



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 June 2024

by F Harrison BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26th June 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/V0728/D/23/3334780

High Barnaby Farm, Middlesbrough Road, Guisborough, Redcar and Cleveland TS14 6RT

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Dane Crawford against the decision of Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is R/2023/0574/FF.
 - The development proposed is detached garage with first floor office above and dormer windows to south elevation with external staircase at side.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposal constitutes an acceptable form of development outside the development limits; and
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Eston Hills.

Reasons

Development outside the settlement limits

3. It is not disputed that the proposal would be outside of the development limits and located within the countryside. Policy SD3 of the Redcar and Cleveland Local Plan (2018) (RCLP) sets out the circumstances under which development in the countryside may be acceptable. One of these is a suitably scaled extension to an existing building, which both parties agree is applicable to the appeal scheme as the proposed development would be within the curtilage of an existing farmhouse.
4. The existing farmhouse is of generous proportions and has planning permission to, amongst other things, increase the height further. Nevertheless, the appeal scheme would be of a considerable length and in combination with its depth and height would appear as a substantial building. The proposal's footprint would be almost as large as the farmhouse and the overall size and massing of the proposed garage would not be suitably scaled to the existing farmhouse. It would not therefore meet the requirements of criterion g of Policy SD3.
5. The proposal would be used for storage and office space which may well be incidental to the farmhouse's use as a dwelling. Even if the floorspace of the

farmhouse were to increase in accordance with a previous planning permission, this does not alter my findings above that the proposed development would not be suitably scaled with regard to its size and massing.

6. The appellant suggests that the proposal would meet several other of the of the criteria set out in Policy SD3, however very limited details have been provided. In the absence of any substantive evidence, it is not clear that the scheme would be an appropriate diversification or expansion of an existing agricultural activity under criterion a. For the same reason, it has not been shown that the development requires a countryside location due to technical or operational reasons in line with criterion i. Even if I were to accept that the appeal site was previously developed land, it is in a remote location that is not accessible by sustainable modes of transport. Nor have I been presented with any clear evidence that it could be made accessible to sustainable modes of transport, as required by criterion j of Policy SD3.
7. Accordingly, the proposal would not constitute an acceptable form of development outside the development limits, in conflict with Policy SD3 of the RCLP.

Character and appearance

8. The appeal site is located within the historic landscape of the Eston Hills, identified in Policy N1 of the RCLP as a locally important landscape. The appeal site forms part of a farmstead which comprises a complex of buildings including substantial two storey farmhouses constructed from traditional materials. The surrounding open countryside is inherently rural in character with sporadic farmsteads of a generally traditional appearance.
9. The proposal would be a high-quality scheme with materials to match the existing buildings which would help to integrate the proposal with its immediate surroundings. However, as set out above, it would be of a significant size and massing. Despite being closely grouped with the existing complex of buildings, the proposal's built form would be visually prominent within an area that is particularly sensitive to change. As stated in Policy N1 of the RCLP, the retention of elements of the landscape character of the Eston Hills is prioritised which in many cases will mean little intervention to change this character.
10. The height and depth of the proposed garage is similar to a previously approved scheme, nevertheless, it would be noticeably wider. The relationship between the dimensions of the proposal would result in it having noticeably bulkier proportions than the previously approved scheme. Despite the backdrop of the two storey farmhouses, and even if the existing permission at the appeal site was implemented which would increase the height of the existing farmhouse, the bulky scale of the proposed garage would appear conspicuous and would not be screened or integrated into the landscape.
11. There would be six dormer windows which would sit neatly within the roof slope. In addition, there would also be six windows on this south facing elevation at ground floor level. The overall amount of glazing proposed on this elevation would result in an overtly domestic appearance at odds with the existing fenestration and spacings between openings at the farmhouse, or that of the scheme with planning permission at the farmhouse. The proposed number and arrangement of windows would appear as a discordant feature, detracting from the landscape in views from the surrounding public footpaths

and in longer distance views from access tracks. Consequently, the proposal would not respect or enhance the character of the surrounding landscape.

12. While development at the appeal site location has been expanded and altered in recent years, this has not affected the character and appearance of the area in the same way that the appeal scheme would. Similarly, while I have been provided with little information about the setting and context of a solar farm with planning permission nearby, it is indicated that it is not within the Eston Hills landscape area and so has a different context to the appeal scheme. It does not, therefore, lead me away from my above findings.
13. The proposal is said to allow for the efficient use of the site, providing additional space for working and storage to support the growing farm. While benefits of the scheme, they would be largely private and therefore of limited weight. As such, they do not outweigh the harm to the landscape that I have identified, as required by Policy N1 of the RCLP.
14. For the reasons given, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the Eston Hills, in conflict with Policies SD4 and N1 of the RCLP. These policies, amongst other things, require proposals to respect or enhance the character of the site and its surroundings in terms of its proportion, form, massing, scale, materials and detailed design features. Development should also not lead to a loss of the quality and distinctiveness of the landscape character unless the benefits clearly outweigh the landscape considerations.

Conclusion

15. My above findings bring the proposal into conflict with the development plan, read as a whole. There are no material considerations that have been shown to have sufficient weight to warrant a decision otherwise than in accordance with it. Therefore, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

F Harrison

INSPECTOR