



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 October 2019

by J Hunter BA (Hons) Msc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15th November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/A2335/W/19/3233366

Silverdale Golf Club, Red Bridge Lane, Silverdale LA5 0SP

- 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 Silverdale Golf Club against the decision of Lancaster City Council.
 - The application Ref 18/01459/FUL, dated 16 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 18 January 2019.
 - The development proposed is for the erection of sand bunkers and timber shed.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of development in the banner heading above has been taken from the planning application form. However, Part E of the appeal form states that the description of development has changed to "*the erection of a timber shed, tin shed, covered sand bunker and open sand bunker with dividing wall*", which is consistent with the Council's decision notice and reflects what was considered by the Council when it refused planning permission. I have therefore determined the appeal on this basis. In the interests of precision, I have removed all references to the word "retrospective" as this is not in itself a form of development.
3. The development has taken place and I am therefore determining the appeal retrospectively.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area including whether or not the development conserves or enhances the landscape and scenic beauty of the Arnside and Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Reasons

5. The appeal site is a greenkeeper's compound within Silverdale Golf Course and lies within the AONB.
6. Paragraph 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) affords great weight to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of

protection in relation to these issues. Policies DM28 of A Local Plan for Lancaster District, Development Management DPD (DMDPD) 2014 and Policy AS02 of the Arnside and Silverdale AONB DPD (AONBDPD) 2019 are reflective of Para 172 in this regard.

7. The appeal site is located within an established compound area which sits at the bottom of the hillside adjacent to the public highway. The site sits at a slightly elevated level behind a dry-stone wall and is partially screened by existing trees and foliage.
8. The development before me is for several structures that are associated with the operational element of the Silverdale Golf Club. They are used for the storage of equipment, mowing machines and other materials such as sand, which are required for the maintenance of the Golf Club. The structures range in scale and height, the smallest being a tin shed of approximately 2 metres in height and the tallest being a wooden shed standing around 2.5 metres high. In between these two structures there is one covered sand bunker and two open bays divided by a low wall of approximately 1 metre in height. In total the structures extend approximately 15 metres along the boundary with the public highway. I note that there is also a shipping container within the line of structures for which there has previously been a temporary planning permission.
9. Policies DM35 of the DMDPD and AS08 of the AONBDPD require development within the AONB to be designed to respond to the character of the landscape, contributing positively to the identity and character of the area.
10. The buildings, which are mainly constructed of concrete block, tin and timber are laid out in a linear form running parallel to the road. From localised public vantage points outside of the site they are highly visible and represent an obtrusive and alien feature in what is a relatively undeveloped rural location. From within the site they are relatively well hidden due to the topography of the site and their location at the foot of the hill.
11. During my site visit I noted the presence of a large timber shed which sits perpendicular to the current proposal and from submissions made by the main parties I understand that it was granted planning permission as part of a previous proposal. Whilst this structure is large and is visible from the road, it is nonetheless finished in timber and is uniform in height. In relative terms, it is far less intrusive in the landscape than the appeal proposal and, in any event, I have determined this appeal on its individual planning merits.
12. In contrast, I find that due to the materials used, the varying heights of the structures and the prominent location of the development adjacent to a public road, the appeal development has an unacceptable and significant detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the local area and in doing so fails to conserve or enhance the scenic beauty of the AONB. Therefore, it is contrary to the requirements of Policies DM28 and DM35 of the DMDPD, Policies AS02 and AS08 of the AONBDPD and paragraph 172 of the framework.
13. In reaching the above conclusion, I have considered the appellant's suggestion that cladding, and screening could be used to improve the appearance of the structures. Whilst this may help to soften the adverse appearance of the development, it would not overcome the harm caused by the development owing to its prominent position, varying heights and close proximity to the

road. Similarly, I am not convinced that wooden screening as is suggested by the appellant, would be appropriate because it would need to be in excess of 2.5 metres in height to screen the structures. Acknowledging the level difference between the road and the site and the proximity to the road, the screening itself would appear intrusive. Consequently, neither screening or cladding would provide effective or appropriate mitigation in this instance.

14. The appellant has suggested a temporary permission would enable the golf club to work towards securing funding for an alternative development proposal. However, I am aware that the Council has previously granted temporary approvals for the shipping container which has now lapsed. Whilst I do have some sympathy for the financial predicament faced by the club, I cannot ignore the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which is clear that it will rarely be justifiable to grant a second temporary permission except in cases where changing circumstances provide a clear rationale. I am not aware of any changing circumstances that would outweigh the harm that I have identified or lead me to the conclusion that a temporary permission is justified. Temporary planning permissions are normally imposed when there is a need for a trial run. There is no need for a trial run and, in any event, the adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area and the AONB are overriding concerns.
15. I acknowledge that some of the structures have not previously had a temporary permission and I have considered whether the harm that I have identified would be reduced if the current development were temporary rather than permanent. However, in the context of the requirements of para 172 of the Framework, I must afford great weight to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in the AONB. In this case, I am not persuaded that it would be appropriate to allow a temporary planning permission for any of the development on the site.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons outlined above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

J Hunter

INSPECTOR