



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 February 2022

by James Blackwell LLB (Hons) PgDip

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/P0119/W/21/3282253

37 Parkfield Rank, Pucklechurch, Bristol BS16 9NP

- 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 Ms R Piggott against the decision of South Gloucestershire Council.
 - The application Ref P21/03965/F, dated 27 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 27 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is the redevelopment of commercial stabling to provide 1 no. new dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal site is located within the green belt. It is common ground between the parties that the proposal would comprise the redevelopment of previously developed land, and that it would not have any greater impact on the openness of the green belt than the existing built form on the appeal site. As such, it would fall within the exceptions of development permitted within the green belt as per the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) (Framework). In green belt terms, the development would therefore not be considered inappropriate. I have no reason to depart from this conclusion.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - whether the principle of the proposed development is acceptable in terms of its location and sustainability; and
 - the effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of its future occupiers, with particular regard to outlook and natural light.

Reasons

Location

4. The appeal property is located on land to the rear of 37 Parkfield Rank, which is a small rural settlement located outside of the defined settlement of Pucklechurch. Policy PSP40 of the Council's Policies, Sites and Places Plan (2017)¹ (PSP) deems any land outside of defined settlement boundaries (as

¹ South Gloucestershire Local Plan, Policies, Sites and Places Plan, adopted November 2017

per its Policies Map) to be “open countryside”. Given the location of the appeal site outside of any defined settlement, it is therefore considered open countryside.

5. Policy PSP40 goes on to prescribe the circumstances in which residential development in open countryside may be permitted. In such areas, residential development is limited to rural exception housing, dwellings for rural workers, replacement dwellings and the conversion/re-use of existing buildings. None of these exceptions are applicable to the proposal in this instance. When considered against this policy, the principle of new residential development on the appeal site is therefore precluded.
6. Whilst I acknowledge the proposal would be close to other housing, this is not indicative of the appeal site being within a sustainable location. Indeed, given the distance of the appeal site from local facilities and its closest public transport links, occupiers of the proposed development would invariably be reliant on private car to access local services and meet their day-to-day needs.
7. For these reasons, the proposed development would be located in an unsustainable location, and would not be considered acceptable for new residential development. As set above, the development would conflict with Policy PSP40 of the PSPP, as it would fail to satisfy the exceptions criteria for residential development in the open countryside. It would conflict with Policy CS5 of the Council’s Cores Strategy² (CS), which directs development to existing urban centres and defined rural settlements, which are generally considered the most sustainable locations in the Council’s area. The development would also conflict with the aims of Policy CS34 of the CS, which seek to preserve settlement boundaries and protect and enhance the distinct character and beauty of rural areas. Finally, the development would contravene the overarching objectives of the Framework, which places great emphasis on the protection of countryside.

Living Conditions

8. The new dwelling would be located in close proximity to a large garage, sited to the south-west of the site. Given the orientation of the proposed dwelling, the windows to the main habitable living spaces within the new dwelling, including the lounge, kitchen/diner and front bedroom, would all directly face the rear elevation of this garage. Given the lack of intervening space between the frontage to the new dwelling and the rear elevation of the garage, the garage would therefore appear dominant and imposing, as it would severely curtail the outlook from the house, and significantly impede levels of natural light within the property.
9. The development would therefore harm the living conditions of its future occupiers. In this regard, the development would conflict with Policy PSP8 of the PSPP, which seeks to ensure new residential development procures a good level of amenity for its occupiers. The development would also fail to adhere to the “window to wall” test set out in the Council’s Householder Design Guide³, which says a distance of at least 12 metres should be maintained between windows to primary rooms and the elevations to other buildings, to ensure outlook and adequate levels of natural light are preserved.

² South Gloucestershire Local Plan, Core Strategy (2006 – 2027)

³ Householder Design Guide, Supplementary Planning Document, adopted March 2021

10. I find no conflict with Policy PSP38, as this concerns development within existing residential curtilages.

Other Matters

11. Irrespective of a proposal falling within an exception of development permitted within the green belt, it must still be considered against all relevant development plan policies. In this instance, the development would conflict with the Council's development plan locational requirements for new residential development, given its location outside of any prescribed settlements. Moreover, it would fail to secure satisfactory living conditions for its occupiers.
12. Whilst the appeal site is located close to other houses (and is therefore not isolated), it sits behind the established ribbon of residential development along Parkfield Rank. Whilst there are examples of built form behind these houses, none of these buildings are standalone dwellings. As such, I do not consider that the location of the proposal relates well to the existing housing along Parkfield Rank, and moreover, it would risk setting a precedent for backland development in this location.
13. In terms of appeal APP/P0119/W/20/3250167, the appeal property was located near to the built-up centre of Winterbourne. Similarly, the development at Hope Road, Iron Acton was sited much closer to local facilities and services. In both examples, the location of the development would have been more sustainable than the appeal site. As such, neither of these development proposals would help justify residential development in this instance.

Conclusion

14. The development would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the provisions of the Framework, which outweigh this finding. Therefore, for the reasons given, the appeal is dismissed.

James Blackwell

INSPECTOR