

LETTER OF OBJECTION

Heathfield
Horseman's Green,
Whitchurch,
Shropshire
SY13 3EA
10/01/2018

Section 78 Appeal at Land South of Boundary House, Horseman's Green, Wrexham
Appeal Ref: H 6955/A/17/3191218 Appellant R Forrester

We request the points in our letter of objection to the planning Application (P/2017/0725) be considered in determining this appeal. We do not wish to repeat the points made but aspects of the appeal require comment and clarification to remove some of the misconceptions generated.

We consider the personal details of the applicant to be irrelevant to the appeal. For clarity however we mention that the applicant does not live in Horseman's Green (HG) and has not done so for many years (over 10 we think). The financial inducement to help with the purchase of the old Scout Hut extended only as far as trying to gain support for his planning application and was overtly contingent on the application being successful. This approach was quite rightly rejected by the Trustees.

Wrexham Planning has rejected his six Planning Applications and the Welsh Ministers have rightly rejected three appeals already. It is clear that the issues have been thoroughly considered and decisions based firmly on knowledge of the Law and Wrexham's Planning Policies. It is insulting for the applicant to impugn the competence of the Council's Planning Committee by asserting that they were ignorant of the facts in coming to their decisions or that they have taken "a short sighted approach", neither of which is correct. In any event for the decision to be changed now would represent a worrying inconsistency in the decision making process.

The mystery phrase "proposal ... subject to legal agreement ..." tells us nothing so is irrelevant to the appeal.

Current demand for Housing

Regarding the suggested demand for low cost housing in Horseman's Green - there is no evidence for it. We have lived in HG for 28 years and to the best of our knowledge no new arrival into HG has been from the locality so there is no evidence for demand for houses from locals, indeed houses here can take considerable time to sell. Furthermore the proposed two bedroom detached bungalow in its own grounds with a garage, together with the need for a car, cannot be considered to be a "low cost" option.

We note that the applicant wishes to occupy the property himself on retirement and wonder how this accords with his previous apparent aspiration that his low cost provision would be "occupied by younger people from the local community".

Non- Sustainable Hamlet

Far from "taking a short sighted approach" to sustainability the Head of Environmental Planning clearly realises the real picture. Despite protestations to the contrary and much obfuscation in the appeals document HG and Hanmer cannot simply be considered to be the same community. HG is a small, rural and isolated Hamlet surrounded by actively managed farm land of good quality. Hanmer, being 1.5 miles away, is in practice generally accessed by most people from HG by car. We walk the lane between the two each day with our dog and know it is a dangerous journey. The lane is narrow and since it goes through a busy farm we often meet huge tractors which completely fill the lane. It is necessary to climb on the steep bank to allow the tractor to pass as there is no pavement. There also is no lighting.

The shops in Hanmer (a Butchers, Florists and small General Store, understandingly holding a limited stock, with Post Office) inevitably provide inadequate choice for full family shopping, so once again car journeys are used to access Supermarkets in Whitchurch (six miles), Wrexham (eleven miles) or further afield.

As has been stated many times the Hamlet does not have the facilities typically found in a Village. The reference in the appeal to HG being a Village is incorrect.

The bus service in HG is not, in reality, a practical option. The minibus calls at HG only on a Monday morning and allows just over two hours time in Wrexham before its return. This is, in reality, a very limited option. The use of the service bus in Hanmer results in the need to negotiate the lanes potentially carry shopping the 1.5 miles to HG, again not practical for most, in particular the elderly, infirm or those with young children, and particularly in adverse weather conditions.

The problem of local flooding through the absence of mains foul or surface water drainage and the inadequacy of the drainage ditches has been cited as good reason for no further building to be allowed.

Thus HG most definitely is a non-sustainable community and as such cannot be a candidate for further building which would be contrary to common sense and the current applicable Wrexham UDP. There is not the infrastructure to support further, and unnecessary, building. Protestations that the current UDP is out of date are spurious, it is the applicable one. We are of the opinion that the revised UDP when it appears will declare HG to be un-sustainable.

Appearance

One reason for the rejection of the various planning applications by both the Council and Inspectorate is the adverse visual impact caused. Indeed the Stable which has been erected on the site very much imposes itself on the view and spoils the natural landscape, a bungalow with garage would be much worse. HG stands in a beautiful landscape which should not be spoilt by the erection of buildings for which there is no need on greenfield sites. Indeed there are sites within the settlement boundary of HG more suitable for low cost housing which would involve infill rather than ribbon development.

The proposed build is definitely outside the settlement area of HG and is visually separated from the nearest house by land which is within the settlement area, it would therefore clearly extend by a significant and noticeable distance outside the settlement area. Such ribbon development into the rural landscape is inappropriate.

Since there are no material considerations to justify departure from the current 2011 UDP, which definitely rules out this development on numerous grounds (noting that the revised UDP is not yet even out for consultation), and based on common sense and local knowledge of those who live here we request that this appeal be dismissed.

Dr D Andrews

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