



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 June 2022

by Ryan Cowley MPlan (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31st August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/F4410/W/22/3294693

Land adjacent to Homelea, Remple Lane, Hatfield Woodhouse DN7 6NX

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Lee Dudgeon against the decision of Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/03186/OUT, dated 10 October 2021, was refused by notice dated 10 January 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as 'outline application (siting and means of access to be agreed) for a detached dormer bungalow'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - Whether the proposed development would provide a suitable location for housing with respect to the Council's settlement strategy; and
 - The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Procedural Matter

3. This is an outline proposal and the details considered at this stage are the layout of the development and the means of access from Remple Lane.

Reasons

Location of the development

4. The appeal site is adjacent to the property known as Homelea on a field which includes a number of small buildings. This adjoins but is just outside of the development limits of Hatfield Woodhouse as defined by the Doncaster Local Plan 2015-2035 (Local Plan), adopted September 2021.
5. Hatfield Woodhouse is defined within Policy 1 of the Local Plan as one of a number of settlements with limited services which houses commuters to elsewhere. Some development is allowed within the defined development limits. However, areas outside of these boundaries (where not within the Green Belt), such as in this case, are defined by paragraph 5 of Policy 1 as being within the Countryside Policy Area (CPA).

6. Within the CPA, Policy 1 does provide for some circumstances where residential development may be allowed such as where the Council is not meeting its five-year housing land supply or the housing delivery test. There is no dispute in this case that these circumstances do not apply. Therefore, again as defined within Policy 1, it is necessary to consider whether the proposal would comply with Local Plan Policy 25 which sets out when development in the CPA will be allowed.
7. The appellant does not argue that there is any essential need for the dwelling with respects to agriculture, forestry or other rural enterprise. The proposal does not comply with that or any other of the provisions of policy 25 of the Local Plan with respect to new dwellings in the CPA.
8. In relation to this main issue, the proposal would not provide a suitable location for housing because it would not comply with Local Plan Policies 1 and 25 for the reasons set out above.

Character and appearance

9. Within the development limits the adjacent streets of Remple Avenue, Remple Lane and Lauroid Avenue are suburban in nature, characterised by detached houses and bungalows. Beyond the development limits are agricultural fields, narrow lanes and high hedges. The appeal site itself is understood to have been a paddock and features an agricultural garage, stables and hay store. The land to the south of the appeal site is in commercial/storage use and features numerous scattered vehicles and small ancillary structures, albeit large portions of it remain green and open. There is also a small caravan site and a detached house at the southern end of Remple Lane. The area where the site is located does however have a rural feel and appearance which is distinct from the more suburban character of the land within the settlement.
10. The site benefits from some hedgerow screening and, ultimately, the appearance and scale of the development are reserved matters. However, the proposed dwelling would still likely be visible above the hedgerow and in views through the access, and there is no guarantee existing screening would subsist indefinitely. Whilst there is existing residential development to the north and east, and the proposed plot size may be generous, the proposal would extend the suburban character of the village beyond the current development limits and along Remple Lane, introducing additional domestic buildings, activity and other paraphernalia into the CPA and beyond the built-up area of Hatfield Woodhouse.
11. The use and condition of the adjacent land to the south is noted, however this appears to be less structured and of a more transient nature than the development proposed. This does not change my view that the site and surrounding land is rural as opposed to the clear built-up land within the settlement.
12. The wider paddock is much larger than the curtilage of the proposed dwelling, and within there is no defined boundary to the southern and western edges of the appeal site. The openness of the wider paddock and the form of the appeal site in relation to existing development precludes it from appearing as a logical 'rounding off' of the existing settlement. Similarly, whilst there are existing dwellings to the north and east, and agricultural buildings to the south, there is no residential development to the south or west, and the proposal would not

close an obvious gap in the street scene. The proposal would therefore appear more as an extension of the residential area of the village into an adjacent field beyond, rather than an 'infill' of a gap in the existing settlement.

13. For these reasons, in relation to this main issue, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, it would be contrary to Policy 1 of the Local Plan. This policy seeks, amongst other things, to protect the character, setting and appearance of settlements and the intrinsic character and beauty of the surrounding countryside.

Other Matters

14. Paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) provides some support for development in rural areas located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. It is acknowledged the proposal would contribute to housing delivery in a position close to an existing settlement. Benefits of the proposal such as the creation of temporary construction jobs, council tax contributions and support for local services and facilities are also noted. However, given the small scale of the development overall these would be modest contributions of limited weight. Further benefits may accrue through biodiversity net gain, and efforts can be made to ensure the dwelling is of sustainable design. However, details of such measures are not before me, and so again little weight can be given to them.
15. My attention has been drawn to various examples of other similar applications and appeals in the area by both the appellant and the Council. Notably, all the examples referred to appear to be of decisions made prior to the adoption of the Local Plan whereas I must make my decision based upon the development plan that exists now. The circumstances of each case also differ from the appeal before me, and ultimately each case must be considered on its own merits. Therefore, whilst I have had regard to the information provided, I have afforded only limited weight to these examples in reaching a decision.

Conclusion

16. The other matters raised do not outweigh my conclusions on the main issues or the identified conflict with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

Ryan Cowley

INSPECTOR