
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 February 2020

by Graham Wraight BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/E2001/W/19/3242950

**Thornwick Bay Holiday Village, North Marine Road, Flamborough
YO15 1AU**

- 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 Haven Leisure Ltd against the decision of East Riding of Yorkshire Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01766/PLF, dated 23 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 13 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a ranger station.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Haven Leisure Ltd against East Riding of Yorkshire Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Procedural Matters

3. I have amended the description of development given on the application form to remove the reference to the address of the site, as this does not have a function in describing the development.
4. I was able to see on my site visit that the erection of a ranger station has already been undertaken, however the siting and orientation of the building as erected do not correspond with the plans provided with the appeal. Furthermore, it would appear that the ranger station as currently positioned is not sited fully within the red-line planning application site area. For the avoidance of doubt, I have assessed the appeal on the basis of the plans and not on the works that have been undertaken.
5. The proposal has been screened in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations and is considered not to be EIA development. An Environmental Statement (ES) is therefore not required.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is the impact of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the area, including upon the Heritage Coast.

Reasons

7. The appeal site currently forms part of the extensive holiday village, although the character and appearance of the area closest to where the proposed development would take place is distinct from that of the areas in which the caravans and central facilities are found, as the land is mostly open and it is free from any substantial built development. As a result, the land performs an important visual function by forming an area of transition between the permanent built form of the holiday village and the mostly undeveloped form of the coastline.
8. Although the scale of the proposed building is limited and the appeal site is partially screened by a bund and establishing landscaping, it would encroach into the area of open land and be distant from existing buildings. This would not only reduce the open character of the land in question, but it would mean that the proposal would stand as an isolated and visually awkward addition to the area. The design of the proposed building is akin to that of a domestic type of structure, and this too jars with the wider character and appearance of the holiday village. As a result of these factors, the proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area and it would fail to protect the existing landscape character of the Heritage Coast.
9. The appellant has drawn attention to a masterplan which has been approved by the Council and which sets out a framework for future development at the holiday village. The masterplan drawing provided does not however suggest that built development is anticipated to take place on the appeal site, or that there would be built development on the open land immediately adjacent to it. Accordingly, the masterplan does not offer support to proposals for built development that would encroach onto the area of open land of which the appeal site forms part. I have also had regard to the Visual Impact Analysis submitted in support of the appeal, however this document does not overcome the concerns relating to encroachment or to the positioning and the design of the proposed building, and the resultant harm that would arise.
10. The appellant has suggested that the proposed ranger station could be stained or painted in a different colour and that existing landscaping could be supplemented to provide additional screening. Whilst these measures would have some benefit in reducing the visual impact that would arise, they too would not address the harm resulting from encroachment and from the positioning of the proposed building, or from its design.
11. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area, and it would fail to protect the existing landscape character of the Heritage Coast. Accordingly, the proposal would be contrary to the aims of policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the East Riding Local Plan Strategy Document 2016, which seek to promote high quality design and a high quality landscape, including by protecting and enhancing the Heritage Coast, and it would therefore fail to accord with these policies. The proposal would also not be in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, where it refers to achieving well designed places and to Heritage Coasts.

Other Matters

12. The appellant has highlighted that the proposal is part of a continuing investment in the holiday village and that its purpose is to inspire an interest in nature for children staying at the village. It would expand the recreational activities available, particularly during inclement weather, and promote the natural environment and healthy, outdoor activity. The appellant further refers to the fact that the Council has not suggested that there would be any conflict with planning policies concerning economic development and enhancing tourism/visitor facilities. Taken together these considerations offer some support in favour of the proposed development, however they do not outweigh the significant harm to the character and appearance of the area that would arise and the failure to protect the existing landscape character of the Heritage Coast.
13. Reference has also been made to a previous refused planning application which included both the proposed ranger station and a climbing wall, and to inferences that the appellant took as to what the Council's areas of concern were with respect to the two elements of that proposal. Whilst I have had regard to the information provided in this respect, I am not bound by previous Council decisions and therefore I have proceeded to determine this appeal based upon its own merits.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Graham Wraight

INSPECTOR