



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 July 2019

by Jamie Reed DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/W/19/3227634

Land North of Redburn View, Bardon Mill Northumberland

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ms Lorimer against Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref. 18/02665/FUL is dated 25 July 2018.
 - The development proposed is residential development for 4 dwellings.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed and planning permission is refused.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council has not formally determined the application. However, it has confirmed that had it been in a position to do so it would have refused planning permission for reasons relating to the effects on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area.
3. The application was originally submitted for 8 dwellings. During the course of the application the proposal was revised to seek consent for 4 dwellings. From the information before me, it is clear that both parties are in agreement with this revised proposal and that further consultations were undertaken in this regard. Therefore as no one would be prejudiced by my consideration of the revised proposal, I have revised the description of the development accordingly and determined the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the appeal site is a suitable location for housing having regard to national and local planning policy.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is greenfield and steeply sloping in character. It is sandwiched inbetween the A69 highway which runs along its northern boundary at its highest edge and the C311 highway which runs along its lowest point to the south. The C311 is the main road that runs through Bardon Mill, which is categorised as a smaller village in the Tynedale Core Strategy (CS) (2007).
6. Policy GD1 of the CS sets criteria for the general location of development in Tynedale, which is a predominantly rural area. The CS explains that everywhere outside of the built up area of a town or village is considered as

open countryside but the Tynedale Local Development Framework Proposals Map (PM) (2007) does not show a boundary for the limits of Bardon Mill. More recent Policy, in the form of the emerging Northumberland Local Plan (NLP) does, however, and it shows the appeal site lying outside of the settlement limits.

7. The appellant has submitted that the Appeal Site is within a sustainable location, with good access to local services and facilities and as such, should be included within the settlement boundary limits of Bardon Mill. She has submitted representations to the Council in this regard as part of its consultations relating to the Publication Draft of the emerging NLP which is due to undergo examination in September 2019. Whilst the emerging NLP provides an indication of the direction of travel with regard settlement boundary policy, I can only attach limited weight to this in its current form due to the unresolved objections relating to the settlement boundary limits.
8. Whilst there are currently no definitive boundary limits, from my observations on site, the approach suggested in the emerging NLP would indeed appear to be a sensible approach to adopt, due to the extent of the built form of the village that is located to the north of the C311 currently terminating to the east of the appeal site. From this point westwards, the character of the area to the north of the C311 changes significantly, taking the form of green and open fields, which slope upwards towards the A69. These fields provide significant uninterrupted views that form a key part of the character and appearance of the area surrounding Bardon Mill. The dwellings positioned in such an elevated position, part-way up this embankment would fundamentally change these views and the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area.
9. The appellant has suggested that the emerging NLP fails to find sufficient housing sites across all settlements in the Tyne Valley and that there is a significant under supply in this part of the county. Consequently, she considers this a reason for the site to come forward for development. The adverse impacts described above would significantly and demonstrably outweigh any benefits, however and as a result, I give this argument little weight.
10. Accordingly, I find that the proposal would result in a visually prominent form of development that would be evident both when entering and exiting the west end of the village on the C311. Such an arrangement would be visually harmful to the current green, open and naturalistic character of the western approach to the village. As a result, the proposal would not be in a suitable location for housing having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and local planning policy. Consequently, the proposal would not accord with Chapter 12 of the Framework and saved Policies GD2 and H32 of the Tynedale Local Plan (2007) or Policies GD1, BE1, NE1, H1 and H3 of the CS. When read together these only permit new dwellings when they are suitably located and sympathetic to the distinctive local character of the area, whilst protecting and enhancing the character and quality of the natural environment.

Other Matter

11. The appellant has drawn my attention to other developments nearby at Falcon Grange and Towhouse Green which they consider to demonstrate that acceptable forms of development can occur on the relatively narrow swathe of land between the A69 and the C311. Whilst it is inevitable that comparisons

may be made between developments, each has its own site-specific circumstances and merits upon which it is considered. These examples differ from the appeal site, as they are both situated amongst other neighbouring developments on the north side of the C311 and the gradient of the land on these sites appears far less pronounced. As a result, these other developments assimilate well into their surroundings and appear far less visually prominent than the proposal which is before me.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed and planning permission is refused.

Jamie Reed

INSPECTOR