



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 August 2019

by Bhupinder Thandi BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30th October 2019.

Appeal Ref: APP/H0520/W/19/3229582

Land adjacent to 22 Main Road, Stonely PE19 5EH

- 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 Stonely Properties Ltd against the decision of Huntingdonshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 17/01821/OUT, dated 21 March 2018, was refused by notice dated 30 November 2018.
 - The development proposed is outline permission for one new dwelling with associated external garage, with access, scale and layout to be considered and all other matters reserved.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The application is in outline with access, scale and layout to be considered at this stage. I have determined the appeal on this basis.
3. The Huntingdonshire Local Plan (1995); Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alterations (2002); and the Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2009) referred to by the Council in its decision notice have been superseded by policies in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan (2019) which has been adopted since the appeal was submitted. The aims of both sets of policies referred to are broadly similar. Both parties have commented upon this change in policy and thus neither party has been prejudiced by this change.

Main Issues

4. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Stonely Conservation Area (CA) and the setting of the grade II listed No 22 Main Road.

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises part of the curtilage of No 22 Main Road, a Georgian dwelling. With the exception of the boundary planting, the site is well maintained and has a functional and visual relationship with the listed building. No 22 Main Road sits centrally within its plot with open countryside extending beyond the northern and eastern boundary thereby contributing to a spacious setting around the listed building. The appeal site makes an important

contribution to this spaciousness and thus to the setting and significance of the listed building.

6. The appeal site lies within the Stonely CA. This largely comprises the historic core of the settlement which runs along the B645 and surrounding meadows. Whilst houses vary in terms of ages and design there is a sense of informality and openness which creates a verdant environment.
7. The Stonely Conservation Area Character Statement (SCACS) sets out that dwellings at the western end of the conservation area, in which the appeal site is located, are some of the earliest houses in the hamlet. The integration between the surrounding landscape and dwellings is important to the character of Stonely.
8. The appeal site lies within an identified 'Area of Best Landscape' which covers undeveloped areas of the hamlet. The trees along the frontage of the site are identified as 'Important Trees and Foliage', although they are not subject to a specific Tree Preservation Order. The trees make an important contribution to Stonely's historic environment.
9. The proposed development would visually and physically sub divide this historic plot which contributes to the character of the CA into two smaller plots. These smaller plots would be uncharacteristic of those in this part of the CA which are very spacious. The proposed development would be at odds with the prevailing character of the conservation area.
10. Whilst wider views would be largely unaffected by the proposed development, it would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Stonely CA. I turn now to the effects on the listed building.
11. Notwithstanding existing planting and the indicative landscaping scheme proposed the scale of the development at full two storey height would be noticeable and would erode the sense of openness that currently prevails which contributes to the setting and significance of the listed building.
12. Whilst I acknowledge the appearance of the development is a reserved matter the design would not overcome the harm to the setting of the listed building that I have identified.
13. Whilst the harm I have identified would not reach the high hurdle of substantial harm, it would result in serious harm that requires clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
14. The proposal would contribute to local housing supply and employment with the creation of an additional dwelling, but these benefits are modest commensurate with the provision of only a single dwelling. I therefore afford these benefits limited weight. Taking into consideration the points above I find that the harm to the CA and the setting of the listed building would clearly outweigh the public benefits of the proposal.
15. For the reasons outlined above the proposal would be contrary to Policies LP11, LP12 and LP34 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan (2019) which seek to secure

high standards of design that relates to its surroundings and the preservation or enhancement of heritage assets and their settings. It would also conflict with the Framework.

Other matter

16. I note the appellant's comments in relation the grant of planning permission for a new dwelling in the village. However, every appeal must be considered on its own merits. The granting of other permissions in the area does not justify the harm that I have identified.

Conclusion

17. The appeal is dismissed.

B Thandi

INSPECTOR