



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 December 2019

by Graham Wraight BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/E2001/W/19/3238439

Elder Farm, Land East of High Street, Gribthorpe Junction With Bell Lane, Foggathorpe, East Riding, DN14 7NT

- 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 WTE Ltd against the decision of East Riding of Yorkshire Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01535/PLF, dated 2 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 16 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is the change of use of existing agricultural building (and alterations) from agriculture to a business use.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are (i) the impact of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the area and (ii) the principle of development in this location.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The current building has an agricultural character and appearance and is consistent with the type of functional farm buildings that are widely found within countryside locations. It has a simple design and appearance, consisting of open front and rear elevations and partially open side elevations. Overall, its presence is appropriate within the countryside and it does not cause harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
4. As a result of the proposed development the building would take on a commercial form, with the front, side and rear elevations being enclosed. A number of windows would be inserted, a car parking area be formalised and a new junction onto the public highway created. Although the appellant draws attention to the fact that cars would only be parked during the day, their presence would nonetheless be at odds with the prevailing character and appearance of the area.
5. The presence of a commercial building with associated parking and access would represent an alien feature in this location and cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the countryside. Whilst the appellant has made reference to landscaping that could be implemented to screen the development, this would not be consistent with the rural character of the area,

where landscaping is generally present only to define field boundaries. The appellant has also drawn attention to the fact that the existing building is partially surrounded by a surface made up from semi-crushed brick, stone and other aggregate. However, this is typical of surfacing found around agricultural buildings and has little perceptible visual impact.

6. The appellant has made reference to the fact that the building would not need to be extended in order for the proposed development to take place, that conversion could be undertaken in a way that supports energy efficiency and that it is not uncommon for agricultural buildings to be enclosed. None of these points however address the fundamental concerns about the inappropriate commercial appearance of the building in this location. Furthermore, whilst I note that the appellant has expressed a willingness to make design alterations to the proposed scheme, I must consider the appeal on the basis of the plans that have been submitted.
7. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Accordingly, it would conflict with the objectives of Policies S4, EC1, ENV1 and ENV2 of the East Riding Local Plan Strategy Document 2016 (LPSD), all of which seek to safeguard character and appearance.

The principle of the development

8. Whilst close to the hamlet of Gribthorpe, the site is remote from the confines of existing settlements and from other built development in general, falling outside of the development limits set out by the LPSD. It is accessed via a network of narrow country lanes and whilst the appellant has provided details of likely trip generation, the proposed development would substantially increase the number of trips to the site from employees, visitors and through deliveries.
9. Due to its location, it is likely that the majority of these trips would not originate close to the site and that they would be undertaken by private vehicles. Furthermore, the site is not close to existing commercial areas and therefore there is little potential for linked trips between businesses to occur. The appellant suggests that Paragraph 84 of The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) offers support to the appeal, however I have no evidence before me to demonstrate that there are no other suitable sites on which the proposed development could take place.
10. The proposal would make a contribution to the rural economy through the provision of employment and this would be achieved by the conversion of an existing building. In this respect, the aim of The Framework to support a prosperous rural economy offers weight in favour of the proposal. In addition, the appellant has highlighted a number of other benefits that would arise to the business and the site, including being closer to their customer base, having ownership of the building, the ability to test new ideas and systems on site, showcasing sustainable conversion and providing improvements to the existing access.
11. Whilst I acknowledge the economic and associated benefits that would arise, the remote location of the site means that the proposal would represent an environmentally unsustainable form of development and would conflict with the relevant development plan policies. The appellant considers that the site on

which their business is currently located has similar characteristics to the appeal site, however I must determine the appeal on the merits of the proposal before me.

12. Accordingly, I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the aims of Policies S1, S2, S4 and EC1 of the LPSD, which seek to ensure that development is undertaken in a manner that is sustainable and which respects the intrinsic character of its surroundings.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposed development would conflict with the development plan with regard to both the impact that would arise upon the character and appearance of the area and with respect to the principle of development in this location. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

Graham Wraight

INSPECTOR