
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 June 2017

by R Norman BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 09 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/K2610/W/17/3171832

Long Field House, Norwich Road, Horstead With Stanninghall, Norwich NR12 7BA

- 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 & Mrs Justin Ayre against the decision of Broadland District Council.
 - The application Ref 20161700, dated 5 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 21 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is 2 no self-build dwellings to land to the rear of Longfield House.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - Whether or not the proposal would provide a suitable location for housing, having regard to the proximity of services, the character of the area and the policies of the development plan;
 - Whether there would be any effects on highway safety.

Reasons

Location of development

3. Policy GC2 of the Broadland District Council Development Management DPD (2015) seeks to accommodate new development within the defined settlement limits, defined in the Site Allocations DPD, which are well linked and well related to existing development, services, facilities and employment opportunities. It is not a matter of contention that the location of the site falls outside of any defined settlement. Furthermore, paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that housing in rural areas should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities and isolated new homes in the countryside should be avoided unless there are special circumstances such as being essential for a rural enterprise, involving the re-use of redundant buildings or exceptional or innovative in design terms.

4. The proposed development would introduce 2 new dwellings into an existing paddock. The site is located to the rear of an existing dwelling, Long Field House, and is within a small cluster of dwellings. The area is rural in character and the services and facilities available in this area are limited. I note the presence of a bus stop on Norwich Road, however to introduce 2 new dwellings into this location would be likely to result in reliance on the use of private cars to access facilities in the surrounding villages. . As such, I find that the site, although within a small group of existing dwellings, would be relatively isolated from the full range of facilities and services likely to be necessary to meet the daily needs of future occupiers. Furthermore, due to the modest level of development proposed, the appeal scheme would be likely to make only a very limited contribution to the vitality of the existing rural community.
5. The Council have demonstrated that they have sufficient sites available for self-build dwellings to meet the needs of those currently on the self-build register. Furthermore, the Council advise that their 5 year housing land supply has been met, which has not been disputed by the Appellant. Given the availability of suitable sites within the defined settlements I can find no overriding factors that would outweigh the harm caused by the introduction of 2 dwellings into this rural countryside setting, outside of any established village.
6. I have had regard to the other nearby sites referred to and also viewed some of these during my site visit. I note these are close to the appeal site however these comprise replacement dwellings or conversions of existing buildings and were not new build developments. As such I do not consider them to be wholly comparable and therefore do not outweigh my concerns with the development proposed.
7. Given the above considerations, the proposed development fails to accord with Policies GC1, GC2 and GC4 of the Broadland Development Management DPD, which collectively require new development to be accommodated within the settlement limits and specific allocations, achieve a high standard of design, avoid significant detrimental impacts and favour sustainable development.

Highway Safety

8. The site would be accessed from Hall Lane via an existing access which would be subject to improvements. Hall Lane is a narrow rural road which serves a number of existing properties and is subject to a 30mph speed limit at the access point. The development would generate additional traffic movements to and from the site and whilst it would be possible for vehicles to turn within the site and exit in forward gear, even with the improvements proposed, the visibility at the access point would be significantly below what would be required for leaving the site safely.
9. Furthermore, there is no footpath present along this part of Hall Lane and due to the very narrow width of Hall Lane there would be potential for conflict between road users. I note that the applications referred to in the Appellant's Statement of Case also access onto Hall Lane. However, these were existing accesses serving commercial premises, therefore already generating a number of traffic movements, and as such I can give limited weight to these examples. Whilst it may be that the occupants of the proposed dwellings would be aware of the traffic flow along Hall Lane and distances to services, this does not override the issues that would arise from the use of the access. I consider that the proposed improvements to the access would not be sufficient to mitigate

the harm that would be caused in terms of highway safety for all road users including those accessing and exiting the site.

10. The development therefore fails to comply with Policy TS3 of the Broadland Development Management DPD, which seeks to ensure that development does not result in any significant adverse impacts on the highway network.

Other Matters

11. A number of local concerns have been raised, including in relation to drainage issues, loss of privacy, noise and disturbance, loss of views and green space and the ongoing creation of a Neighbourhood Plan. However due to my findings above, it is not necessary for me to consider these further in this instance, as they would not alter my overall conclusions on the proposal.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Norman

INSPECTOR