
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 August 2019

by G Pannell BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/L2630/W/19/3229649

Land adjacent Meadow View, Long Lane, Burston IP22 5TG

- 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 L Bloomfield against the decision of South Norfolk District Council.
 - The application Ref 2019/0360, dated 1 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing outbuildings. Erection of 5 no. dwellinghouses and garage structures. New site vehicle access to highway.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The original application was submitted in outline with means of access and layout to be considered. During the course of the application the appellant agreed with the Council to remove the layout from consideration. Therefore this appeal is determined on the basis of an outline application with means of access only.
3. On this basis I have had regard to the following drawings: Location Plan 01/353 Rev A, Existing Context Plan 03/353, Existing Site Plan 02/353 and with reference to the means of access only: Proposed Site Plan 04/353.

Main Issues

4. The main issue is whether the site represents sustainable development in respect of its location.

Reasons

Suitability of Location

5. The site is situated within Mill Green which contains a group of dwellings to the north of the settlement of Burston. The site comprises a range of outbuildings and land forming part of a property known as Meadow View which is accessed off Long Lane. A new access is proposed off Bridge Road to serve the proposed dwellings.
6. The site is outside of the settlement boundary of Burston and is therefore in the countryside for planning policy purposes. However, given its grouping with

other dwellings in Mill Green it is not isolated. The Council's officer report states that Burston is classified as an Other Village in the Joint Core Strategy, which indicates that Burston has limited facilities and public transport. From my site visit I noted that Burston has both a public house and primary school.

7. The village is approximately 800m from the site. However, distance is not the sole consideration. The village can be accessed from the site via either Mill Road or Gissing Road which are both narrow roads without footpaths or streetlighting. These conditions would make it less attractive for people to walk, especially for small children going to school. In addition, the presence of an animal feed mill along Mill Road, which is serviced by HGV traffic, adds to this unattractiveness and I witnessed a number of lorries travelling along Mill Road and through the village during my visit.
8. Even if the occupants of the proposed development were to walk to Burston, this village has limited services and facilities and occupiers would have to travel onwards to services and facilities within the nearby market town of Diss. I have no substantive evidence before me to indicate that the site is well served by public transport. I therefore consider that occupiers of the proposed development would be likely to be reliant on the private car to access community facilities such as shopping, healthcare, leisure and entertainment.
9. I agree with the parties that the site would give rise to some economic benefits during the construction phase and I consider that there would be modest social benefits arising from the contribution to the Council's housing supply, noting paragraph 64 of the Framework highlights the contribution small and medium sized sites can make to meeting the housing requirement in the area. There would also be some environmental benefits from the redevelopment of the site which has previously been used as a builders' yard. However, these modest benefits are not considered to outweigh the considerable harm resulting from the inappropriate location of the site, having regard to its location in relation to day to day services.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not represent sustainable development in respect of its location. Consequently, it would not accord with Policies DM 1.3 and DM3.10 of the South Norfolk Local Plan Development Management Policies Document (October 2015) (LP) which, in combination, seek to ensure that development is sustainably located; reduces the need to travel and maximises the use of sustainable forms of transport. The development also fails to accord with policy 1 of the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (adopted January 2014) (JCS) which seeks to minimise the need to travel and policy 17 which supports the wider objectives of the JCS.
11. I consider that Policy 1 and policy 17 of the JCS accord with the Framework insofar as it seeks to lessen the impact of climate change and allocate housing in appropriate locations.

Other matters

12. The Council has advised that they can demonstrate a 5 year land supply and the appellant has not provided any evidence to dispute this.

Listed Buildings

13. The listed buildings of The Cottage and Higdon's Cottage (Grade II) are adjacent to the site. Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the LBCA Act') requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses when dealing with planning applications. Paragraph 193 of the Framework states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation; the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.
14. Although matters relating to scale, layout, appearance and landscaping have yet to be fixed, the proposed development would result in five dwellings spaced across the appeal site and this would be visible from within the setting of the listed building. However, given the presence of the existing structures on the site and their impact upon the listed building, I have no reason to disagree with the Council's conclusion that the development will not result in any harm to the listed building.

Other material considerations

15. Reference has been made to an appeal decision in Poringland which is also within South Norfolk District Council's jurisdiction, however that site is in a different location and is therefore not directly comparable to the appeal proposal.
16. I have noted the site has previously been used as a builders' yard and therefore could be considered to be previously developed land. However, this factor does not outweigh the harm I have found to sustainability.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G. Pannell

INSPECTOR