
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 September 2019

by D Peppitt BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4th October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/L2630/W/19/3231683

Land Adjacent to the Drift, Crownthorpe Road, Crownthorpe, Norfolk NR18 9EW

- 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 J Cole against the decision of South Norfolk District Council.
 - The application Ref 2018/2427, dated 19 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 10 January 2019.
 - The development proposed is to convert existing workshop to residential unit.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The application was originally submitted for outline planning permission on 1 November 2018. However, as the proposal was for a change of use, the Council requested that the application be amended to seek a full permission. The application was resubmitted on 19 November 2018. I have therefore taken the site address and date of application from the most recent submission.
3. There is disagreement between the Council and the appellant over the use of the building that is the subject of the appeal. However, the current use of the building is not relevant to my assessment of the proposed development and land use. Therefore, I have considered the appeal on the basis of the submitted planning application.
4. The original planning application was refused for 3 reasons. The balcony referred to in the second reason for refusal has since been dismantled. The Council has confirmed that it no longer wishes to pursue this reason for refusal. The third reason for refusal related to the lack of evidence to demonstrate whether the land was suitable for its intended use, with particular regard to contamination. The appellant has since submitted a Phase 1 Contaminated Land Assessment¹. The report identified a medium risk associated with potential land quality issues and further investigations were recommended. Should the appeal be allowed, these could be secured through the imposition of an appropriate planning condition. In light of the above, the Council has

¹ Phase 1 Contaminated Land Assessment – JPC Environmental Services (May 2019)

indicated it no longer wishes to pursue the third reason for refusing planning permission. I have therefore considered the appeal on the basis of the above.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is whether the site is an appropriate location for a residential dwelling, with particular reference to accessibility of services and facilities.

Reasons

6. The site is located outside of a defined development boundary in a countryside location. The boundary of the nearest settlement, Wymondham, is approximately 600 metres away, with schools, shops and employment being over 2 kilometres away. Services at Wicklewood are also a similar distance from the site. Whilst I acknowledge the appellants statement that the development boundary is approximately a 6-minute walk from the site, the main services and facilities are much further than this.
7. The appeal site is located on a narrow B-road which has the national speed limit and no footpath, cyclepath or streetlights. I noted on my site visit that the routes to Wymondham and Wicklewood from the appeal site would mean future occupants of the proposal would have to walk in the highway. In the evenings the routes would be unlit and bearing in mind the speed vehicles may be travelling, these would not be attractive routes to use. It would therefore be likely to deter many occupants from walking or cycling to these settlements. Furthermore, I have no substantive evidence regarding the availability of public transport in the area.
8. Whilst sustainable transport options by foot and cycle may provide access to some services in terms of distance, I consider that due to the existing transport infrastructure, that the majority of journeys would be undertaken by private motor vehicle.
9. The appellant has stated that the change of use will result in a reduction in the number of traffic movements to and from the site, bearing in mind the past commercial use. However, I have insufficient evidence before me to support this claim.
10. Therefore, I consider the site is not an appropriate location for a residential dwelling in terms of its accessibility to services and facilities.
11. The site has had a number of previous appeals to which the Council has made reference². In all cases the appeals have been dismissed. I agree with the Inspectors of the previous appeals, that the site is not in an appropriate location in relation to accessibility of services and facilities.
12. Consequently, the proposed development would be contrary to Policy 1 of the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk, adopted January 2014 and Policy DM3.10 of the South Norfolk Local Plan Development Management Policies Document, adopted October 2015. These policies, amongst other things, seek to maximise the use of sustainable forms of transport, reduce the need to travel and integrate development with local sustainable transport networks.

² APP/L2630/W/16/3155955 – Dismissed 18 November 2016, APP/L2630/A/09/2102967 – Dismissed 13 July 2009 and APP/L2630/A/05/1190450 – Dismissed 2 March 2006.

Other Matters

13. I acknowledge that there is an opportunity to make the existing building more sustainable in terms of its compliance with the latest building regulations. However, this does not outweigh the harm that I have identified above.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

D Peppitt

INSPECTOR