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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 July 2017

**by Jonathan Price BA(Hons) DMS DipTP MRTPI**

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

**Decision date: 8<sup>th</sup> August 2017**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/Y2003/W/17/3170599**

**Land adjacent to Star Croft, Turbary Road, Haxey, Lincolnshire DN9 2JN**

- 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 Anthony Smith against the decision of North Lincolnshire Council.
  - The application Ref PA/2016/637, dated 4 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 October 2016.
  - The development proposed is to erect mixed use barn on land adjacent to Star Croft, Turbary Road, Haxey.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed barn on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, including in respect of its historic landscape interest.

## Reasons

3. The appellant's holding fronts onto Turbary Road, a country lane, and comprises some 12.7 acres of pasture that occupies land either side and to the rear of an isolated bungalow in separate ownership known as Star Croft. The land has an approved use for the keeping of horses and there are existing timber stables running alongside the drain that separates the site from the boundary to Star Croft. There are permissions for replacement stables, also including an adjacent storage barn, which will be sited further into the site to allow a more open view from the kitchen windows of Star Croft.
4. The appeal site is surrounded by a flat topography of farmland providing open and extensive views, containing few trees and areas of woodland, with isolated groups of farm buildings such as those nearby at Summer Croft Farm and at Skyers Farm. The proposal is located within the Isle of Axholme which is designated an Area of Special Historic Landscape Interest (ASHLI) and considered of national importance. This is due to it containing significant areas of medieval open strip fields and Turbaries (old peat or turf diggings) which, together with enclosed land and the overall settlement pattern, make a nationally unique landscape.

5. The proposal is for a substantially larger storage barn than that approved and the details are the same of those of a building dismissed at appeal on 23 June 2014<sup>1</sup>. Compared to the previous appeal scheme the barn would be re-sited further south-west and towards Turbary Road and adjacent rather than to the rear of the proposed new stables. The appellant intends this large barn to replace the smaller one approved but in any case their respective footprints intersect to prevent the implementation of both.
6. The re-sited barn was the subject of officer-level agreement but the Council's decision to refuse was made against the approval recommendation made to Committee. The Isle of Axholme covers an extensive area and much of its original historic character has been altered by the creation of large, modern agricultural fields. This has been the case around the appeal site where there is now little evidence of the pattern of medieval strip fields and early enclosures which remain better preserved elsewhere, such as further to the north around the town of Epworth.
7. However, simply because its original character might only remain in smaller fragments would not alter the historical value of the wider Isle of Axholme and the appreciation of its former character in the context of more recent agricultural changes. Although the better preserved parts of this area might not be visible from this location, the adjacent Turbary Road offers publicly available views of this wider landscape through which its history and former character might be understood and appreciated.
8. In this regard the proposed mixed use barn, standing somewhat apart from the adjacent smaller buildings, would be a large and visually prominent structure. Whilst the utilitarian design proposed would be comparable to other large farm buildings in the area, it would nonetheless intrude harmfully into views of the wider historic landscape.
9. The larger barn would support the appellant's horse keeping business where up to 110 horses are supported by the surrounding pasture and the further 65 or so acres of land rented in the surrounding area. The building proposed would be of a size necessary to provide cost-effective, dry and ventilated storage of hay required for the horse stock as well as accommodation for agricultural machinery, fertilizers, weed control sprays and other supplementary animal feeds which would exceed the capacity of the permitted barn.
10. Paragraph 28 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) supports the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas. In the previous appeal the Inspector considered the evidence demonstrated the need for the proposed building in a countryside location based on the nature and scale of the appellant's business in relation to keeping pasture land and horses. I find no reason to depart from this conclusion.
11. However, sustainability has an environmental dimension and paragraph 109 of the Framework also requires that weight be given to protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. Whilst the larger storage facilities sought would support the operation as a whole I am not persuaded that the economic benefits this would provide would outweigh the significant harm found to the visual

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<sup>1</sup> APP/Y2003/A/14/2216262

character of the surrounding rural landscape, particularly in regard to the protection that should be afforded to its nationally unique historic character.

12. The siting and scale of the proposed building would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the open countryside contrary to the strict control imposed through Policy RD2 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan 2003 (LP). The proposal would also conflict with the aims of LP Policy LC14 for development not to adversely affect the character, appearance or setting of the Isle of Axholme ASHLI. The scheme would not gain the support of Policy CS6 of the Council's Core Strategy 2011 which seeks to safeguard the nationally significant medieval landscapes of the Isle of Axholme.

### **Conclusion**

13. For the reasons given above, and having taken into consideration all other matters raised, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

*Jonathan Price*

INSPECTOR