
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 March 2020

by Andrew Bremford BSc (Hons) MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 April 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R3650/W/19/3243163

Frys Cross Farmhouse, Knightons Lane, Dunsfold, Godalming GU8 4NY

- 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 Peter Cole against the decision of Waverley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref WA/2019/1675, dated 4 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 28 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is erection of auxiliary accommodation and potential holiday let.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the appeal site is a sustainable location for the proposed development.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is set well back from Knightons Lane within the grounds of Frys Cross Farmhouse. The proposal would erect a single storey log cabin for use as auxiliary accommodation and potential holiday let.
4. The site is in a countryside location well away from any settlements where a wide range of services and facilities are located. Around 1km to the north of the site is the village of Dunsfold but, other than a public house and village shop, there are few other services available. The settlement of Chiddingfold is larger than Dunsfold and offers an improved range of services and facilities but lies approximately 5km away. Other settlements, such as Cranleigh and Godalming, offer a wide range of services and facilities but are further away again from the appeal site.
5. In order to promote sustainable transport, the appellant says that he will supply bicycles, possibly electric ones, for future occupiers of the proposed log cabin, to allow them to leave their car at the site and cycle around the local area and to neighbouring villages. However, access to the settlements where there is a range of services and facilities from the site would be via mainly unlit country roads with no pavements. So, for future occupiers of the proposed log cabin cycling or walking the distances to a settlement where there is a range of services and facilities would not be a safe or attractive prospect, especially during inclement weather or after dark.

6. The appellant says that bus services are limited. I have not been presented with any evidence of the nearest bus stop or indeed any evidence that there are any public transport facilities available from or to the site.
7. Thus, by virtue of its location, the proposed log cabin would be detached from a wide range of services and facilities in the aforementioned settlements and in terms of accessibility any future occupier would have a high dependency on the use of a private motor vehicle.
8. The evidence indicates that there is an existing market for self-catering holiday accommodation in the area. Moreover, the appellant says that anyone visiting Dunsfold has to stay in one of the surrounding villages therefore the proposal would reduce vehicle transport and the reliance on cars. However, the future occupiers of the proposed log cabin would still need to access a range of services and facilities in more distant settlements which, for the above reasons, would heavily rely upon the use of a private motor vehicle.
9. I acknowledge the 'unique selling points' of the proposal and note the appellant's assertion that the holiday rental will be a serious long-term business. However, this does not overcome the poor accessibility of the site, as a result of its location, to services and facilities using non-car modes of transport.
10. For the reasons outlined above, the future occupiers of the proposed log cabin would be likely to rely on the use of a private motor vehicle for access to most of the day-to-day services and facilities that they would require. I therefore conclude that the site is not a sustainable location for the proposed development. Consequently, the proposal would not accord with Policy ST1 of the Waverley Borough Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Policies and Sites (2018) which, amongst other things, seeks to ensure that development is located where opportunities for sustainable transport modes can be maximised. It would also not accord with the environmental sustainability requirements of chapter 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conclusion

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

Andrew Bremford

INSPECTOR