

Penderfyniad ar yr Apêl

Appeal Decision

Ymweliad â safle a wnaed ar 17/06/14

Site visit made on 17/06/14

gan Gareth A. Rennie BSc(Hons) DipTP
Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru
Dyddiad: 14 Awst 2014

by Gareth A. Rennie BSc(Hons) DipTP
an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers
Date: 14 August 2014

Appeal Ref: APP/H6955/A/14/2215988

Site address: 4 Cefn Road, Lodge, Wrexham, LL11 5NP

The Welsh Ministers have transferred the authority to decide this appeal to me as the appointed Inspector.

- 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 Michael, Leslie & Anthony Davies against the decision of Wrexham County Borough Council.
- The application Ref P/2013/0777, dated 12 November 2013, was refused by notice dated 3 February 2014.
- The development proposed is the erection of three dwellings including widening of access driveway and provision of vehicular turning area.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider that the main issues in this case are as follows:

- Whether the development represents inappropriate development in the Green Barrier.
- Whether there would be any harm to road safety.
- Whether the benefits of the development would clearly outweigh any harm to the Green Barrier together with any other harm, and thus justify the development on the basis of exceptional circumstances.

Reasons

3. The appeal site lies within an area designated as Green Barrier (GB). National planning guidance, contained within Planning Policy Wales (PPW) says, makes it clear that new development in a GB is inappropriate except under certain circumstances none of which apply in this case. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the GB. This is reiterated in policy EC1 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (UDP).
4. According to PPW inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the GB. In addition, the most important attribute of GB's is their openness. For the reasons given above and because the proposal would occupy an area that is currently

undeveloped, I consider that openness would be significantly reduced. This would cause further harm to the GB and would also undermine the policies that seek to protect it.

5. The character of the area is also dependent to a large part on the balance between the built environment and open space. The siting of the proposed houses within this setting would undermine the area's open rural character by introducing new, built development into open countryside. The proposed development would be visible from surrounding countryside would consolidate linear development along Cefn Road and significantly erode the open countryside of which it is a part. Overall it would be out of character with its predominantly rural surroundings. This would further undermine the openness of the GB as a result.
6. Cefn Road is also very narrow and for the most part partially surfaced, with no pedestrian footway or lighting. The introduction of significant additional vehicular traffic onto this albeit short stretch of road would increase the risk of conflict between vehicles and in particular between vehicles and pedestrians. The appellant has proposed road widening at this point and has proposed to fund road improvements on the adjacent B5101.
7. The proposed traffic calming measures and improvements to visibility would lead to a general improvement for road users and improve visibility, and the proposed widening of Cefn Road would improve access to the proposed and adjacent properties. Nevertheless, I do not consider that the proposed improvements would outweigh the harm to the GB that I have identified. Moreover, despite the appellant's assertions, there is no evidence that the appellant has either control over sufficient adjacent land in order to facilitate such work, or a legal agreement or mechanism is in place that would allow this to take place.
8. In the absence of firm agreements I do not consider that that such improvement could be conditioned. Consequently, there remains a degree of harm to road safety that is unacceptable and that adds weight to my previous conclusions.
9. The appellant has also referred to a shortfall in the supply of housing within the County Borough. The Local Planning Authority have indicated that the 2013 Joint Housing Land Availability Study indicates a housing land supply of 3.4 years. Nonetheless, whilst small sites such as this can make a contribution, I do not consider that in this case such a contribution would outweigh the harm to the GB that I have identified.
10. Overall, I conclude that the proposal is inappropriate development in the GB. There would also be other harm to the character and appearance of the area, and road safety as a result of the proposal.
11. I consider that the appellants have not put forward any material considerations sufficient to clearly outweigh the harm identified and no very exceptional circumstances therefore exist. The proposal is consequently contrary to Policy EC1 of the UDP, and the requirements of PPW. I conclude therefore, for the reasons given above, and having considered all other matters raised, that the appeal should not succeed.

Gareth A. Rennie

Inspector