



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 November 2022

by J Downs BA(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 December 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/D2510/W/22/3301469

Land adjacent to Parkfield House, River Lane, Keddington LN11 7HQ

- 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 Gary Laverick against the decision of East Lindsey District Council.
 - The application Ref N/092/02502/21, dated 4 December 2021, was refused by notice dated 31 January 2022.
 - The development proposed is erection of a dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the site is a suitable location for housing with particular regard to the Council's planned pattern of growth for the district and access to services, facilities and sustainable transport options.

Reasons

3. The East Lindsey Local Plan Core Strategy adopted July 2018 (ELLP) Policy SP1 establishes the settlement hierarchy for the area. Keddington is not identified within that policy and it is not in dispute between the parties that it is a hamlet.
4. Notwithstanding, the appellant has put forward that the site is not within the countryside as Keddington is located on the edge of the main urban area of Louth and is a clear extension to it. However, Keddington is clearly separated from the built-up area of Louth by fields and also by the Louth Canal. While River Lane does extend towards Louth, it is a dead end and does not provide any connection to Louth. From the evidence and my observations, I am satisfied the proposal would be within a hamlet and so in the countryside, as per the development plan.
5. I observed at my site visit the footpath over Louth Canal and the access it provides to Eastfield Road and to sites elsewhere within Louth. However, this is an unlit route. It is unlikely to form an attractive route in inclement weather or into the evening. This distinguishes the appeal site from the LO326 housing allocation which provides for direct access onto Eastfield Road. However, even if I were to accept this as a likely walking route, the locations that would provide day-to-day services and facilities identified by the appellant (such as a grocery shop and educational facilities) are all at least a 15 minute walk away, with the majority closer to 20 minutes or more and the town centre around 30 minutes walk away.

6. While cycling may be an option, travelling to Louth via Keddington Road may not be attractive to young families who may occupy the proposed dwelling given it is relatively narrow and has the national speed limit in operation until it reaches the built up area. The path via the canal is relatively narrow in places and would not allow for cyclists and pedestrians to pass comfortably. It also has gates and both of these factors would make this route less convenient for cyclists. I therefore consider it is likely that occupiers of the proposed dwelling would be reliant on the use of the private motor vehicle to meet their day to day needs.
7. Reference is made by the appellant to bus stops on Keddington Road and Eastfield Road. However very little detail of the service, including its frequency, are in the evidence before me. It is unclear whether this would be a practical alternative.
8. The Council's decision notice refers to ELLP Policies SP3 and SP4 which concern the delivery and distribution of housing development throughout the district, and criteria for allowing development in settlements defined within ELLP Policy SP1. As this site is within a hamlet in the countryside, these policies are not directly relevant to the determination of this appeal.
9. For these reasons, the proposed development would not be a suitable location for housing, as it would result in development in the countryside, contrary to the Council's planned pattern of growth for the district and would not have appropriate access to services, facilities and sustainable transport options. It would therefore conflict with ELLP Policies SP1 and SP2 which seek to ensure that development is focussed within the most sustainable settlements, and with the Framework with regard to sustainable transport and well-designed places.

Other Matters

10. I note the appeal proposal has support from interested parties through a petition and a representation which refers to the appeal proposal being for a member of the appellant's family. This does not change my view of the harm that would be caused by the proposal, as set out above.
11. It has been suggested the development should be considered as an infill development. However, development along River Lane is well dispersed, and a significant gap would remain between the proposed development site and Parkfield House. Even if I were to accept that the appeal proposal constituted infill development, no policy support for the delivery of market housing in hamlets within the countryside in any form has been brought to my attention.
12. I noted the nearby dwelling referred to by the appellant as a speculative development however no details of that proposal and the circumstances under which it was approved have been placed before me. However, as the appellant acknowledges, this was approved prior to the adoption of the current development plan against which this appeal must be determined.
13. I acknowledge that no objections have been raised by statutory consultees with respect to technical matters such as highways and flood risk. I also acknowledge the Council have not raised any concerns with regard to character and appearance, or living conditions of neighbouring residents. However these would constitute a lack of harm and therefore be neutral in the determination of the appeal.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, the appeal proposal would conflict with the development plan when read as a whole. There are no material considerations of sufficient weight to indicate that a decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

J Downs

INSPECTOR