



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 February 2020

by S Edwards MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P2114/W/19/3240983

Five Acres, Elm Lane, Elm Lane, Calbourne PO30 4JS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs S Rolfe against the decision of Isle of Wight Council.
 - The application Ref P/00232/19, dated 27 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 24 May 2019.
 - The development proposed is new 3 bed dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - Whether the proposal would be suitably located, having regard to the requirements of planning policies seeking to manage the location of residential development; and
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

Location

3. Policy SP1 of the Isle of Wight Core Strategy¹ (CS) sets out the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy for the area administered by the Council. The policy seeks to direct development proposals on appropriate land located within or immediately adjacent the defined settlement boundaries (DSB) of the Key Regeneration Areas, Smaller Regeneration Areas and Rural Service Centres. Developments outside of or not immediately adjacent DSB will not be supported, unless a specific local need is identified, or the proposal is tourism related. Overall, I give significant weight to the Council's spatial strategy and the existing settlement boundaries which, insofar as is relevant to the appeal, in my view are in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) in that it seeks to focus development within the most sustainable locations.
4. The appeal site lies within a rural area, at some distance away from the village of Calbourne, which is not identified by Policy SP1 as one of the Key

¹ March 2012.

Regeneration Areas, Smaller Regeneration Areas or Rural Service Centres with DSB. Although it represents previously developed land, the site is not considered to be appropriate land for the purposes of Policy SP1, as it is situated outside a DSB and forms part of the wider countryside. Other than the adjacent Providence Cottage, the site is largely surrounded by fields. Accordingly, the proposal would result in the formation of an isolated dwelling in the countryside.

5. Paragraph 79 of the Framework, permits development in the countryside in restrictive circumstances, including where there is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside. Whilst the appellants have explained that they are required to make numerous journeys to the site to maintain the horses and stables, I have not been presented with detailed evidence to substantiate the presented need for the proposed dwelling. This limits the weight which can be afforded to this consideration.
6. Future occupiers would have to travel further afield to access local facilities and services required for day-to-day living. The appellants suggest that there is a frequent bus service to Newport, Yarmouth and Freshwater from Calbourne, which would reduce the need to travel by car. However, in the absence of information showing the location of the nearest bus stop or evidence to demonstrate the service frequency, this is a consideration which I can only attach limited weight to. Walking and cycling are unlikely to constitute realistic alternatives to the private car, particularly in the absence of continuous footway and street lighting. Overall, for convenience purposes, there is a greater likelihood that for the large majority of trips, future occupiers would rely on private motor vehicles, particularly by reason of the distance involved to the nearest settlement.
7. The proposed dwelling would make a modest contribution to the housing need identified by CS Policy SP2, but as detailed within the Council's spatial strategy, residential development should be directed to the most accessible locations. Having regard to the limited evidence before me, I am not convinced that the construction of a dwelling in such a rural location is essential to meeting the identified housing need.
8. For the foregoing reasons, I conclude on this issue that the proposal would not be suitably located, having regard to the requirements of planning policies seeking to manage the location of residential development. It would not represent a sustainable form of development and would therefore conflict with CS Policy SP1 and the Framework.

Character and appearance

9. Located prominently at the crossroads of Elm Lane, Five Houses Lane and Quarry Lane, the appeal site comprises a large stable block and paddock which is largely screened by mature hedgerows. The proposed chalet bungalow would be built to the rear of the stables, and would be partially sunken into the ground, to reduce its visual impact, but would nevertheless be significantly taller than the existing building. It would be built using similar materials to the stables block, but its domestic character and appearance would still be obvious, not only by reason of its detailed design, but also the paraphernalia such as washing lines, outdoor tables and chairs etc., that would inevitably be associated with a residential use. This would be exacerbated further by the

addition of planting either side of the proposed dwelling and formalised parking arrangements.

10. As a result, the new dwelling would unduly stand out as a form of development which would not relate well to this rural area. In the words of the previous Inspector who considered a proposal for a holiday chalet on the appeal site², the building would appear as a 'somewhat alien feature' at odds with its surroundings. Despite the degree of screening provided by the existing hedgerows, which would be complemented by additional planting as noted above, the visually intrusive nature of the development would still be perceived along parts of Five Houses Lane and Elm Lane, notably from the vehicular entrance to the site.
11. I therefore conclude that the appeal development would cause unacceptable harm to the rural character and appearance of the surrounding area and would consequently fail to accord with CS Policies SP5, DM2 and DM12. Amongst other things, these policies seek to ensure that developments proposals are of a high quality and inclusive design to protect, conserve and enhance the existing environment whilst complementing the character of the surrounding area. The proposal would also conflict with the Framework, particularly paragraph 127, which requires developments to function well and add to the overall quality of the area and are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

Other Matters

12. The appeal site lies within proximity to Providence Cottage, which is a Grade II Listed Building. The Council has not raised any concerns in respect of the effect of the proposal on the setting of this designated heritage asset, and I concur with that view.
13. I have also considered the concerns raised by interested parties, including reservations regarding highway safety and protected species. However, the Council did not object to the proposal on these grounds, and there are no reasons for me to take a different approach.
14. The appeal site lies within 5.6km of the Solent and Southampton Water Special Protection Areas (SPAs), which are recognised under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as being of international importance for supporting significant numbers of overwintering bird species. The Council considers that the proposal would have, in combination with other plans and projects, a likely significant effect on these internationally important sites, by reason of the increased recreational pressure which residential development places on these sensitive areas.
15. In accordance with the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy (SRMS) residential development proposals located within 5.6km of the Solent SPAs are therefore required to make a financial contribution towards mitigation measures, which are normally secured through the completion of a planning obligation.
16. There is no planning obligation before me to secure the mitigation measures required to ensure that the development does not prejudice the integrity of the Solent SPAs. Notwithstanding this, it is however not necessary for me to

² APP/P2114/W/17/3166652.

consider this matter in any further detail, as I am dismissing the appeal on other substantive grounds.

Conclusion

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

S Edwards

INSPECTOR