
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 June 2017

by Graeme Robbie BA(Hons) BPI MRTPI

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

Decision date: 4 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/E2001/W/17/3171866

land west of Coach House, Grange Road, West Cowick DN14 9DH

- 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 A Grantham against the decision of East Riding of Yorkshire Council.
 - The application Ref DC/16/02375/OUT/WESTWW, dated 17 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 9 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is over 55's accommodation of 5 bungalows (2 bedroom).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The application was submitted in outline with all detailed matters reserved. I have dealt with the appeal on that basis, treating the '*proposed site layout plan: feasibility scheme No 4 (5no 2 bed bungalows)*' and '*feasibility scheme – bungalow type 'B' (2 bed)*' floor plan and elevation drawings as illustrative.
3. The appellant has submitted with the appeal a Unilateral Undertaking with the appeal which provides for the dwellings to be occupied only by persons over 55 years of age. I return to this matter below.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the appeal site and the surrounding area; and
 - Whether the location of the proposed development would be consistent with the principle of sustainable development, having regard to the development plan and national planning policies.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

5. The appeal site lies on the northern side of Grange Road, on the opposite side of the road to the main body of the village. Whereas built development is largely continuous along the southern side of Grange Road, albeit in a form befitting a narrow country lane on the rural edge of a village beyond which lies

open countryside, the northern side of Grange Road is altogether different in its character and form. Here, I saw that development is more sporadic with only a handful of houses located to the north of Grange Road. The gaps in-between that provide field boundaries to Grange Road or views towards the open fields beyond, combine with the dense woodland planting alongside Grange Road closer to its junction with Lodge Lane, to provide a pleasingly verdant and informal transition from village to the countryside beyond.

6. Although the application was submitted in outline, it was accompanied by an illustrative site layout plan which shows how five dwellings could be positioned within the site. However, it shows a form of development that would be at odds with the predominantly linear, but informal, rural-edge form of development present on the southern side of Grange Road, and with the somewhat scattered and intermittent built form on the northern side. In the context of the countryside beyond the northern edge of Grange Road, development of the nature proposed would be an overtly urban form of development at odds with the character, appearance and layout of the surrounding area. However, although all matters of detail are reserved for subsequent consideration, given the shape and form of the appeal site and the nature of its surroundings, the application does not suggest, nor has it been otherwise suggested, how five dwellings could be developed within this site in a manner or form that would reflect the character or appearance of this part of West Cowick.
7. Policy S4 of the East Riding Local Plan 2012 – 2029 (April 2016) (ERLP) states that outside settlements listed in policy S3, development will be supported to help maintain the vibrancy of villages and the countryside where, amongst other things, it is of an appropriate scale to its location. Even if the proposal were to satisfy one of the exceptions set out at S4(C)(1) – (11), proposals should still respect the intrinsic character of their surroundings. Further, ERLP policies ENV1 and ENV2 expect all development to contribute to safeguarding and respecting the diverse character and appearance of the area. It is stated that this will be achieved through, amongst other things, design and layout, which achieve a high quality of design that has regard to the specific characteristics of the site's wider context and character of the surrounding area and which integrate sensitively into the existing landscape.
8. For the reasons that I have set out, the proposal would fail to achieve those aims, and would appear as an overly intensive and urban form of development at odds with the relaxed transitional character of the village fringe along Grange Road. This would be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Thus, I conclude that the proposal would be contrary to ERLP policies S4, ENV1 and ENV2 and at odds with the Framework's core planning principles of securing high quality design and taking account of the different roles and character of different areas and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Sustainable Development

9. The appeal site is located on the northern side of Grange Road. The main body of the village of West Cowick lies to the south of Grange Road along which, I am advised, the boundary of West Cowick's development limits run. As a consequence, the appeal site lies beyond the development limits of West Cowick and, for development plan purposes, is therefore within the

countryside. ERLP policy S4 seeks to promote appropriate development in villages and the countryside, with criterion (C) setting out the forms of development that are supported in countryside locations. There is no evidence before me that any of these exceptions apply in this instance.

10. Paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that in order to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities and that new isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided unless there are special circumstances. Once again, there is no evidence before me that any of these special circumstances apply in this instance.
11. The appellant has alluded to a recent appeal¹ which, I am advised, sought to challenge the Council's housing supply calculations and, ultimately, their ability to demonstrate a deliverable five year supply of housing land. However, despite this, the appellant nonetheless acknowledges the presence of a five year supply of housing land within East Riding and has not sought to present any evidence to the contrary, or that relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, I therefore consider that ERLP policy S4 is consistent with the Framework, and give it weight accordingly.
12. The site lies opposite existing housing on the southern side of Grange Road. It cannot therefore be said to be isolated in visual or physical terms. Nor has it been argued that West Cowick as a settlement lacks services or facilities such that the proposal would be isolated in those terms. Whilst I do not consider the site to be isolated, it nonetheless lies in the countryside and does not satisfy any of the exceptions or circumstances set out in ERLP policy S4 or the Framework.
13. The Framework identifies three dimensions to sustainable development, with sustainable development also described as 'a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking'. In this instance, the proposal would provide five dwellings that would be consistent with the Framework's aim of seeking to boost significantly² the supply of housing. There also appears to be some support within West Cowick for the development of housing for the over 55's³, a type of housing that would be secured in this instance by the submission of a UU by the appellant, the presence of which I have also taken into consideration.
- 14.** Whilst these factors weigh in support of the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development, I note that the scope of this survey is limited and does not, in my judgement, compellingly demonstrate an over-riding need for such accommodation. Nor has it been demonstrated why a proposal of this nature and scale could not be located within a settlement's development limits, be it West Cowick or other settlements. The weight that I afford these matters is therefore limited. As I have already found harm in respect of the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, I conclude that the proposal would fail to achieve the environmental dimension of sustainable development. Thus, overall, the proposal would not

¹ APP/E2001/W/16/3151699

² Paragraph 47

³ West Cowick Over 55's Housing Survey Results: November 2015 – Mark Simmonds Planning Services

represent the form of sustainable development that policy S4 of the ERLP and the Framework seek to achieve.

Other Matters

15. I have noted the appellant's comments that there were no objections from statutory consultees and that there is local support for the scheme. I note too that the Council consider that matters relating to residential amenity, highway safety and access, flood risk and drainage and nature conservation could all be resolved with conditions. These though are only neutral effects and do not outweigh the harm that I have identified above.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons set out, and having considered all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Graeme Robbie

INSPECTOR