

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 September 2020

by Chris Baxter BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0923/W/20/3247256

Rakegill, Lamplugh, Workington CA14 4SQ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Peter Watson against the decision of Copeland Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 4/19/2018/001, dated 16 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 16 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as "residential development for 2 dwellings including access junction".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. Outline planning permission is sought with all matters reserved except access. I have determined the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposed development would be in an accessible location.

Reasons

4. The settlement of Lamplugh has been described as a community of farmsteads and isolated dwellings that has developed overtime with further additions of houses and bungalows. The settlement however, has few services and is detached from other settlements in the area by open countryside. The future occupants of the proposal would therefore be reliant on services from other settlements.
5. There is a shop at the adjacent caravan site however, the route from the site to the caravan park is not a desirable walking or cycling route. Although vehicle speeds have been described as being low on the surrounding roads, there are no footpaths or street lighting with parts of the roads being narrow in places, making it unlikely that occupants of the proposals would walk or cycle to the shop at the caravan site or other local services.
6. The appellant has indicated that Sellafield complex is close by as well as a local school. Other than school buses, the settlement of Lamplugh is not well supported by public transport and is lacking in community facilities and employment opportunities. These facilities and opportunities are available in

settlements further away and future occupiers of the proposal are more likely to access these by the use of private motor vehicles.

7. I have had regard to other housing developments in the area including Millfield development for 26 houses. However, I do not have full details of the circumstances that led to the proposal being accepted and so cannot be sure if it represents a direct parallel to the appeal proposal, including in respect of development plan policy and details of the development. In any case, I have determined the appeal on its own merits.
8. Accordingly, I find that the appeal site is not an accessible location for housing. The proposal would fail to accord with Policies ST1, ST2 and SS3 of the Copeland Local Plan 2013 and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which seeks development to consider economic, social and environmental sustainability and deliver a range and choice of good quality homes.

Planning Balance

9. The Council have stated that a 5 year housing land supply cannot be demonstrated. The Council have published an Interim Housing Policy 2017 to encourage sustainable development and boost housing delivery.
10. In terms of the Framework's three overarching objectives, there would be some social benefit in providing additional homes which would contribute to housing land supply. Whilst all contributions have a value, it is noted that those offered by two properties would be relatively limited.
11. Protecting the environment is also a key aspect of achieving sustainable development. The appellant indicates that the proposal would be an extension of the existing built development with a definite boundary with the public right of way. Nevertheless, the proposed properties would be in an unsuitable location which would likely lead occupiers to make many journeys by private motor vehicles contrary to the promotion of more sustainable forms of transport within the Framework.
12. Taking account of the above factors, the adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the relatively limited benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. Therefore, the proposed development cannot benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development. There are no other material considerations to indicate that the proposal should be determined otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. I have already identified significant conflict with relevant development plan policies.

Conclusion

13. I conclude that for the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal should be dismissed.

Chris Baxter

INSPECTOR