



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 June 2025

by D Wilson BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19th June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/H1705/W/24/3357309

Land south of Woodbine Lane and east of the Winchester Road, Burghclere RG20 9DU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant permission in principle.
 - The appeal is made by Mr. Steve Kirby on behalf of Albemarle Street Ltd. against the decision of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/01994/PIP.
 - The development proposed is 9 new starter / affordable houses & associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposal is for permission in principle. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that this is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development. The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages: the first stage (or permission in principle stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle and the second ('technical details consent') stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed. This appeal relates to the first of these 2 stages.
3. The scope of the considerations for permission in principle is limited to location, land use and the amount of development permitted¹. All other matters are considered as part of a subsequent Technical Details Consent application if permission in principle is granted. I have determined the appeal accordingly.

Main Issue

4. This main issue is whether the site is suitable for residential development, having regard to its location, the proposed land use and the amount of development.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is located outside of any settlement policy boundary and is therefore designated as countryside. Policy SS1 of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (2011 to 2029) Adopted May 2016 (LP) sets out a spatial strategy for the Local Authority to meet its full housing need over the Plan period. The strategy is principally based upon the development of allocated Greenfield sites and the redevelopment of land in the towns and villages. Development in the countryside is generally restricted.

¹ PPG Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 58-012-20180615

6. Policy SS6 relates to development in the countryside and states that amongst other things, development in the countryside will only be permitted if the site is a rural exception scheme. The proposal is for affordable housing and therefore Policy CN2 is relevant which states that small scale residential development designed to meet the identified needs of local people unable to meet their own needs in the housing market will be permitted on sites outside of settlement policy boundaries provided that a set criterion is met.
7. Criteria a) is to ensure that the proposal does not result in an isolated form of development. In regard to assessing this matter I have had regard to relevant case law², which advises that what is a settlement and whether the development would be isolated from a settlement are both matters of planning judgment for the decision-maker on the facts of the particular case.
8. The appeal site is located close to a cluster of dwellings on Woodbine Lane and would therefore not be physically isolated and would contribute to this cluster of dwellings.
9. There are some facilities available in Burghclere including a school, pub, playground and sports club. However, there is no access by a continuous footpath and the unlit route, distance and speed limits on the roads would make it an unattractive option for cycling. There are also no bus stops within a reasonable walking distance which means that access to facilities would only be available by a private motor vehicle. For these reasons, despite the physical connection with dwellings nearby I find the site to be isolated due to the total reliance on a private motor vehicle, the proposal would therefore not meet criterion a).
10. Criterion b) is that the scale and tenure of development will be based on proven local need. However, these matters would be considered at technical details stage.
11. Criterion c) and d) require development to be in proportion with and respect the character, form and appearance of the immediate vicinity and surrounding area and that development will be integrated into the existing community, where possible.
12. The appeal site is part of a large, open field which is bordered by extensive hedgerows. The wider area is mostly open fields and sparsely scattered houses. Woodbine Lane is next to the appeal sites and contains a cluster of houses which are generally large in size and occupy significant plots.
13. I am mindful that the details of the proposed houses, including their form and appearance are not before me and the plans are indicative. However, the overall size of the appeal site is modest and the provision of nine dwellings within such a modest site area would likely mean that the properties would be small in size and also occupy small plots. This would not reflect the character of the dwellings close to the appeal site which are large and occupy large plots.
14. The proposed development would also require hardstanding for the access road and associated parking which would take up further room within the plot. Vegetation would provide some screening; however, the urbanising effect of the development would be clear and result in a cramped collection of dwellings.

² Braintree District Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government [2018] and Bramshill v SSHCLG [2021]

15. Overall, I consider that the site is unsuitable for residential development, having regard to its location, the proposed land use and the amount of development through its location outside of the defined settlement boundary and harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would be contrary to Policies SD1, SS1, SS6, CN2, CN9, EM1 and EM10 of the LP, Policies B1, B5 and B8 of the Burghclere Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2011-2019 As Modified May 2023 (NP), Paragraphs 84 and 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and guidance contained within the Landscape, Biodiversity and Trees Supplementary Planning Document 2018. Amongst other things these seek to permit development and redevelopment within the defined Settlement Policy Boundaries, which contribute to social, economic and environmental well-being, ensure that proposals do not result in an isolated form of development, promote transport choice and ensure that proposals are sympathetic to the character and visual quality of the area concerned

Other Matter

16. I note that future occupiers could use low or zero-carbon forms of independent transport. However, there would be no guarantee that future occupiers would have access to these and as such, this does not provide justification for the poor proximity to local services and public transport.

Planning Balance

17. The proposal would be contrary to Policies SD1, SS1, SS6, CN2, CN9, EM1 and EM10 of the LP and Policies B1, B5 and B8 of the NP. These Policies are consistent with the Framework in seeking to ensure that decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside, prioritising sustainable transport modes and establish or maintain a strong sense of place to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live.
18. The Council is unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites in accordance with Paragraph 72 of the Framework. Paragraph 11 d) of the Framework indicates that, in such circumstances where the requisite housing land supply cannot be shown, the Policies which are important for determining the application should be deemed out-of-date and permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the Policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
19. Having regard to the areas of harm identified, Paragraph 11 d) of the Framework indicates that, in such circumstances where the requisite housing land supply cannot be shown, the Policies which are important for determining the application should be deemed out-of-date and permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the Policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
20. The proposed development would contribute to the supply of new homes in a situation where there is a shortfall. It would also contribute to an unmet need of affordable housing within the area. This attracts significant weight in favour of the proposed development. The proposal would also support the creation of jobs directly and indirectly during construction and result in future occupiers spending in the locality.

21. In this instance, the inappropriate location and harm to the character and appearance of the area would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. As such, the proposal would not constitute a sustainable form of development in terms of the Framework.
22. Consequently, when assessed against the Policies in the Framework when taken as a whole, the adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

Conclusion

23. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

D Wilson

INSPECTOR