
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 August 2019

by William Walton BA MSc Dip Env Law LLM CPE BVC MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24th October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/A2525/W / 19 / 3227110

**Land adjacent to 'Half Acre', West Drove North, Gedney Hill, Lincolnshire
PE12 0NT**

- 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 outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Messrs Keith and Philip Grummitt against South Holland District Council.
 - The application Ref H07-0023-19, is dated 7 January 2019.
 - The development proposed is for residential dwellings.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The outline application, with all matters reserved for future determination, is for up to 6 houses. The accompanying illustrative plans show 6 houses.

Main Issues

3. The main issue is whether the proposed development would cause sporadic development in the open countryside contrary to development plan policies.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a broadly rectangular area of flat agricultural land measuring 0.49ha located to the north-west of the centre of the village of Gedney Hill in Lincolnshire. The southern half of the site fronts directly onto West Drove North whilst the northern part is separated from the road by a flood drain measuring around 1 metre in width. The southernmost part of the site is around 60-80 metres from Lincoln's Avenue (the B1166) which is the main thoroughfare through the village.
5. Four of the six proposed dwellings would have driveways accessing directly onto West Drove North with the two on the northern part of the site having indirect access via a short section of road to be shared with farm vehicles accessing the adjacent fields.
6. In its pre-application advice to the appellant of 27 December 2018 the Council advised that the proposed site was located outside the settlement boundary as identified in the then emerging local plan. The advice acknowledged, however, that since it was adjacent to the settlement boundary its development might be

- consistent with the provisions of the Framework which seek to encourage new housing in sustainable locations.
7. The local policy position crystallised in March 2019 when the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 (LP) was adopted. This confirmed that the appeal site was outside the settlement.
 8. Under LP Policy 1 (Spatial Strategy) Gedney Hill is categorised as a 'minor service centre' where development is normally permitted within the defined settlement boundary. The appeal site is outside of that boundary. Within the boundary the Council has identified three sites for residential development (Geh003; Geh004; and Geh015) which collectively will accommodate 120 units. I also note that according to the Council – and unchallenged by the appellant – there is a 6.07 year supply of housing land supply.
 9. The settlement boundary has been defined in order to promote sustainable development and to protect the surrounding environment. It does this by preventing sporadic development and by maintaining a relatively compact urban form. The appeal proposal would breach that boundary and damage the compactness of the village by extending development to the north. This is contrary to LP Policy 1.
 10. I note that paragraph 78 of the Framework seeks to encourage new housing development where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Nevertheless, I consider that the allocations in the newly adopted local plan will help ensure that this objective is met without requiring the appeal site to be brought forward for development.
 11. LP Policy 2 (Development Management) and LP Policy 3 (Design of New Development) both seek to emphasise the need to ensure that new development respects the character and appearance of the area and its sense of place. To date there has been relatively little development along West Drove North which is a narrow country lane with a very uneven road surface for much of its length. Further north West Drove North passes a series of fishing lakes and a golf course (the main entrance to the latter is from North Road which runs in parallel) after which the lane turns sharply to the east for a short stretch before joining North Road.
 12. Most of the few buildings that are on West Drove North are located on the eastern side ensuring that there are largely uninterrupted views of open countryside to the west. The development of housing on the appeal site would represent a significant incursion on the west side of West Drove North. This would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area through suburbanising what is currently a very rural corner of the village. It would therefore breach LP Policy 2 and LP Policy 3.

Conclusions

13. For the reasons set out above the appeal should be dismissed.

William Walton

INSPECTOR