

Area Planning Committee Corby

Monday 29 June 2021

7.00 pm Council Chamber, The Cube, Corby

Present: Councillor Watt – Chair

Councillors McGhee, Addison, L Buckingham, Dalziel, Sims, Colquhoun, Armour and Rielly.

5. Apologies for Absence

There were apologies for absence from Councillor Buckingham, Councillor Rielly substituted.

6. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare any personal interests they may have in the business to be discussed and/or indicate whether this was prejudicial or non-prejudicial, the nature of any interest, and whether they intended participating in the relevant agenda item. Councillors Watt and Sims declared a prejudicial interest in item NC/21/00036/DPA Change of use of land from Agricultural to Residential – Ashley Road, Middleton, Councillor Watt would leave the meeting for this item and Councillor Sims would be speaking as a Ward Councillor and would not vote on the item.

Committee were advised by the Planning Management Manager that item 6 on the Agenda had been withdrawn by the Applicant and so no decision would be made on the application.

Chair advised that item 5 would be moved up the Agenda with item 4 being taken after.

7. Planning Applications

7.1 20/00594/DPA Revised proposal for erection of pair of 2 storey semi-detached dwellings – land to the rear of 26 – 40 Oakley Road, Corby.

The report before Committee was a revised proposal on a previous submission for 3 storey properties which raised objections from neighbours, the revised proposal had also raised objections.

Relevant policies had been considered and consultation had taken place with both internal and external consultees, the Police/Fire Authority had made some recommendations which were contained within the report including the fact that the proposed scheme in terms of access was unacceptable.

The Officer concluded that the site was sustainable being near the town centre, however, there were concerns about the access via Railside Lane as there were no passing points, this would not be acceptable from a highway safety aspect, therefore the proposal was contrary to Policy 8 of the Core Strategy, secondly the overbearing impact of the new flats under construction to

the north of the site would result in a low level of privacy, this would be contrary to the aims of the NPPF and Policy 8 of the Core Strategy.

Members were concerned about the narrowness of the lane and asked if it could be widened.

The Officer explained that the lane was in the ownership of people living in row of terraces and they would all have to agree.

Members asked about bin lorries and emergency services access.

The Officer said they would not be able to access the site and in the case of fire a sprinkler system would have to be fitted.

RESOLVED that: -

The application be refused in line with the Officer's recommendation.

At this point Councillor Watt asked for nominations for Chair for the next item as both he and the Vice Chair Councillor Sims had declared a prejudicial interest, Councillor Addison nominated Councillor Dalziel and Councillor Rielly seconded. Councillor Watt left the Chamber and Councillor Sims took a seat away from the Committee to speak as Ward Councillor.

7.2 NC/21/00036/DPA Change of use of land from Agricultural to Residential – Ashley Road, Middleton.

Councillor Sims addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor, he thanked the Committee for the opportunity to speak and agreed with the Officers recommendation to refuse the application.

The site was in open countryside and did not comply with several policies both national and the local the JCS. Paragraph 127 NPPF says that a development should add to the overall quality of the area and be sympathetic to the local character and landscape. This development is in the Welland Valley open countryside and the field is an historic ridge and furrow. The proposal is in contravention of this policy.

Planning policy 25 for traveller sites says the LPA should restrict development in open countryside and weight should be given to brown fields sites for travellers. This is not a brownfield site but an attractive picturesque location that many have enjoyed over the years and hope future generations will do too.

Policy 31 of the JCS states that development sites should link to existing settlements with a suitable range of services.

The local community instructed an approved licenced company to carry out an impact assessment which highlighted several significant issues in conclusion it did not support this development proposal.

In terms of Ecological impact, the report covers this in detail, this was a flourishing habitat for wildlife that needed to be protected from further damage.

All applications for gypsy or traveller sites should be determined in accordance with NPPF policy and of course with Policy 31 of the JCS that is until the Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Plan is in place.

Sarah Brant addressed Committee as Chair of Middleton Parish Council and on behalf of 354 objectors and 4 other Parish Councils around the site.

In summary our objections are:

- There is insufficient information to allow an accurate assessment and determination. This application is so poor - we are shocked that it was validated.
- The cumulative impact of proposals for traveller sites just outside Middleton is disproportionate to the size of our community
- The application has an adverse impact on highway safety given its location
- It would impact adversely on biodiversity, ecology, and historic landscape features.
- There is no attempt to show a net biodiversity gain.
- There is inadequate information on foul water disposal and
- The site would be an inappropriate urbanisation of the rural area with an adverse impact on adjoining fields.

The Highways Agency had identified serious problems with the application and requested further information which had not been forthcoming.

The Officer's report was welcomed by objectors but there were two points that would build on the report:

Firstly, sewage disposal. The installation of a package sewage system is complex and requires

- suitable drainage
- the correct ground conditions, ground water levels and percolation.

Streams to the east and west of the site feed into the Welland and without proper consideration of the local hydrology there was a considerable risk of contamination so close to a flood plain.

We disagree with the report in this respect, as our advice is that planning approval conditioning a package treatment system, would be extremely ill advised and rather its suitability should be determined prior to consideration of the application.

Secondly, the County's Principal Ecological Adviser states that a further study would be needed to ascertain the existence of Great Crested Newts. The Residents Action Group had recently commissioned a study in the surrounding fields and research had confirmed evidence of GCN within 500m of the site.

We ask members of the Committee to lobby for the urgent identification of a five-year land supply for traveller accommodation. We understand that consultancy work is ongoing, looking at the possible extension of existing sites and we urge its swift conclusion in order that unauthorised developments in unsustainable rural locations such as this, do not continue to proliferate.

Chair thanked the speakers, and the Officer presented his report.

The application sought change of use from agricultural to residential to provide 5 gypsy and traveller pitches including hardstanding ancillary to that use. Located off Ashley Road the land lies within open countryside and comprised of grassland with access off Ashley Road.

The front boundary consisted of mature vegetation consisting of hedgerow, a self-seeded tree and 5 bar-gate for access. The site was bounded by agricultural land on 3 sides and by Ashley Road was the Van Oppen Equine Yard. The site was currently empty, however, on a site visit it was observed that some works had been carried out including removal of hedgerows.

A submission of objection from Middleton Parish Council was included in the Officers report which included information on protected species, flooding, pollution of waterways, traffic issues and concern about the use of the remainder of the field in the future.

Similarly East Carlton Parish Council submitted a full response to the application also contained within the report. Neighbour notification brought in 354 objection and a letter from the MP for Corby and East Northants.

The relevant statutory consultees were informed, and their comments were contained within the Officers report. All Local Policies had been considered and the 5-year land supply.

The NPPF was a material consideration in dealing with applications, the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites provided national guidance and Policy H, Paragraph 22 outlined that permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicated otherwise.

The proposal as submitted was unacceptable in several areas including access, parking, servicing, and manoeuvring in accordance with adopted standards and would result in environmental harm.

Further harm would be caused by the erection of 5 pitches in the countryside beyond the boundary of Corby. The site was separated from discernible settlements by fields, woodland, and open arable countryside.

RESOLVED that: -

Planning permission be refused for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development will significantly encroach upon the open countryside and introduce a sharp urban edge would into an overtly rural and tranquil landscape that would meaningfully alter the nature of the application site from an open undeveloped field to that of residential sprawling development. Such development would appear starkly isolated given its physical remoteness from a settlement and affecting the way in which the open countryside is experienced and understood, impacting upon the way it relates to the surrounding landscape. The proposed development would have a significant adverse impact on the landscape and character and appearance of the area. The Application fails to demonstrate that this impact could be mitigated. As a result, the proposed scheme would conflict with Policies 2, 8, 11 and 31 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2016), which seek to secure development that is sensitive to the landscape and does not result in significant adverse impacts.
2. The site is in the countryside outside of the defined village envelope as identified in the Adopted Core Strategy. The site is divorced from the village/town with facilities and amenities beyond reasonable and safe walking distance of the site and development of the 5 gypsy pitches in this location would undoubtedly place reliance upon travel by car. Furthermore, the proposal would introduce new built form into the countryside that results in direct conflict with the settlement boundary policies, the role of which is to direct development away from the countryside.

Cumulatively the adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the limited benefits and the proposal fails to secure sustainable development, contrary to the NPPF and Policies 2, 8, 11 and 31 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2016).

3. Insufficient information has been submitted with regards to vehicular access including less satisfactory provision for parking, servicing, and manoeuvring in accordance with adopted standards, such it cannot be ascertained whether a satisfactory means of access can be achieved without comprising the safety of all road users. The proposal

is therefore considered contrary to the NPPF and Policies 8 and 15 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2016).

4. The proposed development does not take account of the protected species and archaeological remains present on the site with the proposal imposed upon them rather than the protected species and archaeological remains informing the design of the site. Furthermore, insufficient information has been provided regarding the protection of the protected species and archaeological remains. In the absence of Ecological Assessment and Archaeological investigation, the proposal as currently proposed would result in an unacceptable impact on protected species and archaeological remains. The proposal, therefore, would contradict the objectives of Policy 4 of the JCS and advice within the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).
5. Even if it is considered that tilted balance was to apply under Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Council considers that the adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole.

Schedule of Plans

D01 Location Plan	26.01.2020
D03 Location & Block plan	26.01.2020
Planning Statement	01.01.2021
DWG 1 Elevation and Floor Plan	

8. Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 7.39pm.