



# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 March 2021

**by Matthew Jones BA(Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

**Decision date: 17 March 2021**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/D0840/W/20/3262461**

**Land East Of Belle View, Crowntown, Helston, Cornwall TR13 0AB**

- 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 and Mrs Watters against the decision of Cornwall Council.
  - The application Ref PA20/05506, dated 2 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 28 August 2020.
  - The development proposed is the construction of a single storey self-build eco dwelling and associated works.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and outline planning permission is granted for the construction of a single storey self-build eco dwelling and associated works at Land East Of Belle View, Crowntown, Helston, Cornwall TR13 0AB in accordance with the terms of the application Ref PA20/05506, dated 2 July 2020, subject to the following conditions:
  - 1) Details of appearance and landscaping (hereinafter called the reserved matters) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any development begins and the development shall be carried out as approved.
  - 2) An application for approval of the reserved matters must be made no later than the expiration of 3 years from the date of this decision and the development hereby approved shall commence no later than 2 years from the final approval of the reserved matters or, in the case of approval on different dates, the final approval of the last such matter to be approved.
  - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 001A, 003A, 004A.

## Procedural Matters

2. The planning application was submitted in outline with the matters aside from access, layout and scale reserved, and I assessed the appeal on that basis.
3. I have taken the site address from the decision notice and the appeal form as it most accurately conveys the site's location.

## Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
  - the suitability of the site for the proposal, having regard to the development plan's spatial strategy for the supply of housing; and,
  - its effect on the character and appearance of the area, with reference to the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site (the WHS).

## Reasons

### *Suitability of the site*

5. The site is an open field at the east side of Crowntown. Policy 3 of the Cornwall Local Plan: Strategic Policies Document 2010–2030 (adopted 2016) (CLP) supports limited growth adjacent to or within appropriate settlements, subject to schemes meeting one of a set of criteria, which includes the ‘rounding off’ of a settlement. There is no dispute between the main parties that Crowntown is an appropriate settlement under Policy 3 and I have no reason to disagree.
6. The supporting text to Policy 3 explains that ‘rounding off’ applies to the development of land substantially enclosed but outside of the urban form of a settlement, where its edge is clearly defined by a physical feature that acts as a barrier to further growth. Schemes should not visually extend development into the open countryside.
7. Whilst the site is beyond the urban form of Crowntown, it is adjacent to two new homes to the west and the dwelling Borlowen Barn and its grounds to the south. It is enclosed by a substantial tree lined bank across its east side, and the north boundary is formed by one side of a hedgerow enclosed sunken lane. Consequently, the site is substantially enclosed and has physical features that would act as a barrier to future growth.
8. The site is visually separated from the countryside by its strong boundary features and, given its proximity to built form, relates first and foremost to the settlement. It follows that the development would not visually extend into the open countryside either and, for these reasons, would constitute rounding off.
9. Reference has been made to the Chief Planning Officers Advice Note: Infill/Rounding Off (CPOAN) (2017), particularly its guidance that rounding off provides a symmetry or completion to a settlement boundary. The CPOAN is not part of the development plan. Nonetheless, the site would provide a degree of completeness and symmetry to Crowntown’s boundary when considered with the site at Borlowen Barn.
10. I therefore conclude on this issue that the site is suitable for the proposal, having regard to the development plan’s spatial strategy for the supply of housing. The proposal would accord with Policies 1 and 3 of the CLP. Given my findings above, the site is not within the open countryside as defined by the CLP, and the proposal would not conflict with its Policy 7.

### *Character and appearance*

11. Crowntown is principally a linear settlement, largely following the B3303. However, its character is also formed by examples of development behind the main frontages, not least the site at Borlowen Barn, which although agricultural in origin, is now a residential part of the settlement.
12. Crowntown’s buildings are in a variety of scales and designs. A well-designed dwelling could be introduced within this context successfully with the scale and layout proposed. Given the site’s relative screening, level of enclosure and its intimate relationship with the settlement, it would not harm Crowntown’s rural setting, the key elements of which are set out within the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Landscape Character Study (2007).

13. The site is also within the WHS, which is a designated heritage asset of the highest significance. Former miner smallholdings are a key attribute which contributes to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the WHS. There is no clear evidence before me that the field containing the site was such a smallholding, and even if it was, its legibility would have been significantly compromised through its partial development with the new housing to the west. As such, the proposal would not harm the OUV in this regard.
14. Consequently, the proposal would have an acceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area, with reference to the WHS. It would accord with the design, landscape and heritage aims of Policies 12, 23 and 24 of the CLP and the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Conditions**

15. In addition to the standard time condition, a condition is needed to define the approved plans in the interest of certainty. For the same reason, it is also required to set out those matters that are reserved for future consideration. Given that the site has an existing access off a main road and would provide ample space for construction vehicles to turn and for materials to be stored, I see no reasonable cause to require a Construction Traffic Management Plan.

### **Conclusion**

16. For the reasons outlined above and taking all matters raised into account, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed, subject to conditions.

*Matthew Jones*

INSPECTOR