries is strictly controlled unless formally reviewed through a Site Allocations Development Plan Document, a neighbourhood plan.
 6. While Bromham, classified as a Large Village, could provide some of the services that would satisfy everyday needs, these are not within walking distance of the appeal site. A bus service does run along the nearby Devizes Road route, with a stop near to the Chittoe Heath junction. However, access to
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this bus stop is along an un-lit country lane, with no foot path. The volume and speed of traffic along the Devizes Road, coupled with the lack of a bus shelter, would, in my judgement, lessen the likelihood of future occupiers regularly relying on the bus service. With limited options for future occupiers to travel without using a car, the appeal proposal would consequently result in car-reliant development.

7. The Highway Authority raised no objection to the scheme in consideration of the access and layout, including space for parking, visibility splays and road safety. They did not, however, provide any specific comment on the acceptability of the proposals in relation to local facilities. The existing chalet units do contribute to a domestication of the appeal site. However, the creation of four detached dwellings and associated garaging would significantly intensify this residential use. While both uses would generate car travel, future occupiers of the proposed houses would require physical access to a range of community and social facilities. Occupiers of holiday cottages would not require access to such facilities to the same degree. The appeal site would therefore not be suitable location for four new permanent dwellings.
8. The Council's Housing Land Availability Statement, September 2015, indicates that a 5-year housing land supply for the East Housing Market Area can be demonstrated. There may currently be a deficit in neighbouring Housing Market Areas, and I accept that there is no upper limit for housing where supply can be demonstrated. I also accept that the provision of four new homes would provide a modest contribution in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF), which seeks to boost significantly the supply of housing.
9. In consideration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, there would be some economic benefits such as employment during construction. There is a lack of substantive evidence to indicate that the proposal would enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities, or support services in nearby settlements. As such, the proposal does not focus development where it would promote strong, vibrant communities. There would be benefits to the local economy, a modest boost to housing supply, and re-use of previously developed land. However, these positive attributes of the appeal proposal are outweighed by the degree of harm that would arise from adding to an already isolated group of dwellings, unacceptably remote from essential facilities.
10. Weighing up these matters, I conclude that the proposal would not adequately satisfy the three dimensions of sustainable development. The proposal is therefore not in accordance with the Development Plan or the NPPF as a whole. In the absence of demonstrable exceptional circumstances, the development runs contrary to WCS Core Policy 1 and 2 and also fails to meet the objectives of Core Policy 60 and 61, which relate to promoting sustainable communities and development in accessible locations to reducing the need to travel by private car. It would also be contrary to the principles and policies of the NPPF that relate to sustainable development, including paragraph 55.

Other matters

11. I note the appellant's comments about Housing Market Area boundaries, and the possibility of future revisions to settlement boundaries. I have also taken into account the letters of support and lack of an objection from the Parish Council. However, none of these matters alter my conclusion that the development would not be acceptable because of its isolated location.

12. I have also considered the planning permission and appeal decisions referred to by the appellant. In appeal APP/Y3940/W/15/3141340 the site was close to the settlement boundary and in an area where there was no 5-year housing land supply. It is clear that the circumstances of all those cases were very different from those in the current appeal, which has been considered on its own merits.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, and considering all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

H Porter

INSPECTOR