
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 May 2020

by T J Burnham BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st June 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/G2713/W/19/3244049

Thorpe Farm, Great Smeaton, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL6 2EZ

- 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 J Barry Walker against the decision of Hambleton District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01828/FUL, dated 23 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 22 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'require planning permission to park a caravan at Thorpe Farm, Great Smeaton on a site marked * on the attached. It has no electricity and has a chemical toilet'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. I have noted that the description of the development on the Council decision notice varies from that on the application form. I have no evidence to indicate that the revised description has been agreed to or that the proposal specifically relates to a two-year period. I have therefore determined the appeal on the basis of the description on the application form.
3. I noted on my site visit that the caravan is already in place, although its location varies slightly from that shown on the submitted OS plan, being sited slightly closer to and slightly further towards the western end of the large shed which sits immediately to the south. I have noted inconsistency across the submitted plans and some indicate the presence of two sheds at the location. In this context, I have considered the appeal on the basis of the position of the caravan at the time of my site visit.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are whether the proposal would be appropriate development within the countryside including any effect that it would have on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is situated within attractive countryside to the north east of Great Smeaton. The static caravan has been placed adjacent to a large agricultural style shed on an area of hardstanding on land closely to the north of the Thorpe Farm complex.

Whether appropriate development within the countryside

6. Policy CP4 of the Hambleton District Council Core Strategy (2007) (HDCCS) and Policy DP9 of the Hambleton District Development Policies (2008) (HDDP) have their aims on focussing development towards settlements where it would serve to support and sustain them. The Policies state that within the countryside, development will only be supported when an exceptional case can be made for the proposal, amongst other things, where it is necessary to meet the needs of farming with an essential requirement to locate in the countryside.
7. No detailed information has been supplied in relation to the nature of the farming business for which the caravan is required to provide accommodation. This does not enable any form of assessment to be made as to whether there is a necessity for a rural worker to live at, or in close proximity to the site to ensure the effective operation of the agricultural business. These are matters which Planning Practice Guidance¹ advises it may be relevant to consider in relation to such a proposal.
8. The evidence indicates that the caravan is required for accommodation due to the appellants personal circumstances in relation to a farming business on retained land at Thorpe Farm. While I note the circumstances, only very limited information has been supplied and I can therefore only afford them limited weight. Further, although the appellant states that their income would be insufficient to rent a property in the locality, no further information is supplied in relation to either income or local rental figures and I cannot therefore be fully certain that this would be the case.
9. Therefore, I conclude on this issue, that on the basis of the evidence it has not been demonstrated that the accommodation is necessary to meet the needs of farming and as a result the proposal fails to accord with Policy CP4 of the HDCCS and Policy DP9 of the HDDP.

Character and appearance of the area

10. Only very limited views towards the caravan are available when looking south west towards the site from the road between Great Smeaton and Hornby due to the presence of a robust hedgerow which separates the road from the adjacent fields.
11. The materials and green colour of the caravan are reflective of the much larger agricultural style shed immediately to the south. Further, the appellant makes it clear within their statement that they would be willing to accept a temporary permission. Subsequently, were I minded to allow the appeal, an appropriate condition could be added to ensure such a permission were temporary. This would mitigate any limited harm to the character and appearance of the area.
12. Therefore, I conclude on this issue that the proposal would not conflict with Policies DP30 and DP32 of the HDDP which amongst other things seek to ensure that the openness, intrinsic character and quality of the landscape will be respected or enhanced and which require that the form of proposals must respect local character and distinctiveness.

¹ Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 67-010-20190722

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

T J Burnham

INSPECTOR