



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 4 May 2021

by M Ollerenshaw BSc(Hons) MTPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 May 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/E2530/W/20/3264898

Land to the rear of 155 Station Street, Rippingale, Bourne PE10 0TA

- 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 Steve Stables against the decision of South Kesteven District Council.
 - The application Ref S20/1527, received by the Council on 26 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 27 October 2020.
 - The development proposed is an outline application with all matters reserved for one new dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The site address and description of development above are taken from the appellant's appeal form and Council's Decision Notice as these are more precise than those given in the original application form.
3. The application was submitted in outline with all matters reserved and I have determined the appeal on this basis. I have had regard to the accompanying illustrative block plan which indicates a potential siting for the dwelling.

Main Issue

4. Whether the site represents a suitable location for the proposed dwelling, having regard to the effect of the development proposed on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site lies to the rear of No 155 Station Street, a detached one and a half storey dwelling on the northern side of that street opposite its junction with East Street. The site is on the eastern edge of Rippingale, with four dwellings fronting Station Street to the east, a paddock to the west and fields to the north and north-east. The site currently includes a number of outbuildings and a concrete block structure which is part demolished. The site is partly enclosed by fencing. There are a number of trees within the northern part of the site.
6. A lawfulness development certificate granted in 2011 confirmed that part of the site was in lawful use for vehicle storage¹. Given this lawful use and the

¹ Council ref S11/1091/LDE

- existing buildings situated within it, I accept that a substantial proportion of the site constitutes previously developed land.
7. The proposal is to demolish some of the outbuildings and erect a single dwelling within the wider part of the site. The dwelling would be accessed via the existing track running along the eastern side of No 155.
 8. Rippingale is identified as a 'Smaller Village' in policy SP2 of the South Kesteven District Council Local Plan (the Local Plan), adopted in January 2020. Station Street is a principal street running west-east through the village. The surrounding area is generally characterised by frontage dwellings with some backland development and residential cul-de-sacs leading from Station Street. The form and character of properties in the surrounding area varies considerably, with more traditional buildings, such as the dwellings and agricultural buildings on the southern side of Station Street close to the junction with East Street, and more modern developments like those at Horse Chestnut Lane and Miller's Close.
 9. Local Plan policy SP3 permits infill development in settlements provided it is within a substantially built up frontage or is a re-development opportunity (of previously developed land); it is within the main built up part of the settlement; and does not cause unacceptable impacts upon the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers or the character of the area.
 10. No 155 forms part of a small group of dwellings on the northern side of Station Street. Travelling east along Station Street, this group is the last collection of buildings to be seen before leaving the village, whereupon views open out across the countryside. The paddock to the west of the site provides a degree of separation between the site and the dwellings further to the west on this side of Station Street. The paddock, in combination with open fields to the north and partly to the east and on the south side of Station Street, result in a rural character to the site surroundings.
 11. The proposed dwelling would be located behind the existing property, No 155, and set some distance back in relation to both No 155 and the small number of properties fronting Station Street to the east. Therefore, rather than infilling a gap between dwellings the proposal would be situated to the rear of the existing dwelling with open fields beyond, and would therefore extend the pattern of development beyond the existing built form. Notwithstanding that the site comprises previously developed land, I do not find that the site is within a substantially built up frontage or within the main built up part of the settlement, for the reasons identified above.
 12. My understanding is that, prior to its current use as a dwelling, No 155 was used historically as a chapel and more recently as a doctors surgery. The appellant argues that the previous uses of the property suggest that it was an integral part of the village, physically, functionally and visually. However, based on the location of the site relative to its surroundings, as described above, I consider that the development would be on the edge of the settlement for the purposes of Local Plan policy SP4.
 13. Policy SP4 allows for development on the edge of settlements, subject to criteria a-f being met, which include the need for substantial support for the proposal from the local community, or where there is a demonstrable local need for affordable housing as a Rural Exception scheme. There is no evidence

before me to indicate that there is substantial support for the proposal from the local community. The proposal would not meet a proven local need for housing and it is not for an affordable home. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policy SP4.

14. The appellant has referred to a number of examples of recent planning permissions for new dwellings in village locations in the District, including in Rippingale. One example is the outline approval for a dwelling to the rear of 22 High Street, Rippingale.² Whilst there are commonalities with the scheme before me, there are also clear differences. The details provided by the appellant indicate that the proposed dwelling in that case was to be situated to the rear of the existing property and between existing dwellings to the west and a collection of buildings within close proximity to the east. Therefore, that site was considered as an infill development due to its relationship with surrounding development. On the basis of the information submitted by the appellant, I consider that the other examples are not comparable to the appeal proposal and I therefore give these little weight in my consideration of the appeal.
15. I acknowledge that there is some variety in the nature of development nearby, that the proposed dwelling could be designed to reflect the scale and design of those found nearby, and that screening afforded by the form of surrounding properties or boundary features would limit the visual prominence of the proposal to some degree. However, the proposal would be visible from the access track between No 155 and No 157 and from views along Station Street to the west.
16. The proposal would result in a dwelling situated in a backland location which would lack a street frontage. This would not reflect the prevailing pattern of development in the immediate area. The proposal would therefore represent an uncharacteristic form of development when viewed in the context of its surroundings.
17. I therefore conclude that the development proposed would not provide a suitable location for a dwelling having regard to its effect on the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, the proposal fails to accord with Local Plan policies SP3 and SP4, which seek to ensure that development is located in the most sustainable and suitable locations, and protect the village's nature and character. It would also conflict with Local Plan policy DE1, where it seeks to reinforce local identity and avoid adverse impacts on the settlement pattern and landscape/townscape character of the area.

Other Matters

18. A number of comments have been made by the Parish Council and a nearby resident, which include concerns about the safety of the access, localised flooding, adverse effects on the living conditions of neighbouring properties and that a precedent would be set. However, the Council have not raised objections to the proposal on these grounds and I have no reason to disagree with this assessment based on the evidence before me and my observations on site. Given the size of the site and its relationship to the neighbouring properties, it is likely that a dwelling could be accommodated on the site whilst safeguarding the living conditions of the neighbouring occupants.

² Council ref S19/1920

19. The development would offer potential benefits in terms of providing a new dwelling to the Council's housing stock. It would also have economic benefits through employment opportunities during the construction phase of the development, Council tax revenue and spending in the local area by future occupants. I have attached some weight to these factors. However, given the modest scale of the development, the weight attributable to these matters is limited and is not sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified and the conflict with the policies I have referred to.

Conclusion

20. For the above reasons, having considered the development plan as a whole, the approach in the NPPF, and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Mark Ollerenshaw

INSPECTOR

