



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 June 2024

by E Grierson BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/X3540/W/23/3333971

Land North to the Lavender Cottage, Kiln Lane, Great Bealings IP13 6NJ

- 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 John Mcdermottroe against the decision of East Suffolk Council.
 - The application Ref is DC/23/2127/FUL.
 - The development proposed is described as 'the owner is planning to build single storey stable room and storage room for hay and tools for one horse'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is an undeveloped field adjacent to Kiln Lane. It is surrounded by well established hedging and informal fencing providing a boundary around the site. It is located in a rural area outside of the settlement limits of Great Bearings, within the countryside. The proposed development would introduce a single storey stable building to the site along with a smaller storage unit for manure and a permeable surfaced area providing access from the road to both proposed structures.
4. Policy SCLP10.4 of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan 2020 (the LP) states that proposals for development should be informed by, and sympathetic to, the special qualities and features as described in the Suffolk Coastal Landscape Character Assessment (2018), the Settlement Sensitivity Assessment (2018), or successor and updated landscape evidence.
5. The appeal site is located within the B8 Fynn Valley area within The Suffolk Coastal Landscape Character Assessment. This outlines that the meadowlands within this area have generally changed little over the centuries and most continued to be managed for grazing and hay making, with some meadows divided up for paddocks and poached by horses. The strategy objectives go on to state that conversion to equestrianism should be resisted. The Settlement Sensitivity Assessment highlights that the appeal site, along with the rest of Great Bealings, is located within the GBS1 peripheral area. This is described as an intimate and deeply rural valley landscape which has strong sense of time

depth and where the valley landscape forms an important setting to the settlement.

6. Great Bealings Neighbourhood Plan 2017 (the GBNP) outlines Kiln Lane as a very significant area as the landscape penetrates right into the heart of the village and provides a classic illustration of the extent to which the village and the landscape work in harmony. It goes on to state that the land either side of Kiln Lane as far as Kiln Farm is to be protected from development by being designated as an Area to be Protected from Development (APD). Policy LP2 of the NP states this is in order to maintain important gaps and spaces and avoid the coalescence of built areas. The GBNP also identifies the appeal site as within a Landscape Protection Area (LPA).
7. The appeal site, as an open and undeveloped parcel of land within the countryside, contributes positively to the rural landscape character as described within these aforementioned documents and provides an important gap amongst the existing development in this area. Although the site is partially obscured from public view by existing hedging, which is to remain, the proposed development would still be seen above this, due to elevated ground levels, and through gaps in the hedging for the vehicular access and alongside the boundary with Lavender Cottage. As such, the proposal would be a highly visible addition within this valley landscape.
8. Although only single storey in height and constructed of external materials typically seen in rural and agricultural buildings, the proposed stable is relatively large in size with a significant footprint for the stabling of one horse. Its elevated position, due to the topography of the land, gives it increased prominence against the neighbouring buildings and other plots of land on Kiln Lane and further into the valley. The proposal also includes a considerable amount of permeable surfacing, resulting in the loss of grassland within the appeal site to the detriment of its rural character. Whilst the appellant indicates that this would only be used for maintenance vehicles to remove horse manure, it extends much further into the site than the proposed manure storage unit and around the stable building itself.
9. The addition of an excessive level of development to this currently open and green site, along with its overall prominence and visibility from the surrounding area, would significantly and detrimentally alter its rural character and positive contribution to the surrounding landscape, eroding the important gap in built form which it currently provides.
10. The appellant indicates that there are multiple stable blocks on neighbouring plots. However, none in particular have been brought to my attention and only one unused stable adjacent to the appeal site was observed during my site visit. Therefore, whilst an equestrian use may be considered commonplace in such rural surrounds, this does not set a precedent for the proposed development in this instance. It is also noted that the neighbouring property, Lavender Cottage is much larger than the proposed stable building, as highlighted by the appellant. However, due to its position lower down in the valley, it is not as prominent as the proposed stable and its red brick façade and traditional design assimilates well into the rural landscape.
11. Therefore, for the reasons above, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would conflict with Policies SCLP10.4 and SCLP11.1 of the LP and Policies LP1, LP2 and Policy BE1

of the GBNP. These policies collectively seek to ensure that development proposals will protect and enhance landscape quality, including the special qualities and character of the area whilst responding to local context and taking account of any important landscape or topographical features. With development in Landscape Protection Areas only being supported where there is no harm to the landscape setting.

12. The proposed development would also conflict with the general design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

13. It has been highlighted that the appeal site is located in close proximity to the grade II listed building, Kiln Farmhouse. Limited information has been submitted regarding this building. However, it appears that its significance is derived, at least in part, from its historic nature as a farmhouse and from its status as a well-preserved example of its age and type. The open and rural surroundings contribute to how this asset is appreciated and its setting makes a positive contribution to the significance of this listed building.
14. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the decision maker, in considering whether to grant planning permission for the development which affects a listed building or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any feature of special architectural or historic interest. The Council has not raised any concerns in relation to the impact of the proposed development on this listed building. Whilst the appeal site is in close proximity to this listed building and its surrounds, the two are visually separate and well screened from each other by well-established trees and hedging. As such, the proposed development would have a neutral impact on the setting and significance of the grade II listed Kiln Farmhouse.

Conclusion

15. Nevertheless, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Therefore, for the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, the proposal would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole and I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

E Grierson

INSPECTOR