



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 December 2025

by Ann Veevers BA(Hons) PGDip(BCon) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/N2535/W/25/3363738

Land to the west of Westmoreland Avenue, Scampton LN1 2UW

- 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 Tony Crowe against the decision of West Lindsey District Council.
 - The application Ref is WL/2024/00714.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Construction of 8 semi-detached, 2 storey dwellings including, drainage and services. Compensatory tree planting and habitat enhancement to west of the site'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council's decision notice refers to Policy SM15 in the Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan, Preferred Approach for updating the plan, July 2024 (emerging LMWLP). The Council's delegated officer report advises that consultation on the emerging LMWLP closed on 24 September 2024. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that the weight given to relevant policies in emerging plans should be according to their stage of preparation, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies and the degree of consistency of the plan with the Framework. Whilst I have been provided with the wording of the draft policy and confirmation that the emerging LMWLP has not been adopted, I have no further information relating to the stage of the emerging LMWLP, or whether, and if so to what extent, there are any unresolved objections to the policy. Consequently, I cannot give weight to it in my decision.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposal on heritage assets, with particular regard to archaeology;
 - Whether the proposal would provide an appropriate housing mix;
 - Whether the appeal site is a suitable location for the proposal having regard to the local development plan strategy for RAF Scampton and the wider spatial strategy, including the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area;
 - The effect of the proposal on minerals, with particular regard to the local safeguarding strategy; and,

- Whether the proposal would be energy efficient.

Reasons

Archaeology

4. The Council assert there is high archaeological potential for below-ground remains dating to the prehistoric and Roman periods in proximity to the appeal site. While limited information has been submitted to substantiate this claim, I am mindful of the RAF Scampton Historic Characterisation (SHC)¹ referred to in Policy S75 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan, adopted April 2023 (the CLLP) provided to me. This indicates at paragraph 5.8 that the area surrounding RAF Scampton has a high concentration of recorded archaeological remains. There are known buried archaeological sites within and close to the boundaries of RAF Scampton which include cropmarks of potential pre-historic date, a Roman villa site and road, Saxon burials, the medieval settlement of Scampton to the west and features associated with the early origins of the airfield.
5. Of particular relevance to this appeal, the SHC notes a key area of archaeological potential lies to the south-west of the airfield. This would be in the vicinity of the appeal site. Here, the area offers the highest potential for remains associated with Scampton Roman villa and the presence of a Saxon settlement and funeral activity. Furthermore, the HA goes on to suggest that the airfield and surrounding grassed areas are likely to have had little under-ground disturbance. Therefore, the potential for discovering buried archaeological remains in such areas is high.
6. Paragraph 207 of the Framework and advice in Planning Practice Guidance² (PPG) require that where a site has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, then an appropriate desk-based assessment, and where necessary a field evaluation, should be submitted. No desk-assessment or field evaluation of the appeal site has been undertaken.
7. An appeal can only be based on the information before the Inspector. The deficiencies in the evidence before me limit a meaningful assessment. Without an archaeological evaluation of the appeal site, I am unable to conclude whether it holds any archaeological interest and thus significance; and without establishing the site's significance, I cannot determine any potential effects of the proposal in this regard.
8. Drawing the above together, the evidence before me is insufficiently precise. No archaeological evaluation has been submitted which conclusively confirms or not the extent of any surviving archaeology within the appeal site. Mindful of the high significance of the potential archaeological remains prior to groundworks being carried out and the potentially adverse consequences of allowing the proposal before this matter has been resolved, I have no option but to take a precautionary approach.
9. As such, I find conflict with Policy S57 of the CLLP which requires, amongst other things, that development with a potential to affect archaeological remains should be accompanied by an appropriate and proportionate assessment to understand the potential for and significance of remains and the impact of development upon them. Similarly, there is conflict with Paragraph 207 of the Framework.

¹ RAF Scampton, Historic Characterisation, October 2004, English Heritage and Atkins

² Paragraph: 041 Reference ID: 18a-041-20190723

Housing Mix

10. Policy S23 of the CLLP seeks to secure a range of unit tenure, types and sizes in residential schemes to help support the creation of mixed, balanced and inclusive communities. In doing so it sets out that developers should have regard to local evidence of housing need. The Council's evidence confirms that due to the scale of the proposal, there would be no requirement for affordable housing. On the basis of the information before me I have no reason to disagree.
11. Nonetheless, the proposed dwellings would all be three-bedroom and therefore on plain reading of Policy S23, it is clear that the proposal would not offer a mix of type or size of dwelling. Neither the Council nor the appellant have provided information regarding housing need in the area, for instance, through the latest Central Lincolnshire Housing Needs Assessment, or any other appropriate evidence as required by Policy S23. As such, I cannot be certain that the proposed three-bedroom, semi-detached dwellings would meet housing need in the area.
12. I recognise that the scheme is relatively modest in scale. However, lacking any objective evidence to the contrary, I cannot be confident that the proposal would not skew the area's mix of housing or prejudice the Council's strategy for accommodation across the plan area.
13. Therefore, on the basis of the information provided, it has not been demonstrated that the proposal would provide an appropriate housing mix. Accordingly, it would conflict with Policy S23 of the CLLP where it seeks a mix of housing types and sizes having regard to local housing need. Neither has it been demonstrated that it would meet the housing mix aims at paragraph 61 of the Framework.

Location

Strategy for RAF Scampton

14. The site comprises a roughly square parcel of land located within the RAF Scampton opportunity area (ROA10) as shown in the 'Policies Map' of the CLLP. Policy S75 of the CLLP relates specifically to RAF Scampton and seeks to safeguard the site and ensure that a framework is provided for its sustainable and holistically planned redevelopment, in the event that the Ministry of Defence (MOD) withdraw from the site. To this end, the policy states that a masterplan with the status of a development plan document will be required prior to a planning application being submitted, which could be either through a single policy review of the CLLP or as an Area Action Plan.
15. Pertinent to this appeal, the policy goes on to state that major development proposals not detailed in a masterplan, or any other proposals that, amongst other things, deliver substandard development will not be supported. The policy then lists several requirements that the masterplan would be expected to deliver. The supporting text to this policy explains that Scampton's RAF heritage is deeply ingrained in the site through its layout and that it is imperative the future of its community should be well-managed in order to enhance and protect it whilst remaining adaptive and responsive to development.
16. The information before me indicates that the MOD have withdrawn from RAF Scampton and it is clear that the Council seeks to restrict development on any part of this opportunity site which would prejudice its comprehensive redevelopment

until a masterplan has been adopted as part of the CLLP. I have not been provided with an approved masterplan and neither am I aware that one is being prepared, although evidence also suggests previous uncertainty arising in relation to a Government proposal to house asylum seekers on part of the wider RAF site that has been deemed no longer feasible, may have delayed progress on an overarching masterplan.

17. I acknowledge 8 dwellings would not be considered to be major development in the context of the wider RAF Scampton site. Nevertheless, in the absence of a masterplan, the proposal has the potential to undermine the objectives of the policy through piecemeal development without regard to the broader implications for the proper planning of the wider site. The Council cannot prevent a planning application from being submitted, and it would be unreasonable to restrict potential development on a site promoted as an opportunity for development for an indeterminate time. However, it would be harmful given the public interest, particularly that of the RAF Scampton community, in having a genuinely plan led system that provides consistency and direction.
18. This factor, together with the concerns identified above with regard to the standard of development insofar as it relates to archaeology and housing mix means that the proposal conflicts with Policy S75 of the CLLP.

Wider spatial strategy

19. As well as being within an opportunity area, the appeal site is located within a Medium Village, defined in Policy S1 of the CLLP as a settlement with between 250 and 749 dwellings, as of 1 April 2018. Policy S1 sets out the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy for the central Lincolnshire area and states that, beyond housing allocations, residential development is limited to that which accords with Policy S4 of the CLLP.
20. Policy S4 sets out that in order to support their role and function, Medium Villages will experience limited growth through allocated sites, or on unallocated sites in 'appropriate locations' within the 'developed footprint' of the village that are typically up to 10 dwellings. The policy also requires that such development preserves or enhances the settlement's character and appearance; does not significantly harm the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside or the rural setting of the village; and is consistent with other policies in the development plan.
21. 'Developed footprint' is defined in the glossary to the CLLP as the continuous built form of the settlement and, amongst other things, it excludes undeveloped land on the edge of the settlement where land relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the built-up area of the settlement as well as formal open spaces. The appeal site is not allocated for housing and forms part of a reasonably wide, vegetated strip of informal open space that directly fronts a continuous ribbon of housing along the east side of Westmoreland Avenue.
22. While the site is located adjacent to open countryside along its southern boundary and part of its western boundary, I saw at my site visit that it is bound on these boundaries by a tall concrete post and wire mesh fence. There is also a hedgerow on the southern boundary. These form a physical and visual barrier between the site and agricultural land beyond. To the north-western boundary of the site, a timber fence separates the site from the former airfield, which cannot be described

as open countryside given the infrastructure that remains. To the north-east, the open space extends to Northumberland Avenue where it is enclosed by the former airfield and housing on three sides and incorporates a surfaced parking area. In views from the A1500 Till Bridge Lane to the south, the appeal site is seen enclosed by boundary trees and hedges as part of the settlement rather than open countryside.

23. For all these reasons, I find the appeal site is undeveloped land within the settlement that relates more to the built-up area than to the surrounding countryside. The Council argue the appeal site is adjacent to the developed footprint of the settlement and that in such circumstances, Policy S4 only supports development that is a First Home or rural affordable housing exception site, which the proposal is not. However, given the appeal site's enclosure by open countryside on two sides, its proximity to residential development along Westmoreland Avenue to the east, the airfield infrastructure to the west, and the presence of street lighting and a telegraph pole within the site, I conclude that it lies within the developed footprint of the settlement. In reaching this view, I have also had regard to the site's location within the opportunity area designation referred to in Policy S75 of the CLLP.
24. In terms of an 'appropriate location', a definition is also provided in the CLLP. It includes that the site, if developed, should retain the core shape and form of the settlement and not significantly harm the character and appearance of the settlement or its rural setting, or the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside. The Council also refer to Policy S53 of the CLLP in its first reason for refusal in this regard. This policy requires, amongst other things, that all development is of a high quality that contributes positively to local character, landscape and townscape.
25. Originating as a training aerodrome during the First World War, RAF Scampton grew as a military base in the 1930's through the Second World War and the Cold War and latterly as the home of the renowned Red Arrows RAF acrobatic team base. As set out in Policy S75 of the CLLP referred to above and evidenced in the SHC, it is a well-known historic military and culturally cherished RAF base and includes several military buildings including hangars, a control tower and extensive airfields as well as accommodation and other services and facilities for military personnel.
26. Whilst a historically designed layout, accommodation within the military base evolved over time to include military barracks as well as 'married quarters' and family housing along with services and facilities to serve those living or working at the site, all of which has resulted in an irregular-shaped overall form and footprint of buildings across the base. Evidence suggests many of the former military barracks and mess rooms are currently vacant and much of the family housing is now in private ownership.
27. The appeal site is physically open in a spatial sense and provides a pleasant, green and leafy character to the area. As set out above, it is divorced from the surrounding agricultural landscape and does not read as part of the swathe of open countryside that lies beyond RAF Scampton but relates more closely to the settlement itself in forming a buffer between existing housing, the airfield, and open countryside.

28. The proposal would result in a noticeable change to the character and appearance of the area in public views from Westmoreland Avenue, particularly from within properties and gardens fronting the road. However, in the context of the pattern of development in the south-west corner of the wider site bound by Northumberland Avenue and Westmoreland Avenue, where a visibly separate enclave of residential development already exists, the proposal would be a modest incursion into open space. Moreover, the proposed dwellings would reflect the two-storey brick built linear form of houses along Westmoreland Avenue and in this respect would integrate in the streetscene. A substantial area of vegetated open space would remain between the proposed dwellings and the boundaries with open countryside and the airfield, thus limiting the erosion of open space and retaining the tangible historical separation between the airfield and domestic buildings.
29. In these respects, I am satisfied the core shape and form of the settlement and its character and appearance would not be harmed. Furthermore, due to the limited intervisibility between the site and the surrounding countryside, the impact of the proposal when viewed from surrounding countryside would be negligible as it would be seen against the backdrop of existing housing.
30. For the reasons above, the proposal complies with Policy S53 of the CLLP insofar as it relates to the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the area. Nevertheless, while the factors set out above may weigh in favour of my determination as to whether the proposed development would be in an appropriate location with reference to Policies S1 and S4, the definition of 'appropriate location' in the CLLP also carries the caveat that the location of the proposal should not conflict, when taken as a whole, with national policy or policies in the CLLP.
31. Given my findings above in relation to archaeology, housing mix and the strategy for RAF Scampton, while the proposal would meet the criteria set out in the CLLP definition of 'developed footprint' and some criteria in the definition of an 'appropriate location', this does not alter the fact that the proposal would conflict with policies in the CLLP when taken as a whole. Consequently, the proposal conflicts with Policies S1 and S4 of the CLLP insofar as they seek that an appropriate level of growth in medium villages is accommodated.

Minerals Safeguarding

32. The appeal site is located within an area designated as a Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA) identified for its underlying limestone resource under Policy M11 of the adopted Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan, June 2016 (LMWLP). Paragraph 222 of the Framework advises that, as minerals are a finite resource, and can only be worked where they are found, best use needs to be made of them to secure their long-term conservation. Paragraph 223 (c) goes on to say, amongst other things, that MSAs should safeguard mineral resources, whilst not creating a presumption that the resources will be worked, and paragraph 225 makes it clear that local planning authorities should not normally permit other development proposals in MSAs if it might constrain potential future use for mineral working.
33. Policy M11 requires applications for non-minerals development in a MSA to be accompanied by a minerals assessment. Despite a reason for refusal given on the basis of a lack of a mineral assessment for a recently refused application for 14 dwellings on the site³, none has been submitted for the current appeal

³ Local Planning Authority Ref: 147198

proposal. As such, Lincolnshire County Council's consultation response advised that there is insufficient information to assess the impact of the proposal on a minerals resource.

34. Nevertheless, I note Policy M11 sets out a list of exemptions, one of which is that the development is of a minor nature which would have a negligible impact with respect to sterilising the mineral resource. There is no definition of what constitutes 'minor nature' in the LMWLP and I have not been directed to any other definition. It is therefore a matter of planning judgement. Paragraph 5.96 of the supporting text to Policy M11 does however indicate that it could include a small extension to existing buildings or sites.
35. I have concluded above that the appeal site lies within the developed footprint of the settlement of RAF Scampton, which is also an opportunity area promoted for development through Policy S75 of the CLLP. I find the footprint of buildings and their associated gardens and driveways would be a narrow linear extension of a minor nature in the context of existing residential development in the south-west corner of the wider site. Furthermore, due to the site's location adjacent to existing housing I consider it would be impractical and undesirable, given the potential for adverse noise and disturbance to arise for surrounding residents, to extract any potential minerals from the site.
36. To conclude on this main issue, while not strictly in accordance with the LMWLP requirement to submit a mineral assessment, in this specific case and for the above reasons, I am satisfied that the extraction or safeguarding of minerals would not be adversely affected. This would, theoretically speaking, address the requirements of Policy M11 so far as they seek to safeguard mineral resources.

Energy Performance

37. The Council's fifth reason for refusal relates to the lack of information provided in relation to the energy performance of the proposed dwellings. However, the Council's Written Statement confirms that some information submitted with the planning application may not have been taken account in reaching the decision, but that the Council maintain their stance.
38. As part of the design of development, Policy S6 of the CLLP sets out several expectations that should be considered. The policy also states that energy statements required by Policy S7 of the CLLP must set out the approach to meeting each of the expectations.
39. Although no specific energy statement has been submitted, the appellant's Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) Assessment and the CLLP Energy Efficiency Checklist and email⁴ provide details regarding the energy efficiency of the dwellings, and how the orientation, form, fabric, heat supply and renewable energy expectations of the proposal would be met.
40. Mindful of the need to complement the aesthetic value, core shape and form of the settlement, I am satisfied that the proposed dwellings are oriented in a way that achieves an appropriate balance between integrating with the streetscene and optimising solar gain. Similarly, the form and fabric of the dwellings strike a balance between visual continuity in the use of brick for the compact semi-

⁴ Email from appellant to Council dated 22 September 2024

detached dwellings as well as heat efficiency through the use of mechanical ventilation and air source heat pumps.

41. The solar panels would only cover 39% of the roof to each dwelling, and the site average total energy demand of 35 kWh/msq/yr set out in Policy S7 would be minimally exceeded. However, each single dwelling's total energy demand would be well below the maximum policy measure of 60 kWh/msq/yr and all of the dwellings would be well within the 15-20kWh/m²/yr space heating demand. Indeed, the Council's officer report confirms that the proposal meets or is slightly above the compliance route in relation to energy efficiency within the Central Lincolnshire Energy Efficiency Design Guide, adopted 2023.
42. On the above basis and from the information before me, I am satisfied the proposal, subject to compliance with the SAP Assessment and other submitted energy information, would comply with Policies S6 and S7 of the CLLP which together, amongst other things, establish design principles aimed at reducing energy consumption in new development.

Other Matters

43. In support of the development, the appellant refers me on numerous occasions to an outline planning permission granted by the Council in 2024⁵ (the 2024 permission) which is considered to be comparable to the appeal proposal. This permission is for 9 dwellings located close to the appeal site, on land within the same parcel of open space. It is argued by the appellant that there was no request by the Council for the applicant to provide an archaeological evaluation or minerals assessment prior to the determination of that application and neither was reference to housing mix made in the Council's officer report, or an assessment against Policy S75 of the CLLP in reaching their decision to approve the development.
44. While there are locational similarities between the sites, and the 2024 permission is for a similar number of dwellings, it is an outline permission and I do not have the full details pertaining to that scheme. From information submitted for this appeal, it would appear that the Council's archaeology specialist did not comment on the 2024 permission but did so in respect of the appeal before me. In relation to a minerals assessment, I have found the appeal scheme acceptable with regard to the effect on the MSA.
45. Although no reference appears to be made to housing mix in the officer report relating to the 2024 permission, evidence suggests that scheme is for a mix of three and four-bedroom dwellings, and in any event, specific dwelling type can be considered at detailed reserved matters stage. Finally, while not explicitly detailed in the Council's officer report relating to the 2024 permission, Policy S75 was listed and an assessment was made in relation to spatial strategy against Policy S4 that concluded that site was considered to form part of the settlement, which the Council found not to be the case in this appeal.
46. In any event, I have determined the appeal before me exercising my planning judgement having regard to the evidence and the specific merits of the proposal that is before me. Whilst consistency of decision making is important, from the

⁵ Local Planning Authority Ref: WL/2024/00066

information presented to me, I have not found that the comparison to the 2024 permission alters my findings.

47. I recognise the appellant has sought to address the reasons for refusal in relation to the previous decision on the site. Reference has also been made to positive pre-application advice received from the Council in relation to the appeal proposal which did not refer to housing mix or the need for an archaeological evaluation⁶. Nevertheless, my role is to assess the scheme before me and pre-application advice is not binding.

Planning Balance

48. The proposal would be contrary to the Council's spatial strategy and would introduce piecemeal development without regard to the broader implications for the proper planning of the wider site through a masterplan. It has not been demonstrated that potential archaeological interests would not be adversely affected or that the proposal would be a suitable housing mix. Consequently, it conflicts with the development plan as a whole.
49. The proposal would make a modest contribution to housing supply in an accessible location which would be in accordance with the Framework and the Government's aim to significantly boost the supply of land for housing, notwithstanding the Council's ability to demonstrate a five year housing land supply is not in dispute. Framework paragraph 73 highlights the contribution small and medium sized sites can make to meeting the housing requirement in the area.
50. It would also provide economic and social benefits both in the short term through the provision of employment opportunities during construction and in the short to long term through spending in the local economy both during construction and afterwards and from future occupiers supporting local services and facilities. There would also be biodiversity net gain on the appeal site and improved footpath access on Westmoreland Avenue. Owing to the quantum of development that is proposed, these economic, social and environmental benefits carry moderate weight in favour of the appeal proposal.
51. Whilst there are considerations that weigh in favour of the proposal, they are not sufficient to outweigh the harm I have found.

Conclusion

52. The proposal conflicts with the development plan when taken as a whole and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it.
53. Therefore, for the above reasons and having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Ann Veevers

INSPECTOR

⁶ Letter from Council dated 7 March 2024 and layout plan in Appendix B of appellant's Statement Ref: 1601 3 AS RJCD