



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 October 2019

by Conor Rafferty LLB (Hons), AIEMA, Solicitor (Non-practising)

Decision by Chris Preston BA(Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/V2635/W/19/3234475

The Chalet, Golf Course Road, Old Hunstanton, PE36 6JH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Foster and Mrs Howell against the decision of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 18/01824/O, dated 11 October 2018, was refused by notice dated 5 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of the chalet and erection of two dwellings.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matters

3. The application submitted was for outline planning permission with all matters except for access reserved for future consideration. However, a drawing showing the site layout and the scale of the proposed development was submitted with the application. Regard has been had to this plan in this recommendation, which is considered as being indicative only.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site is part of a group of dwellings located behind a row of properties along Golf Course Road within the settlement boundary of Old Hunstanton. It sits on elevated land backing onto an area of undeveloped coastal dunes which descend to the nearby beach. It currently houses The Chalet, a two storey dwelling which, due to changes in land levels, has the appearance of a single storey when viewed from the coastal side. A public right of way runs through the site and separates the property from its allocated parking area and the houses along Golf Course Road.
6. The surrounding area is characterised by its residential nature with numerous dwellings located in the immediate vicinity. While the properties vary largely in

style and design, a broad consistency remains in terms of massing and scale. Both the group of properties fronting Golf Course Road and those situated alongside the appeal site are defined by their large, detached nature situated in relatively big plots, with mature planting. The spaciousness between plots and the verdant feel created by associated garden planting are key features in creating an attractive residential environment.

7. The proposal comprises the demolition of The Chalet and the construction of two replacement dwellings at the site and involves the replacement of the garage with four allocated parking spaces. Policy DM15 of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan, adopted in September 2016 (the DMP) states that the scale, height, massing, materials and layout of a development should respond sensitively and sympathetically to the local setting and pattern of adjacent streets. Similarly, Policy CS08 of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy, adopted in July 2011 (the LDF) states that new development should demonstrate its ability to respond to the context and character of places in West Norfolk by ensuring the scale, layout, density and access will enhance the quality of the environment.
8. Whilst the layout plan was submitted for indicative purposes only, the limited depth of the plot is such that the only practical way of developing two dwellings instead of one would be to situate them side by side and sub-divide the garden, broadly in the manner shown. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that the suggested layout would be indicative of the likely impact, notwithstanding that minor variations may be possible.
9. In contrast to the prevailing pattern of large dwellings in sizeable plots, the two dwellings at the site would appear cramped and incongruous, with little space between the two buildings. The subdivision of the garden area with boundary fencing would also result in two very compact plots which would contrast awkwardly with the prevailing pattern of development. While views of the proposal would be limited from Golf Course Road they would be more prevalent from the public right of way, where the appeal site would appear cramped and overdeveloped, particularly when experienced with the surrounding plots. This cramped feeling would be heightened by the fact that the public right of way dissects the main area of the site from the associated parking area, giving it a smaller, narrower feel which would be accentuated by the resulting density of two dwellings.
10. While four parking spaces associated with the dwellings would be in compliance with the parking provision in the Local Plan, the introduction of four spaces side by side would add to an overcrowded feel. Views of the entrance to the site would be dominated by views of parked cars, particularly from Golf Course Road where the spaces would be in close proximity to the boundary of neighbouring properties, along a narrow stretch of the site.
11. For the reasons set out above, the proposed development would fail to respond sensitively or sympathetically to the local setting and context. The proposal would therefore cause harm to the character and appearance of the area, and would not be in compliance with Policies CS08 of the LDF and DM15 of the LDP.

Other considerations

12. The appellant has stated that Old Hunstanton is defined as a Rural Village in the Local Plan and, as such, limited minor development which meets the needs of

settlements and helps to sustain existing services will be permitted in accordance with Policy CS06 of the LDF. It has also been raised that as the proposed development would result in an additional dwelling within a Rural Village the principle of development is to be supported.

13. A copy of Policy CS06 has not been provided. However, whilst an additional dwelling may be acceptable within the village in principle, that does not over-ride the need to comply with other relevant policies of the development plan. As outlined above the proposal does not comply with other policies of the Local Plan and any small benefit to local services arising from one additional dwelling does not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion and Recommendation

14. Having had regard to all matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Rafferty

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report, and, on that basis, I agree that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Preston

INSPECTOR