



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 July 2024

by Chris Baxter BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/D3505/W/23/3333575

Manor Farm, Tye Road, Monks Eleigh, Suffolk IP7 7JL

- 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 Keitley-Webb against the decision of Babergh District Council.
 - The application Ref is DC/23/01440.
 - The development proposed is erection of 2no 1 bedroom thatched cottages.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. For the sake of clarity and brevity I have taken the description of development from the Council's decision notice.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are whether the proposal is suitably located and whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the setting of nearby heritage assets.

Reasons

Location

4. The appeal site is a parcel of land within a countryside location. It has been described that the site occupied two cottages up until around the 1970/80's, however, these buildings have been demolished and the land now appears to be a paddock/field.
5. The settlement to the south of the appeal site is described as being around one kilometre away. The settlement has numerous facilities such as a shop, public house, restaurant, church and bus stops. There are also facilities and services in nearby villages.
6. I note the reference to the Sustrans "*Walkable Neighbourhoods*" 2022 document which indicates that a 20 minute walking trip of around 1.6 kilometres has been found to be the longest distance a majority of people are willing to walk to meet their daily needs. The road from the appeal site to the nearest settlement is narrow and without any street lighting or footpaths. The road has verges, however, these are also narrow in places with uneven ground. Walking from the appeal site along this road would not be desirable, particularly during hours of limited daylight, and it is more likely that future occupants of the proposed development would use private motor vehicles to reach essential services.

7. Due to the location of the appeal site, future occupiers of the proposal would be reliant on the use of private motor vehicles, and therefore the proposed development would not be suitably located. The proposal would not accord with Policies CS2 and CS15 of the Babergh Local Plan Core Strategy and Policies 2014, Policy SP03 of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan 2023 and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which seeks the sustainable location of new development.

Heritage assets

8. A grade II listed building known as Manor Farmhouse is located to the east of the appeal site. 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 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 features of special architectural or historic interest. Moreover, paragraph 205 of the Framework states that when considering the impact of new development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
9. Manor Farmhouse is a 15th-16th century timber-framed and plastered building. It is two storeys, constructed from gault brick and tiled roof with casement windows. There is a large ridge chimney stack with sawtooth shafting on a rectangular base and the interior has good, exposed beams and ceiling joists and there are small wall paintings. The listed building has historical and architectural significance within the area.
10. The Council are satisfied that the design of the proposed properties would not cause any adverse harm to the heritage asset. The appeal site is a considerable distance away from the heritage asset with substantial landscape screening between the site and the heritage asset. Given the design of the development and its location in relation to the listed building, the proposal would not have a harmful effect on the setting or the significance of the heritage asset. The proposal would therefore preserve the setting of the grade II listed building.

Other Matters

11. The proposed scheme would include the introduction of over 3000 square metres of ponds and landscaped areas to aid in the expansion of habitats for Great Crested Newts, described as being part of Natural England's Strategic Plan. The proposal would contribute to meeting housing need and the local economy providing employment as well as not compromising highway safety or having a detrimental effect in terms of flooding. All existing trees and boundaries are to be retained with enhanced planting of native hedgerows and flora, contributing towards enhanced biodiversity and ecology.
12. There is a lack of compelling evidence that the introduction of pond and landscaping is specifically required in this location and given the scale of the overall development, I attribute minimal weight to the benefits and matters described above.

Conclusion

13. I have found that the proposal would not have an adverse effect on the setting of a heritage asset. However, this matter and the benefits described above

would not outweigh the significant harm I have identified with regards to the development not being suitably located.

14. The proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the provisions of the Framework, which outweighs this finding.
15. Therefore, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the planning appeal should be dismissed.

Chris Baxter

INSPECTOR