



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 August 2019

by I A Dyer BSc (Eng) MIHT

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/J3530/W/19/3221775

Trailer Nursery, Bealings Road, Martlesham IP12 4RW

- 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 Walkden against the decision of Suffolk Coastal District Council.
 - The application Ref DC/18/4326/FUL, dated 11 October 2018, was refused by notice dated 31st January 2019.
 - The development proposed is the removal of trailer home & erection of 1No detached dwellings with associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The officer's report and the first reason for refusal refer to the replacement of the caravan on the site with two detached dwellings. It is clear, however, from the application documents and the Council's written statement, that the proposal is for one replacement dwelling. I have therefore determined the appeal on this basis.
3. During the course of the application a revised drawing was submitted to the Council removing a proposed garage and reducing the size and ridge height of the proposed dwelling. The appellants have requested that this appeal be determined against the original plans. However, I must determine this appeal on the same proposal that the Council considered. In the Council officer's report and the decision letter it is clear that they have determined the application with regard to the amended scheme and so I have determined this appeal on that basis.
4. Since the Council's determination of the application Suffolk Coastal District Council have merged with Waveney District Council to form East Suffolk Council. This does not, however, affect my determination of this appeal.
5. Following the Council's determination of the application further amendments have been made to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). The parties have, however, had the opportunity to make comments on the revisions to the Framework as part of the appeal process.

Main Issues

6. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area.
7. A second reason for refusal relating to the effect of the development on European Designated Sites is no longer being pursued by the Council because the proposal results in no net increase in dwellings. There is no need, therefore, for me to take this matter further.

Reasons

8. The appeal site contains an existing dwelling in the form of a trailer caravan and lies on the northern side of Bealings Road, a single carriageway road without footways or street lighting. To the west of the site lies an area of woodland, and to the east lie 1-3 Bealings Road, which are modest two story houses fronting the street with small front gardens.
9. The boundary of the site to Bealings Road is formed by a hedge of tall conifers, the branches of which oversail the road at height and which restrict views into the site. Opposite the site frontage is a mature hedge, mainly of deciduous trees, partially concealing a residential development fronting a side street. The boundary of the site with No 1 is in the form of planting and a fence and there are views of the green space to the rear of the dwellings on the northern side of Bealings Road.
10. The site lies outside of the physical limits boundary of Martlesham. It is therefore in the countryside for planning purposes where development will only be permitted subject to the exceptions set out in the Council's countryside policies. Policy DM3 of the Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan Core Strategy and Development Management Policies -2013- (the Local Plan), which refers to housing in the countryside, allows replacement dwellings on a one to one basis where they are no more visually intrusive in the countryside than the building to be replaced.
11. The proposed dwelling that would replace the trailer caravan would be a two storey detached house, situated in the middle of the plot. The proposed dwelling would be much greater in mass and form than the existing dwelling.
12. The proposal also raises ground levels within the site which combined with the size of the dwelling would mean the ridge height of the dwelling would be significantly higher than that of the more modest dwellings to the east on the same side of Bealings Road. Furthermore, the position of the dwelling would also obstruct views of the green space to the rear of the dwellings to the east along Bealings Road.
13. Following the removal of conifers on the frontage the new building would be highly visible from the public realm, dominating the site and its height mass and scale would be so disproportionate to, and out-of-keeping with, the existing dwellings to the east so as to seem incongruous. In this particular context that lack of conformity would be so significant as to amount to harm.
14. I conclude that the proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area. It would therefore be contrary to Policies SP19, SP29 and DM3 of the Local Plan, which, amongst other things, set out a spatial strategy to provide sustainable development whilst

safeguarding the countryside and DM21 of the Local Plan which, amongst other things, requires that development should relate well to the scale and character of its surroundings particularly in terms of its siting, height, massing and form.

Other Matter

15. I appreciate that the appellant wanted an earlier revision of the proposal considered as part of this appeal as set out in my preliminary matters. However, in light of the harm I have found, even if I had considered this plan, as it is for a larger dwelling with detached double garage, it would result in similar, if not additional harm to that which I have set out above.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

I Dyer

INSPECTOR