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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 May 2025

**by Jennifer Wallace BA(Hons) MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

**Decision date: 05 June 2025**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/X3540/W/24/3353876**

**Land Adj 16 Ipswich Road, Newbourne IP12 4NS**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mr Downing against the decision of East Suffolk Council.
  - The application Ref is DC/24/0878/OUT.
  - The development proposed is outline application for erection of dwelling (all matters reserved).
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the site address from the appeal form as it more accurately describes the location of the appeal site.
3. The appeal is made in outline, with all matters reserved. Notwithstanding access is a reserved matter, it would be taken from Ipswich Road as the site location plan shows only one location for connection to the public highway. I have treated the submitted plans as indicative only.
4. On 12 December 2024, a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published. Those parts of the Framework most relevant to this appeal have not been materially amended. As a result, I consider that there is no requirement for me to seek further submissions and I am satisfied that no party's interests have been prejudiced by my taking this approach. I will refer to the updated paragraph numbers in this decision.

### Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

### Reasons

6. Much of Newbourne is occupied by the former Land Settlement Association Holdings (LSAH). This was an experimental scheme in the interwar period which sought to provide employment on the land for workers from depressed industrial areas. This has given rise to a distinctive land use pattern of large plots, some of which still contain commercial scale greenhouses. The ongoing influence of horticulture on the area was readily discernible at my site visit from the visibility of those greenhouses throughout the settlement. In recognition of this distinctive history, Suffolk Coastal Local Plan adopted September 2020 (LP) Policy

SCLP11.9 provides the policy context specific to development within the former LSAH.

7. There is not a settlement boundary for Newbourne therefore the site is in the countryside. LP Policy SCLP5.3 sets out the circumstances in which housing development in the countryside would be acceptable. This confirms that limited development within existing clusters is appropriate subject to criteria set out in LP Policy SCLP5.4.
8. 16 Ipswich Road appears as the first property when travelling into Newbourne, as 18 Ipswich Road is set well back from the road. It is set in a very spacious plot. Part of this forms the appeal site. This lies between No 16 and the plot of 14 Ipswich Road and at the time of my site visit was largely covered in derelict glasshouses. There are further properties, both on the same side of the road, and opposite the appeal site. These all appear as very spacious plots, some with outbuildings and structures reflective of the history of the area as part of the LSAH. Although there is a notable distance between the properties along Ipswich Road, because of the consistency in the spacious and contiguous nature of the plots and the position of those dwellings adjacent to the highway on both sides, I am satisfied that the site does lie within a cluster of at least five dwellings.
9. The spacious nature of the plot of No16, and the similarly spacious nature of the neighbouring plots provides a reference to the historic development of the area and are important in defining the character of this part of Ipswich Road. The glasshouses, while derelict, add to this, as do the supporting structures found in the plots of the neighbouring dwellings. Consequently, the appeal site does not appear as a clearly identifiable gap within the cluster, but as an integral part of the plot.
10. The proposal would result in two plots which would be much smaller than those in the cluster. Such sub-division of the plot to accommodate a further dwelling would be entirely uncharacteristic of the pattern of development along this particular part of Ipswich Road. The appeal plot would appear particularly incongruous given its narrow width. Furthermore, it would represent an intensification in the density of dwellings which would be discordant given the position of the site to the edge of Newbourne where development is more spacious than in locations closer to the centre of the settlement.
11. Landscaping of the site would not address the inconsistency of the proposal with the prevailing character of development. Furthermore, appropriate landscaping should form part of any well designed scheme. The condition of the glasshouses is poor. However given they are not in a prominent location, and views are glimpsed while moving along Ipswich Road, their removal would be at best neutral in visual terms.
12. I have been referred to another decision<sup>1</sup> of the Council where development was allowed further along Ipswich Road, and provided with the officer report and plans. However, it is clear from the site location plan within the appellant's statement that the surrounding nature of the built form is substantially and materially different to that of the proposal before me. That decision would therefore not lead me to reassess my conclusions with respect to the appeal site.

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<sup>1</sup> DC/23/4741/FUL

13. For these reasons, the proposal would not have an acceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area. It would be contrary to LP Policies 5.4 and 11.9 which require infill development in the countryside to be within a clearly identifiable gap which would not harm the character of the former Land Settlement Association Holdings area.

### **Other Matters**

14. The appeal site is within the recreational disturbance Zone of Influence for habitats sites as set out in the Suffolk Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy. This was the basis of the Council's second reason for refusal. Had I been minded to allow the appeal, it would have been necessary to establish whether the proposal on its own or in combination with other projects would likely have significant environmental effects on the integrity of the habitats sites and if any mitigation had been appropriately secured. However, it has not been necessary for me to pursue this issue as a finding that the proposal would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the habitats sites, with or without any mitigation, would be at best a neutral matter.
15. The site itself would be capable of accommodating a dwelling with appropriate living conditions for future occupiers. Suitable access could be provided from the highway. These matters would be fully addressed at the reserved matters stage were I minded to allow the appeal. However, these are to be expected of any well designed development and so would be neutral in my assessment.
16. Notwithstanding Newbourne is within the countryside, it does comprise a number of properties with some limited facilities for community use. Development within the settlement could, in principle, help to sustain a rural community. There would be a benefit from the delivery of an addition dwelling and associated economic benefits during the construction and occupation stages. However, these would be minor given the proposal is for a single dwelling and would not outweigh the harm I have identified to the character and appearance of the area.

### **Conclusion**

17. The appeal proposal would conflict with the development plan when read as a whole. There are no material considerations of sufficient weight to indicate the decision should be taken otherwise. For the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Jennifer Wallace*

INSPECTOR