



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 July 2017

by J Ayres BA Hons, Solicitor

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

Decision date: 27th July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/H1705/W/17/3172141

Land at Boars Bridge House, Bramley Road, Little London RG26 5EY

- 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 and Mrs Baker against the decision of Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/04106/FUL, dated 4 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 10 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a dwelling and garage and associated parking and amenity area. Change of use of equestrian land to residential.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the whether the proposal would be sustainable development having particular regard to local need and its location within the countryside.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is currently part of the land associated with Boars Bridge House, a generous four bedroom house with paddocks, located on the outskirts of Little London, outside of a settlement. Policy SS1 of the Basingstoke and Dean Local Plan 2016 (BADLP) sets out the spatial strategy for the district, directing development within the settlement boundaries. Policy SS6 of the BADLP provides a number of exceptions to Policy SS1 which would allow for development outside of the settlement boundary. Both parties agree that Policy SS6(e) is relevant to the proposal. This provides for residential proposal of a scale and type that meet a locally agreed need, which is subject to criteria relating to the relationship of the development to the settlement, character and appearance, and amenity of neighbours.
4. The Council has published guidance to assist in addressing locally agreed need. This advises that an applicant should demonstrate that their proposal meets a specific and clearly identified unmet need in the local area in terms of number, size, type, and tenure, and refers to the need being with the Parish, village, or settlement. The appellant has referred to a Housing Needs Assessment carried out by the Pamber Parish Council which identified a Parish-wide need for eleven market dwellings. The appellant has also submitted a letter from a local estate agent stating that properties such as Boars House Bridge are always in demand. However, whilst this demonstrates that there is a need for housing

within the parish, it does not confirm that the need is within Bramley or Little London, the nearest settlements. The appellant wishes to reside in the proposal, and therefore the dwelling that would actually address the need would be Boars Bridge House. However the appellant has not, in my view, provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate that Boars Bridge House would meet local need in terms of its size, type and tenure. Furthermore, the appellant asserts that the proposal would meet their need in respect of downsizing from their current property, and would therefore meet a local need. However, I have no evidence to suggest that their need cannot be met within one of the settlements.

5. As such it is my view that the appellant has failed to adequately demonstrate that the proposal would meet a locally agreed need in accordance with Policy SS6(e) of the BADLP.
6. Bramley Road provides a link between Little London and Bramley Village. Properties are located along the length of the road, either in clusters or as more sporadic development. Boars Bridge House is one of the clusters of residential properties and the built form at this part of the road is relatively concentrated, in comparison to the more sporadic development elsewhere in the surrounding area. There is a public footpath almost opposite the site, which provides a link to Little London. The drive into either Little London or Bramley Village is relatively short, and a bus service can be hailed from the roadside, making it quite easy to access either place. Bramley provides a post office, primary school, railway station and village shops. There are no footpaths or lighting along Bramley Road so it would be unlikely to attract travelling on foot. However, in my view it would be suitable for cycling, and public transport is in a convenient form. As such, occupiers of the proposal would be able to access facilities and services relatively easily, and I do not consider the site to be isolated in a physical or functional sense.
7. The parties do not dispute that the proposal is sympathetic in its design and scale, and would not detract from the open and spacious character and appearance of the area.
8. The appellant states that they have lived in the area for a considerable period of time, and are engaged in a number of charities. In order to continue their charitable work, and to remain in the area, they intend to sell Boars Bridge House and reside in the proposal. I commend them for the charity work that they carry out, and appreciate that they would like to remain in the local area. However, based on the evidence before me, it is not clear that they are reliant upon the proposal to remain in the general area. In my view the desire to remain in this specific location does not outweigh the conflict that the proposal has with the development plan in its justification as addressing a locally agreed need.

Other Matters

9. In this case I find that the conflict with the development plan arising from the proposal failing to address an identified locally agreed need would not be outweighed by the benefits of the proposal in terms of its construction to sustainable design standards, and the economic benefits brought about through the construction period. As such, the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be allowed. Therefore, the proposal would not represent sustainable development in accordance with Paragraph 49 of the

Framework and accordingly it would also fail to comply with Policy SD1 of the BADLP which identifies how decisions should be consistent with the principles of sustainable development.

Conclusion

10. I conclude that, having regard to the requirements of local and national planning policy for the delivery of housing, the appellant has not provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate a locally agreed need which would justify development within the countryside.
11. The appeal proposal would conflict with the requirements of the development plan when taken as a whole. There is no weight of material considerations sufficient to override this conflict and, thus, for the reasons given above, and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Ayres

INSPECTOR