



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 November 2019

by Phillip J G Ware BSc DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/D0515/W/19/3232611

Land south of 58 Back Road, Gorefield PE13 4PE

- 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 D Flint against the decision of Fenland District Council.
 - The application Ref F/YR18/0778/F, dated 8 August 2018, was refused by notice dated 5 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is a storage building for garden implements and the change of use of land to paddock and highway access.
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Procedural matter

1. I noticed on my site visit that some parts of the development shown on the submitted plan, namely part of the proposed access track and fencing, have been commenced. I have dealt with the appeal as submitted.

Decision

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect on the character and appearance of the countryside.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located to the rear of properties fronting Back Road, with access to the land from Wolf Lane. It is a paddock apparently associated with the appellant's house, which is one of the Back Road properties, and runs along the rear of five other properties.
5. To the south of the site, away from the frontage houses, there are agricultural fields, whilst to the east, across Wolf Lane, is a Community Hall.
6. The proposal, along with fencing and an access track, is for a storage building, partly open and partly enclosed. This would be located on the western part of the land, furthest away from Wolf Lane and closest to the rear of the appellant's property.
7. Development in the immediate area is generally in linear form facing the Back Road (with the exception of the Community Hall, to which I will return below). The edge of the settlement is clearly delineated in this location by the rear of the Back Road properties. It is not within the village as it exists on the ground.

8. The Fenland Local Plan (2014), at policy LP3, provides that outside villages development will be restricted to that which is demonstrably essential to the effective operation of local agriculture. No agricultural justification has been put forward in this case. In addition policies LP12 Part A (c) and LP16 (d) state that new development should not adversely impact the character and appearance of the countryside and landscape.
9. Although there is no objection to the detailed design of the proposal, which would be in a traditional form, the scale of the building would be such that it would represent a prominent intrusion into the countryside. The appellant has not submitted any specific justification for the size of the building or its proposed location.
10. The Council has also expressed concern at the length of the access track. Whilst I appreciate that this could be finished in a material intended to blend in as much as possible, this would nevertheless increase the perception of the development intruding into the countryside.
11. I appreciate that the Community Hall, which is almost directly opposite the site entrance is a substantial building, but I have no information as to the circumstances which led this to be approved. In any event I have to deal with the current proposal on its own merits.
12. For the above reasons the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the countryside and conflict with the relevant policies of the plan.
13. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

P. J. G. Ware

Inspector