



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 August 2017

by Claire Searson MSc PGDip BSc (Hons) MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 18th August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/D2510/W/17/3172719

Land at Station Road, Alford, LN13 9LH

- 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 John Large against the decision of East Lindsey District Council.
 - The application Ref N/003/02524/16, dated 20 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 15 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is the erection of 1 No dwelling.
 - The application is outline with access to be determined and all other matters reserved.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of 1 No dwelling at Land at Station Road, Alford, LN13 9LH in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref N/003/02524/16, dated 20 December 2016 subject to the attached schedule of conditions.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr John Large against East Lindsey District Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the rural area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site forms part of an open field used as a paddock. It is located on the western side of Alford, adjacent to No 27 which is a dwelling currently forming the end property in a run of dwellings along Station Road. To the west of the appeal site, separated by a mature hedgerow, is a site with a number of buildings, believed to be part of a former rabbit farm with an associated access track and hardstanding. Beyond this is a car sales business, located on a former Council depot and a separate crematorium located in landscaped grounds. To the rear of the appeal site are open fields. There is also open rolling countryside on the opposite side of Station Road.
5. The site is located towards the western fringes of Alford, a small town. The site is also located in an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). Policy C11 of the East Lindsey Local Plan Alteration 1999 (LP) requires the protection of the distinctive character of the AGLV and seeks to restrict development which

would harm landscape features which contribute to the character of the area. LP Policy A5 also seeks to integrate development into its setting and preserves medium and long distance views.

6. Development along Station Road is of a relatively low density and is characteristic of a transition from the core of Alford into the rural hinterlands. No 27, as the last residential dwelling along Station Road, also has a mature hedgerow boundary which currently marks an end to the residential uses along this part of Station Road. However, in light of the former rabbit farm, the car sales premises and the crematorium, I consider that today No 27 does not define the edge of the Town and that there is no particular marked change of character at this point.
7. The dwelling would be positioned away from the road and a small paddock area would be retained to the frontage of Station Road ensuring that the development would be relatively inconspicuous and retaining a semi-rural character. I am also mindful that the future design and landscaping proposals secured as part of any future reserved matters application, would further help to assimilate the development into its surroundings, even when taking into consideration the length of time it would take for landscaping to establish and mature.
8. I accept that it is not unusual to find scattered dwellings and buildings when leaving towns and villages and there can be no doubt that the existing use of the site as a paddock gives the appeal plot a rural character. However the addition of a further single dwelling located towards the rear of a reasonable size plot would reflect the sporadic nature character of the edge of the settlement and I consider that the proposals would provide an appropriate low key development.
9. The Council also submit that the site forms a strategic gap separating uses beyond the town, however, the site is neither particularly wide nor prominent from within the street scene which limits its significance. As such, I am satisfied that the appeal site is akin to an infill plot rather than forming an important break between residential and commercial premises.
10. I also saw that the appeal site is not prominent when viewed within its wider landscape context. As viewed from the A1104 at the top of the hill, from the cross roads with Well High Lane, the plot is located in a shallow area. If views are gauged of the development, this would be with the crematorium and other developments in the foreground and as such the character of this area as a transition into the rural landscape would be preserved.
11. On this basis, I consider that the proposed addition of a single dwelling would not harm the character and appearance of the rural landscape and the AGLV. The development would accord with LP Policy A5 which seeks to integrate development into its setting and preserves medium and long distance views. In preserving the character of the AGLV, I also find that there would be no conflict with LP Policy C11.

Conditions

12. I have had regard to the conditions put forward by the Council. I have attached conditions limiting the life for the planning permission and setting out

the requirements for the reserved matters. I have however, amended the list of reserved matters to reflect the wording of the Act.

13. I also consider that a condition relating to ensuring that visibility is retained at all times from the existing access is necessary in terms of highway safety. I have, however amended the wording as the access is already in existence.

Conclusion

14. For all the above reasons, and having regard to all other matters raised, I consider that there would be no harm to the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

C Searson
INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions:

- 1) Details of the appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale, (hereinafter called "the reserved matters") shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before any development takes place and the development shall be carried out as approved.
- 2) Application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the local planning authority not later than 3 years from the date of this permission.
- 3) The development hereby permitted shall take place not later than 2 years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.
- 4) The dwelling hereby permitted shall not be occupied until all obstructions exceeding 0.6metres high shall be cleared from the land between the highway boundary and the visibility splays identified on drawing number LDC1649-02B dated 27/01/2017 and thereafter the visibility splay shall be kept free of obstacles exceeding 0.6metres in height.