



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 May 2024

by Thomas Hatfield BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 August 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P4415/W/23/3335938

Rackford Farm, Rackford Road, North Anston, Rotherham, S25 4DF

- 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 Neil Murray against the decision of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref RB2023/1358, dated 29 September 2023, was refused by notice dated 24 November 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as "*conversion of existing stables and store building into dwelling*".
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for conversion of existing stables and store building into a dwelling at Rackford Farm, Rackford Road, North Anston, Rotherham, S25 4DF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref RB2023/1358, dated 29 September 2023, subject to the conditions set out in the attached schedule.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether future occupiers of the development would be unduly reliant on private transport.

Reasons

3. The appeal site contains a detached stable block that is constructed in brick, stone, and block with a concrete tile roof. It is located in the Green Belt, around 600 metres from the settlement edge of North Anston.
4. The site is located within a small cluster of buildings that includes a number of dwellings and a farm. These are located at the end of an access road that connects the appeal site to North Anston. Whilst this access road is single lane and unlit, it is very lightly trafficked, and only serves the cluster of buildings within which the appeal site is situated. Accordingly, few vehicles use this route and it is relatively wide considering it is single lane. There are also significant verges alongside it. Moreover, it is currently used by pedestrians to access the open countryside and there are a number of footpaths that connect to it, as I observed on my site visit. In view of these factors, I consider this to be a safe pedestrian route to access services and facilities within North Anston.
5. A small convenience store, and bus stops served by relatively frequent services, are located around 1.2 km from the appeal site near to the junction

between Rackford Road and the B6060. Further bus stops are located nearby along Woodland Drive. A primary school, shops and other facilities are also located around 1 mile from the appeal site. It would therefore be in a reasonable walking and/or cycling distance of a range of shops and services that would be capable of meeting many of the day to day needs of future occupiers. Given the site's proximity to the urban edge, and its accessibility to services and facilities, I do not consider it to be 'isolated' for the purposes of paragraph 84 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework').

6. Policy SP 64 of the Rotherham Sites and Policies DPD (2018) requires that residential development should have good access to a range of shops and services. In my view, that would be the case here. Whilst this policy also sets more specific accessibility requirements for larger residential developments of 10 or more dwellings, those are not relevant to the current appeal proposal which is for a single dwelling only.
7. For the above reasons, I conclude that future occupiers of the development would not be unduly reliant on private transport. The development would therefore accord with Policy SP 64 of the Rotherham Sites and Policies DPD (2018).

Other Matter

8. It is common ground that the appeal proposal would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. In this regard, it would involve the re-use of a building that is of permanent and substantial construction, in accordance with paragraph 155 d) of the Framework.

Conditions

9. The Council suggested a number of conditions, some of which I have edited for clarity and enforceability. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have imposed a condition that requires the development to accord with the approved plans. This is necessary in the interest of certainty. Conditions relating to drainage and cycle storage are necessary to ensure that the development is appropriately drained and facilitates cycle use. Further conditions relating to boundary treatments and external materials are necessary in order to protect the character and appearance of the countryside.
10. The Council also suggested a condition that would have removed various permitted development rights. However, permitted development rights have not been withdrawn (in whole or in part) in the Green Belt, and so this designation does not justify removing permitted rights here. In any case, the scope for such additions is limited given the size and shape of the appeal site. Another suggested condition relating to electric vehicle charging points is unnecessary as this is now a requirement of the Building Regulations.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Thomas Hatfield

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan; Block Plan; 400/5; 400/3A; 400/4A.

Pre-occupation conditions

- 3) Prior to the first occupation of the development, that part of the site to be used by vehicles shall be constructed with either:
 - a permeable surface and associated water retention/collection drainage, or;
 - an impermeable surface with water collected and taken to a separately constructed water retention/discharge system within the site.

This area shall thereafter be maintained in a working condition.

- 4) Prior to the first occupation of the development, details of onsite cycle storage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the dwelling and shall thereafter be retained.
- 5) Prior to the first occupation of the development, a plan indicating the position, design, materials, and type of boundary treatment to be erected shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The boundary treatment shall thereafter be implemented as approved prior to the first occupation of the development.

Other conditions

- 6) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be in accordance with the details provided in the submitted application form.