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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 February 2025

**by J Bell-Williamson MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

**Decision date: 14 March 2025**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/K2610/D/24/3354854**

**24 Station Road, Reedham, Norwich, Norfolk NR13 3TA**

- 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 Steven Keating against the decision of Broadland District Council.
  - The application Ref is 2024/0656.
  - The development proposed is erection of annexe.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Preliminary Matters

2. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework was published on 12 December 2024. The content of the revised Framework has been considered but in light of the facts in this case it does not alter my conclusion.

### Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
  - whether the proposed annexe would be an appropriate form of development in this location, with particular regard to its physical relationship with the host dwelling; and
  - whether there is sufficient information to assess any effects of the proposal on habitats and biodiversity.

### Reasons

#### *Whether an appropriate form of development*

4. No 24 is a two-storey detached dwelling in a rural village setting. It is positioned behind dwellings with frontages on Station Road and set on a large linear plot with a long driveway providing access from the road. The site is outside the defined settlement limit.
5. The Broadland Development Management DPD (2015) states that by their very nature annexes should be ancillary to the use of a dwelling house, for example they should be located within close proximity of the main dwelling with shared facilities such as a kitchen, shared utilities such as electricity and water supply, and shared postal address<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 4.6.

6. The proposed annexe would be a modestly sized two-bedroom structure, which would be accessed from the road using the same driveway that serves No 24. The appellant indicates that it is intended for occupation by elderly relatives who require care, whilst also providing some independence.
7. Due to the building's self-contained internal facilities, it would be capable of independent residential occupation and independent access could be gained to it, although I acknowledge that is not what is proposed given the familial relationship involved in occupation of the annexe. Nonetheless, given the permanent nature of what is proposed, the use of the building needs to be considered in the long term as well as in relation to any initial occupation.
8. The host dwelling has a front boundary which separates its principal garden area from the remainder of the long, linear plot, which is largely open except for a number of outbuildings. The proposed annexe would be sited in the middle of this area outside the principal garden area of the host dwelling. Consequently, due to the overall size of the site it would be some considerable distance from No 24; indeed, it would be marginally closer to No 22 to the front of the site than to its host dwelling.
9. In these circumstances, it is likely that the substantive separation between No 24 and the proposed building, and its self-contained facilities, will result in it not functioning as an annexe in the long term beyond the initial occupation by the appellant's relatives. It is possible in principle to use a condition to require use of the annexe to be tied to that of the host dwelling. However, due to the physical layout of the proposal which would not result in a long-term functional relationship and dependency between the two buildings, this would not be appropriate.
10. I have had full regard to the fact that the annexe is required to address family members' care needs. While I give this matter weight, it must be balanced with the fact that I have found that the proposal would not function as an annexe in the long term. On balance and considering these matters as a whole, I conclude that the above findings would not be outweighed by the particular personal circumstances that are relevant to this case.
11. While neighboring occupiers or other parties might not have raised concerns about the proposal, this is a neutral factor in consideration of the appeal. I acknowledge that there is a recently built housing estate to the north of the appeal site. However, I am unaware of the background to this development and, therefore, it is not clear that there are any directly comparable issues to those raised in this case.
12. Accordingly, for these reasons, I conclude that the proposed annex would not be an appropriate form of development in this location due to its physical relationship with the host dwelling. As such, it would amount in the long term to a separate small dwelling outside the defined settlement limit. It would, therefore, be contrary to Policy GC2 of the Broadland Development Management DPD concerning the location of new development.

#### *Habitats and biodiversity*

13. Policy EN1 of the Development Management DPD states that development proposals will be expected to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the district and avoid fragmentation of habitats. Policy 3 of the Greater Norwich Local Plan (2024) requires development to enhance the natural environment, including

through undertaking a relevant assessment, such as an ecological assessment, if impacts to a natural asset might arise.

14. While the site is not apparently subject to a particular designation in terms of its ecological value, it is nonetheless within a rural setting and formed of grassland with established trees and hedges to the nearby boundaries. I note the appellant's contention that as the building would not have foundations this would reduce its environmental impact. However, despite this, in the absence of a preliminary assessment of any possible effects of a building in this location, it is not possible to conclude with certainty that habitats and biodiversity would not be adversely affected, contrary to the intentions of development plan policy.
15. Accordingly, for these reasons, I must conclude that the proposal is contrary to Policy EN1 of the Broadland Development Management DPD and Policy 3 of the Greater Norwich Local Plan as it has not been adequately demonstrated that the proposal will not have a harmful effect on habitats and biodiversity.

### **Conclusion**

16. For the reasons given the appeal is dismissed.

*J Bell-Williamson*

INSPECTOR