



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 August 2019

by S Leonard BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/D0840/W/19/3229859

Two Burrows Farm, Proposed Campsite, Road from Two Burrows to North Hill, Two Burrows, Blackwater TR4 8HN

- 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 Nigel Gosling against the decision of Cornwall Council.
 - The application Ref PA18/11193, dated 23 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 2 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is bungalow with double garage.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Cornwall Council against Mr Nigel Gosling. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Procedural Matters

3. The address on the banner heading above is taken from the application form. This differs from the addresses given on the appeal form and the decision notice. I use the above address, given its similarity with that of the appeal form and the Council questionnaire.
4. Notwithstanding the above, for the avoidance of doubt, my decision is based on the description of development on the heading above, which matches that of the appeal form and decision notice, and does not include the use of land as a campsite.
5. The drawing numbers listed on the decision notice do not correspond with those on the drawings the subject of the decision. The Council has confirmed that drawings 1, 2 and 3 as originally submitted required amendment prior to the registration of the application. The amended drawings have been listed as "Proposed 1A, Proposed 2A and Proposed 3A" on the decision notice, albeit no alterations were made to the numbering on the drawings.
6. The refusal reason on the decision notice and the officer report do not refer to any Neighbourhood Development Plan policies. The decision notice confirms that Policies 6 and 10 of the St Agnes Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018 – 2030 (NDP) were given very limited weight in the decision making process, due to the stage of plan preparation reached at the time of the

decision. The Council's statement of case refers to Policies 1, 7 and 10 of the NDP. Since the Council's decision, the NDP was 'made' on 5 September 2019. Accordingly, I attach full weight to the relevant NDP policies in my decision.

Main Issue

7. The main issue raised in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

8. The appeal site comprises the front part of an agricultural field located opposite Two Burrows Farm, on the unclassified road which runs between North Hill and the B3227. It lies within open countryside to the northwest of Blackwater, and is separated from the built settlement by open fields and a road. There is a gated vehicular access in the southwest corner of the field via a grassed track off the unclassified road, which runs adjacent to the western site boundary. The site, together with the remainder of the field to the north/west, is grassed, and its boundaries are defined by mature landscaping, hedging and trees, so that it has an open, rural character, consistent with its countryside setting and the adjacent fields which surround it.
9. During my site visit, I observed that part of the appeal site has been enclosed by picket fencing and low hedging and that various structures have been placed on the site, including a caravan, free-standing photovoltaic solar panel and a metal storage container. Several vehicles were also parked on the site including a horse box lorry. These structures do not form part of the appeal proposal and I am unaware of their planning status. Accordingly, I do not take them into account in my appeal decision.
10. The appellant argues that the appeal site is close to, and has easy access to, the settlement of Blackwater, and that the proposed dwelling is appropriate in this location, which is not covered by any specific landscape designations and contains nearby development including a quad bike circuit and BMX Racing Club. The appellant also confirms that the proposed dwelling is to be occupied by the owner/manager of a proposed future campsite immediately adjacent to appeal site, as indicated on drawing no.3.
11. I find that the appeal site is clearly separate from the main settlement of Blackwater due to the intervening road and fields, and it is surrounded by agricultural fields on all sides. Furthermore, it lies outside the designated Blackwater settlement boundary in the recently made NDP. As such, the site does not lie within any of the locations within which Policy 3 of the Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010 – 2030 (LP) would permit new housing. The appellant has not provided evidence of an essential need for a new dwelling in association with a rural enterprise, in accordance with LP Policy 7, since the proposed campsite is intended to be the subject of a future planning application. This is notwithstanding the negative preapplication advice given by the Council on 25 November 2016 under Ref PA14/03546/PREAPP.
12. I have had regard to the comments from both parties regarding the visibility of the proposed bungalow and garage from the public realm and within the wider countryside. In this respect, I note that the appellant's Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) dates back to August 2015 and relates to a different proposal and I therefore afford it little weight. Notwithstanding the existing

boundary vegetation around the field within which the appeal site is sited, and regardless of whether the development may be visible in certain views within the wider landscape, the appeal proposal would nevertheless introduce isolated permanent residential built development onto the agricultural land, thus eroding the intrinsic rural character of this part of the countryside.

13. In addition to the new dwelling and large detached garage, the proposed access drive, turning head, and pedestrian path, would further domesticate the rural site. It is also reasonable to expect that the proposed residential use of the site would include features such as further ornamental plantings, domestic paraphernalia, garden buildings and structures. This would further reduce the open rural character of the site and increase the incongruity of the residential development within the agricultural land.
14. Furthermore, the appellant has not demonstrated how the proposed design of the new dwelling takes account of its rural location. The modern bungalow with rendered walls, a large pitched roof, and contemporary fenestration detailing, does not reflect the two storey local vernacular building design more traditionally associated with rural dwellings within the area. The bungalow roof depth would be almost twice that of the ground-to-eaves height, and the roof would incorporate large blank gable ends. The proposed layout of buildings would not address the road frontage, so that the south side gable end walls of the bungalow and garage would face the road, comprising the parts of the buildings most likely to be visible from the street scene when the frontage landscaping is at its thinnest during the Winter months. These factors further reinforce the discordant impact of the proposal upon the rural character of the surrounding area.
15. Given the above, the proposed development would result in material harm to the rural character and appearance of the surrounding area. This would be contrary to LP Policies 1, 2, 3, 7, 12 and 23, and NDP policies 1, 6 and 10, which, amongst other aims, seek to ensure that development is suitably located having regard to the Council's adopted spatial pattern of development, protects the open countryside from inappropriate development, and comprises high quality design that integrates with the character of its surroundings. For similar reasons, the proposal would also be contrary to Policies of the Framework which seek to secure high quality design and contribute to and enhance the natural environment as set out in Chapters 12 and 15.

Conclusion

16. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Leonard

INSPECTOR