



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 14 September 2021

by M Chalk BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/J1535/W/21/3269584

Paradise Farm, Hamlet Hill, Roydon, Harlow, CM19 5JZ

- 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 and Mrs Tomkins against the decision of Epping Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref EPF/0688/20, dated 30 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 26 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as “demolition of existing buildings, cessation of the existing storage use and erection of three dwellings with associated landscaping and car parking”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council’s emerging Local Plan has been submitted for examination, but I have no information to provide a projected timescale for adoption. Accordingly, its policies attract limited weight in the determination of this appeal.
3. The Government issued a revised National Planning Policy Framework in July 2021. The main parties were invited to comment on the revised document, and the comments have been considered as part of the determination of the appeal.
4. I have removed the reference to an earlier application from the description as it does not directly relate to the development proposed. However, permission was granted for that application for three houses on the site, and it is a material consideration in the determination of this appeal.
5. The site lies within the Green Belt, but there is no dispute between the main parties that the appeal proposal is not inappropriate development. I see no reason to disagree with this.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

7. The wider area around the appeal site comprises a scattered mix of residential and commercial properties. The surrounding houses are typically of individual appearance and scale, with few common characteristics that indicate an overarching unity of character in the area. However, the houses in the

immediate vicinity of the site do all have pitched roofs. The introduction of a group of three houses with flat roofs would therefore be out of keeping with the character of houses in the area.

8. The appeal site is set back from the road, and the houses would be set towards the rear of the site with a reduced height from the approved houses. They would not therefore be prominent from the street but would be visible from neighbouring land and would form part of the overall character of the area.
9. Within this context the development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore conflict with Policy DBE1 of the Epping Forest Local Plan 1998 (the LP) which requires, amongst other criteria, that new buildings respect their setting in terms of roof-line and detailing. It would also conflict with Policy DM9 of the emerging Local Plan (the ELP) which requires, amongst other criteria, that new development achieve a high standard of design and relate positively to their locality having regard to the form prevailing around the site.
10. The development would create three new houses, supporting the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. The principle of development has been established by the earlier permission, and there is no dispute that the appeal proposal is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. However, the proposed development would not deliver any additional benefits that would not derive from the approved scheme. The benefits of the development would consequently not, in this instance, outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area that would result from the detailed design of the houses. Accordingly, there are no material considerations to indicate that this appeal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan.

Other Matters

11. The Council referred to Policy GB2A of the LP and Policy DM4 of the ELP in its reason for refusal. These policies relate to development in the Green Belt and are not directly relevant to the main issue of this appeal.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above, the appeal fails.

M Chalk

INSPECTOR