
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 August 2019

by Sarah Dyer BA BTP MRTPI MCMI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/V2635/W/19/3210425

The Bungalow, Waterworks Road, Old Hunstanton PE36 6JE

- 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 D Lloyd against the decision of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 18/00198/F, dated 1 February 2018, was refused by notice dated 7 June 2018.
 - The development proposed is the construction of 3 dwellings following demolition of existing bungalow.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Waterworks Road defines the eastern extremity of Old Hunstanton beyond which lies an open landscape. It also provides access to the golf course which runs parallel to the beach. The road is characterised by a variety of house types, constructed in a broad range of materials which are orientated at varying positions relative to the carriageway. There are also examples of clusters of buildings accessed via tracks which run perpendicular to Waterworks Road. Groups of mature trees and hedges combine with open areas to provide a pleasant natural context for the existing development.
4. The Bungalow occupies a large plot and as a consequence of its small footprint there are substantial open areas around the building. Whilst the groups of trees on the road frontage limit the contribution which the existing building makes to the street scene, the undeveloped space behind it is readily visible in views along Waterworks Road towards the beach.
5. The appeal scheme would replace the existing modest bungalow with three substantial dwellings. Whilst individually the houses would not be significantly larger or different in design to other new dwellings in Waterworks Road, they would cumulatively have a significant impact on the street scene.

6. Houses 1 and 2 would, as a result of their bulk and depth, present a building mass to the southern boundary which would be out of keeping with the natural context of Waterworks Road. When taken together with House 3 the development as a whole would appear cramped on the site, which would be out of character with this part of Waterworks Road. Whilst there are some clusters of other buildings in the vicinity of the site, these are not directly comparable to the appeal proposals because they are set off longer tracks and are not as close to the road frontage. Consequently, those groups have a much more limited impact on the street scene and are compatible with the overall character of buildings in a natural landscape.
7. I conclude that the appeal scheme would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area. The development is therefore contrary to Policies CS06 and CS08 of the Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council Local Development Framework – Core Strategy (2011) and Development Management Policy DM15 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016). These policies set out the strategy in rural area which is, amongst other things, to maintain local character and a high-quality environment and require new development to respond to context and character whilst making the most efficient use of land. For similar reasons the development would not accord with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) in relation to achieving well-designed places.

Other Matters

8. The appeal scheme would contribute towards the provision of housing which would have a positive impact on the supply of housing. The development would also benefit the local economy in both the short term during the construction phase and in the long term as a result of new residents using local shops and services. These outcomes weigh in favour of the scheme albeit that they would be limited by the scale of the development.
9. The appellants consider that, on the basis that the Core Strategy predates the Framework, the policies within it could be regarded as out of date. However, there is limited evidence before me to demonstrate that this is the case. Nevertheless, even if I were to accept the argument, the adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the limited benefits of the scheme which I have acknowledged in the preceding paragraph.
10. The Council has invited me to consider the need for ecological mitigation measures to be secured via a Section 106 Agreement. However, as I am dismissing the appeal for other reasons it is not necessary for me to consider this matter further as it could not change the outcome of this appeal.
11. The Council has indicated that protected species are likely to be affected by the appeal proposals on the Appeal Questionnaire. However, there is very limited evidence of the presence of such creatures within the appeal submissions. On this basis, and given that I am dismissing the appeal, I have not pursued this matter further as part of my determination of the appeal.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above, the appeal is dismissed.

Sarah Dyer

Inspector