
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 December 2016

by Andy Harwood CMS MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 20 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/P2114/W/16/3154694

Land between Meadow View and Sun Cottage, Main Road, Bouldnor, Yarmouth, Isle of Wight PO41 0XA

- 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 D Shurmer against the decision of Isle of Wight Council.
 - The application Ref P/00465/16, dated 3 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 27 May 2016.
 - The development is a proposed dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. An accurate address for the site was included within the description of the proposal on the application forms. I have used that address above as it more accurately reflects the location than the address on the Council's decision and other correspondence.
3. A unilateral section 106 planning obligation (S106) has been entered into which is proposed to provide a financial contribution towards mitigating impacts upon the Solent Special Protection Area. Given my overall conclusion I do not need to consider this.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the suitability of the site for the proposed dwelling having regard to the housing needs of the area and accessibility to services.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is located to the front of an existing dwelling (Meadow View) and is accessed off of the same private driveway. The proposed dwelling would be behind another small dwelling (Sun Cottage) and on the other side of the driveway from a large dwelling (Purbeck House). This existing small group of dwellings separated from the nearest built up areas by fields. The site is not within or immediately adjacent to a Rural Service Centre or other settlement as defined within Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy¹ (CS).

¹ Island Plan: The Isle of Wight Council Core Strategy (including Minerals and Waste) and Development Management Policies DPD adopted March 2012

6. CS Policy SP2 requires on average over the 2011-2027 plan period the provision of 520 dwellings per year. This is also confirmed within the 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The appellant refers to the core projection of housing need within the SHMA as being 589 although he also refers to the discount down to 525 due to migration over the next 20 years.
7. I have limited evidence in this appeal relating to housing permissions and completions. Of the 2 years for which details are provided to me the number of permissions approved in 2013/14 was 471 and in 2014/15 it was 526. I am not aware of the average provision over a sustained period of time. I have not been provided with further annual reports such as land availability studies or details of planning permissions that may have been approved since the 2014/15 figures were published.
8. The appellant has quoted from appeals relating to a site at Hazely Combe, Arreton². In those cases the Inspector concluded that the Council can show a 5 year supply of housing sites albeit with some concern over whether all of those sites can be delivered. The Inspector referred to the Core Strategy examining Inspector's report from 2011 which suggested that the prompt release or allocation of sites was necessary. I am told that allocations have not been forthcoming through the development plan process. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) makes it clear that Councils can make allowance for windfall sites within 5 year supply figures where there is evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply.
9. The information provided about completion of sites with planning permission shows that the Council may be running behind target. I am mindful however of what the footnotes on page 12 of the Framework say. I do not have sufficient evidence to doubt the deliverability of schemes with planning permission. The limited information provided to me shows a snapshot in time insufficient to indicate a longer or sustained trend.
10. Whilst I have insufficient evidence to reach a definitive conclusion on the matter, on the limited evidence before me it appears that the Council can demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing. This does have implications for how up to date the CS Policies for the supply of housing are, taking account of paragraph 49 of the Framework. CS Policy SP1 seeks to steer new development within or immediately adjacent to defined settlements. This policy and the supporting paragraphs are generally consistent with the Framework taken as a whole.
11. The site is not within or adjacent to a defined settlement. CS Policy SP1 also prioritises redevelopment on previously developed land (PDL) where it is available, suitable and viable. The policy goes on to confirm that unless a specific local need is identified development proposals outside of or not immediately adjacent to defined settlements will not be supported.
12. The site is in a rural area and other than the 2 adjoining dwellings and what appear to be ancillary structures, it is surrounded fields. It is not within a built up area and is part of the garden closely associated with Meadow View. It is within the curtilage of the dwelling. None of the exclusions to the definition of PDL within the Framework apply. The site is therefore on PDL. The site is available and I have no evidence to question viability. It is therefore necessary

² APP/P2114/A/14/2213876 and APP/P2114/A/14/2219750

to consider if the site is suitable in other respects as set out in the CS and taking account of the Framework as a whole.

13. The site is within Shalfleet Parish within the Rural West Wight housing sub-market area as defined within the SHMA. It is also close to the West Wight sub-area. I can understand the appellant's point that there will be a cross over in how the 2 adjoining sub-market areas function. The defining boundary between the parishes does not include physical limitations to movement for residents. The SHMA indicates that there is a need for 77 open market dwellings per year within the two areas with a significant proportion being for 3 bedroom family units as proposed. A local agent confirms that there is a strong need for modern housing such as the proposal. This would contribute to meeting this local need although as the appellant states within the supporting planning statement, this combined area covers a vast swathe of the island.
14. The site is located along a busy main road where there is a regular bus service and a bus stop is close to the site. The bus service operates 7 days a week from early in the morning into the late evening linking the site with Newport and Alum and towns in between. This could reduce the environmental impacts of living in this location.
15. The site is otherwise a substantial walk or cycle to other services. The road is unlit nearby and does not have a complete footpath leading to facilities to the west or to the east. The footpath to the west does not become properly established until one gets close to the playing field within the area known as Bouldnor which is not a settlement defined within CS Policy SP1. The services and facilities within Yarmouth are a considerable distance further along the road. The appellant's table showing distances to services shows that the site is not well related to Shalfleet either. Shalfleet is accessed along a country lane not conducive to walking or cycling particularly outside of daylight hours. The site is close to other dwellings but not close to shops, schools or other day to day facilities. It is isolated from many services apart from the bus link. In my opinion, the site is isolated for the purposes of the Framework. This states that new isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided.

Planning balance

16. There are constraints which may limit where new housing can be accommodated close to settlements such as the concerns over flood risk. However I am not convinced by the presented evidence that this site is critical to meeting the housing needs arising nearby. The proposal would make a small difference towards meeting a general local need across a wide area rather than a specific local need for the area close to the site. A single dwelling will make only a limited positive impact upon the need for 3 bedroom family dwellings. The proposal would have limited social and economic benefits.
17. The site is on PDL and were this a suitable location, it would prioritise its development in terms of CS Policy SP1 and the Framework. However, the location would lead to an increase in use of private vehicles which would therefore cause significant environmental harm.
18. The site differs significantly from the other sites referred to by the appellant. In the Blackwater Mill Farm³ case, the Council report states that the site is

³ Proposed detached dwelling with parking, LPA Ref:P/00578/15

physically within a sizeable urban settlement and residential area near to existing shops, services and facilities within Newport town centre. The site at Norton Green⁴ is referred to within that officer report as being physically within the built form of a small hamlet. Those sites are not isolated according to the available information and therefore do not alter how I have looked at this site.

19. The proposal would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the countryside being amongst a small group of buildings. The additional household would not harm living conditions at the adjoining dwellings and safe vehicular access would be achievable. However, these factors are neutral, neither weighing in favour nor against the proposal.
20. The proposal does not comply with CS Policy SP1. If I were able to conclude that there is a shortfall in 5 year housing supply as suggested by the appellant and that relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date this lack of compliance with the CS would still be a harmful factor. The adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of this proposal.
21. In relation to the main issue, the site is not suitable for the proposed dwelling having regard to the housing needs of the area and accessibility to services. This would not be a sustainable form of development when considering the advice within the Framework when taken as a whole.

Conclusion

22. For the reasons given above and having considered all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andy Harwood

INSPECTOR

⁴ Proposed detached dwelling with parking, LPA Ref:P/00003/16