

R04

OL/TH/20/0466

PROPOSAL: Outline application for the erection of a single storey detached dwelling with all matters reserved

LOCATION: Land North West Of Down Barton Road BIRCHINGTON Kent

WARD: Thanet Villages

AGENT: Mr D Brown

APPLICANT: Mr Melvin Walker

RECOMMENDATION: Refuse Permission

For the following reasons:

1 The site lies outside of the village settlement boundary, and as such represents an unsustainable form of development within the countryside for which there is no overriding need, contrary to Policies H1 and CC1 of the Thanet Local Plan, Policies H01, SP01 and SP24 of the Draft Thanet Local Plan, and paragraphs 7 and 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2 The proposed dwelling, by virtue of its prominent location, would appear visually divorced and isolated, impacting upon long distance views, and detracting from the open and undeveloped rural character of the area, severely detrimental to the appearance of the Landscape Character Area, whilst failing to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, contrary to Thanet Local Plan Policies CC1, CC2 and D1, Draft Thanet Local Plan Policies SR24, SR26, and QD02, and paragraphs 127 and 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

3 The proposed development will result in additional pressure on the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Special Protection Area (SPA), and Sandwich Bay and Hacklinge Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and in the absence of an acceptable form of mitigation to relieve the pressure, the proposed development would be contrary to paragraph 177 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

SITE, LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The application site relates to a rectangular parcel of land on the northern side of Down Barton Road, St Nicholas at Wade. The site is part of a larger area of land used as paddocks for the grazing of horses. To the west of the site lies Huckleberry Farm, and to the west of the paddocks lies a stable block building. Opposite the site are open fields. The site has a

small amount of landscape screening to the western (side) and northern (rear) boundary, with the front and eastern side boundary currently open.

The site is located within designated countryside as defined by both the Local Plan and emerging Local Plan.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Site History

OL/TH/20/0062 - Erection of 1No 4 bedroom detached dwelling with associated parking. Refused 12/03/2020.

The reasons for refusal were:

The site is outside the built up area boundary of any settlement and, as such, represents an unsustainable and isolated form of development within the countryside, reliant on a private car contrary to Policies H1 and CC1 of the Thanet Local Plan and Paragraphs 103 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The proposed dwelling, by virtue of its location, would appear visually divorced and isolated within the open landscape which is characteristic of Down Barton Road, and out of keeping with the open rural character of the area, resulting in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area contrary to Thanet Local Plan Policies CC2 and D1, and paragraph 170b) of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The proposed development will result in additional pressure on the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Special Protection Area (SPA), and Sandwich Bay and Hacklinge Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and in the absence of an acceptable form of mitigation to relieve the pressure, the proposed development would be contrary to paragraphs 176 and 177 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Adjacent site within same ownership (opposite 1 Down Barton Farm Cottages & 7 Prospect Place)

OL/TH/17/1412 Outline application for erection of 1no detached bungalow with all matters reserved. Refused 16/11/2017 Appeal dismissed

The reasons for refusal were:

The site is outside the built up area boundary of any settlement and represents an unsustainable and isolated form of development within the countryside, not outweighed by any economic, social or environment benefits, contrary to Policies H1 and CC1 of the Thanet Local Plan and Paragraphs 49 and 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The proposed dwelling, by virtue of its location, would appear visually divorced and isolated within the open landscape which is characteristic of the western side of Down Barton Road, and out of keeping with the open rural character of the area, contrary to Thanet Local Plan

Policies CC1, CC2 and D1, and paragraphs 17, 58, 60 and 61 of the National Planning Policy Framework

In respect of the character and appearance reason, the Planning Inspector stated:

"The bungalow would be located where the western extremity of St. Nicholas at Wade's built up area is transitioning into the generally undeveloped countryside. I consider that the bungalow's siting would be a divorced one, which visually would relate poorly with the dwellings on the northern side of Down Barton Road, given that the bungalow would be randomly sited in a field. There would be a degree of domestication associated with the bungalow's occupation and I consider that would accentuate the incongruity of the randomness of the bungalow's siting." The Inspector concluded that the development would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area. He concluded that the development would be contrary to policies CC2 and D1 of the Local Plan.

The Inspector commented in respect of if the site was appropriate for a dwelling. He considered that whilst the bungalow would be outside of the settlement boundary he considered that it would not be an isolated location for a home due to the proximity to other nearby dwellings.

A planning application is also currently pending for the conversion and change of use of the existing stable block to residential use, which is located between the application site and the appeal site mentioned above. All of these sites fall within the same land ownership.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposal is in outline form, and is for the erection of a single dwelling with all matters reserved for future consideration. Only the principle of a single dwelling on the site is therefore being considered through this application.

An illustrative block plan has been submitted suggesting that the dwelling would be located towards the centre of the site, with hedge and tree planting to all boundaries. The illustrative floor plan and front elevation plan suggest that the building would be single storey in height, with a central vehicular access point onto Down Barton Road.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Thanet Local Plan (2006 Saved Policies)

CC1 - Development in the Countryside

CC2 - Landscape Character Areas

H1 - Residential Development Sites

D1 - Design Principles

D2 - Landscaping

SR5 - Play Space

TR12 - Cycling

TR16 - Car Parking Provision

Draft Local Plan

SP01 - Spatial Strategy - Housing
SP24 - Development in the Countryside
SP26 - Landscape Character Areas
SP29 - Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Plan (SAMM)
SP30 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets
SP35 - Quality Development
H01 - Housing Development
QD01 - Sustainable Design
QD02 - General Design Principles
QD03 - Living Conditions
QD04 - Technical Standards
TP02 - Walking
TP03 - Cycling
TP06 - Car Parking

NOTIFICATIONS

Letters were sent to the neighbouring occupiers and a site notice was posted near the site. Seven representations have been received. This includes 3 letters of support and 4 letters of objection. The concerns raised can be summarised as follows:

- Affect local ecology
- Increase in traffic
- Traffic/highway concerns - no passing bays
- Set a precedent for other development along the road
- Infrastructure shortcomings
- Conflict with Local Plan
- Strain on existing community facilities
- No need for an additional property
- Reduces grazing land and encroaches into countryside
- Nothing has changed since previous refusal

Letters of support can be summarised as follows:

- Keep a family within the village
- No additional traffic implications
- No impact on neighbouring residents
- Screening and minimised height of development has reduced visibility

St. Nicholas-at-Wade with Sarre Parish Council - The site is outside of the built up boundary of any settlement and therefore represents an unsustainable form of development contrary to paragraph 103 of the NPPF. It is also not in keeping with the open rural character of the area and thus contravening the NPPF.

The infrastructure is unsuitable for further development in this location and concern regarding the safety of pedestrians is also raised.

CONSULTATIONS

Environment Agency: (previous application comment) No foul drainage details were submitted in support of this application. The site overlies a principal aquifer, however due to the scale, nature and setting of this proposal and supporting information, we do not object to the proposal in principle providing a condition is attached relating to foul water drainage and an informative relating to the discharge of domestic sewage.

Southern Water: (previous application comment) Request an informative be attached to any consent in relation to the public sewerage system

KCC Archaeology: (previous application comment) The proposal is sited within an area of significant archaeological potential. The fields to the west and north contain evidence of ancient landscapes visible as cropmarks on aerial photographs. These include clear evidence of prehistoric funerary monuments, enclosure, trackways and fields of unknown date, pit groups and alignments and evidence for structures. Finds in the surrounding fields include artefacts of Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and Medieval date. The main focus of activity is to the north west of Huckleberry Farm but there is still potential in this area. To the north and east the remains of WW2 defence systems are also on aerial photographs though not evident on the present area of the site. A condition is therefore recommended for archaeological assessment and evaluation to be followed by appropriate mitigation measures to be agreed following the results of evaluation.

KCC Biodiversity - (final comment) We have reviewed the ecological information submitted in support of this planning application and advise that sufficient information has been provided by the applicant.

Breeding Bird Informative

The boundary vegetation of the proposed development site provides opportunities for breeding birds. Any work to vegetation that may provide suitable nesting habitats should be carried out outside of the bird breeding season (March to August) to avoid destroying or damaging bird nests in use or being built. If vegetation needs to be removed during the breeding season, mitigation measures need to be implemented during construction in order to protect breeding birds. This includes examination by an experienced ecologist prior to starting work and if any nesting birds are found, development must cease until after the juveniles have fledged. An informative is recommended.

Thanet and Canterbury SAMMS

The development includes proposals for a new dwelling within the zone of influence (7.2km) of the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Special Protection Area (SPA) and Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention (Ramsar Site). Therefore, Thanet District Council will need to ensure that the proposals fully adhere to the agreed approach

within the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) to mitigate for additional recreational impacts on the designated sites and to ensure that adequate means are in place to secure the mitigation before first occupation.

A recent decision from the Court of Justice of the European Union has detailed that mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a full 'appropriate assessment' is needed under the Habitats Directive. Therefore, we advise that due to the need for the application to contribute to the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SAMMS there is a need for an appropriate assessment to be carried out as part of this application.

Ecological Enhancements

In alignment with paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019, the implementation of enhancements for biodiversity should be encouraged. The ecology report recommends suitable enhancements, such as native hedgerow planting and the provision of bird boxes. To ensure the implementation of enhancements, we advise that a condition is included with any granted planning permission.

(initial comment)

No ecological information has been submitted with this outline application. As a result of reviewing the data we have available to us (including aerial photos and biological records) and the information submitted with the planning application, we advise that further information is sought with regards to the potential for ecological impacts to arise as a result of the proposed development.

KCC Highways and Transportation - It would appear that this development proposal does not meet the criteria to warrant involvement from the Highway Authority in accordance with the current consultation protocol arrangements. If there are any material highway safety concerns that you consider should be brought to the attention of the HA, then please contact us again with your specific concerns for our consideration.

KCC Public Rights of Way Officer: - No comments.

Natural England: On the basis of the appropriate financial contributions being secured to the relevant scheme. NE concurs with your authority's conclusion that this is suitable mitigation, as such the proposed developments will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA and Ramsar site.

COMMENTS

The application is brought before members at the request of Cllr Trevor Roper, to enable members to consider the impact of the proposal on the village.

Principle

In line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2014, planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the 'development plan' unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are a significant material consideration in this regard.

The application is in outline form with all matters reserved therefore details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale cannot be considered at this time and would be submitted under reserved matters. Therefore the principle of the erection of a dwelling is the only issue being considered at this time.

The application site lies within an area designated as countryside as defined by the Thanet Local Plan and is therefore contrary to Policy H1 of the Thanet Local Plan, which requires that new residential development should be on previously developed land within the urban confines. It is also confirmed that the proposal is outside the village envelope in the emerging Local Plan (boundary to the western boundary of the house known as 'Orpen' and no. 2 Jubilee Cottages).

Policy H01 of the Draft Thanet Local Plan states that permission for new housing development will be granted on non-allocated sites within the confines of the urban area and villages. Furthermore, Policy SP01 of the Draft Thanet Local Plan states that the primary focus for new housing development in Thanet is the urban area as identified on the Policies Map. The proposal falls outside of the village confines, and is therefore contrary to Policy H01 of the Draft Thanet Local Plan, whilst also failing to comply with the objective of Policy SP01.

Policy CC1 of the Thanet Local Plan states that within the countryside, new development will not be permitted unless there is a need for the development that overrides the need to protect the countryside. The Council are of the view that this is a valid policy, compliant with the NPPF. The policy allows for consideration to be given to the balance between the need for development and the need to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, in accordance with paragraph 170 of the NPPF.

The NPPF states that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption of sustainable development. In determining whether housing on the site would be acceptable, the need for housing in the district will therefore need to be balanced against other issues such as the impact upon the countryside, sustainability of the site, character and appearance of the proposed development and highway safety.

It is confirmed that a full allocation of housing for the plan period has been identified within the Draft Local Plan, which in addition to the properties built, granted planning permission, empty properties to be brought back into use, and windfall sites, will exceed the Council's requirement of 17,140 of residential units during the plan period up until 2031. The Draft Local Plan has been through examination and full consultation, and modified in response to the Inspector's comments. The Council's Cabinet has approved the recommendation to adopt the Local Plan, and has recommended adoption to Full Council, which is currently expected to take place in July. It is therefore considered that the Draft Local Plan can be given substantial weight in decision making.

In terms of housing need, the inspectors have not amended any of the figures put forward by the Council within their report, and therefore based upon the information contained within the Draft Local Plan, and supported by the Inspectors' report (para 160-177), specifically paragraph 174 where the Inspector accepted that 'the number of dwellings expected to come forward in the first five years from adoption (7,015) exceeds the five-year housing requirement (6,084)', it is considered that the Council do have a 5 year housing supply equating to 5.77 years (with a 20% buffer)."

Policy SP24 of the Draft Local Plan considers development within the countryside, and provides a list of development within the countryside that is permitted through the policy. The proposed development does not fall within the development permitted, and as such the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policy SP24 of the Draft Local Plan.

Whilst located only just outside the village, the site has poor linkages to the village, and may therefore be reliant on the car to use the services and facilities of the village. This would be exacerbated by the fact that the site is not served by a footpath, there is no street lighting and this part of the road is particularly narrow, with only one car being able to utilise the road at any one time. The site is not therefore considered to be overly sustainable in its location, however, Members have recently approved an application for the erection of a dwelling at Huckleberry Farm, to the west of the application site, and on this basis it would not be considered reasonable to refuse the application on the grounds of its location in relation to the village.

Due to the lack of overarching need for the proposed dwelling, there are only limited economic and social benefits that can be attributed to the provision of this single dwelling, which needs to be weighed against any environmental harm resulting from the proposal.

Character and Appearance

The site lies outside of the village settlement, and planning permission has previously been refused for the erection of a dwelling on the site on the grounds that it would appear visually divorced and isolated within the open landscape which is characteristic of Down Barton Road, and would therefore be out of keeping with the open rural character of the area, resulting in an unsustainable form of development. This application is identical to the previous refusal in that the proposal remains for the erection of a single dwelling on the site. Whilst the agent refers within his statement to amendments, including a reduced footprint and changes to landscaping, the application is in outline form only, and therefore these amendments are not relevant when considering whether the principle of a dwelling on the site is acceptable. The agent further refers to the decision by Members to approve the erection of a new dwelling on land to the west of the site at Huckleberry Farm, but this was taken into account when determining the previous application for this site, which was made following the Huckleberry Farm decision. It is therefore officers view that nothing has changed since the previous refusal of this exact proposal, other than the weight to be applied to the Draft Local Plan. The previous application was determined on the 12th March 2020. The Council received the Inspector's report on the final modifications to the Draft Local Plan on the 23rd March 2020, and the final version of the Draft Local Plan was published on the 3rd April 2020, following which the Council have determined that they have a five years housing supply. For this reason, when compared to the previous application, less weight

should now be afforded to the extremely modest social and economic benefits achieved through the provision of a single dwelling on the site, when balanced against the environmental impact, given the Council's lack of overriding need for new housing (where contrary to policy).

The site lies outside of the built up village confines of St Nicholas-at-Wade, and within the St.Nicholas at Wade Undulating Chalk Farmland Landscape Character Area (formerly known as the Former Wantsum Channel Character Area) for which the key sensitivities and qualities as identified within the Council's Landscape Character Assessment (2017) include the openness and undeveloped character of the farmland that contributes to the essentially rural character and relatively dark skies; occasional quiet rural lanes; and long distance panoramic views, big skies and uninterrupted sea views from elevated locations.

The application site, when compared to the appeal site, lies further outside of the village. Whilst planning permission has been granted for a dwelling at Huckleberry Farm, adjacent to the site, the neighbouring site differs from the application site in that it contains agricultural buildings, and is screened by vegetation to most boundaries, thereby varying in character to the application site, which is extremely open in character. The area of land to the east of the application site would remain open, along with the land opposite the site, which forms open countryside, and as such long views of the site would be possible from both Down Barton Road, and in longer distant views across the fields.

The proposed dwelling, if permitted, would be visually divorced from the rest of the St Nicholas at Wade settlement. It would not represent in-fill development or a cluster of residential development and it would be in an area of only sporadic development. When considering the appeal site the Inspector concluded that "the bungalow's siting would be a divorced one, which visually would relate poorly with the dwellings on the northern side of Down Barton Road, given that the bungalow would be randomly sited in a field". Given the siting of the proposed bungalow within an open paddocks, which forms a "transition site between the built up area of the village and the undeveloped countryside", the Inspector concluded that the proposed development would be "contrary to Policies CC2 and D1 of the Thanet Local Plan", and that the modest contribution of a single dwelling to the Council's Housing Land Supply did not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area, and the intrinsic beauty and character of the countryside (which should be safeguarded), to which he attached great weight. The Inspector also remarked about the degree of domestication associated with the use of the dwelling, which would accentuate the incongruity of the bungalow's siting. The degree of domestication would be the same for the proposed dwelling, and if anything the impact would be more pronounced given the sites open appearance when viewed from Down Barton Road.

All matters are reserved and therefore the appearance is not known at this time and would need to be dealt with through a reserved matters application should this outline be considered acceptable. An illustrative floor and elevation plan has been submitted, which indicates that the proposed dwelling could have a rural appearance, but the concern relates not the design of a dwelling in this location, but the presence of new built form within an area that is currently open, and provides long distant views across the Landscape Character Area. No visual impact assessment has been submitted to support the application.

Given the current position of the Draft Local Plan, which can now be afforded significant weight, the social and economic benefits from the provision of a single dwelling do not outweigh the significant environmental harm resulting from the erection of a new dwelling within an open countryside location within the Landscape Character Area, and therefore does not result in sustainable development. The proposed development is therefore considered to be contrary to the Policies CC1, CC2 and D1 of the Thanet Local Plan, Policies SP24, SP26 and QD02 of the Draft Thanet Local Plan, and paragraph 170 of the NPPF.

Living Conditions

Paragraph 117 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.

The appearance, layout and scale of the dwelling has been reserved for future consideration, however, the illustrative floor plan provided does suggest that it would be possible to provide a good standard of residential accommodation for future occupiers given the available size of the site. A dwelling located within this site would be some distance from other dwellings and with appropriate boundary treatments is unlikely to have a detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers.

Local Plan policy SR5 requires new dwellings with two bedrooms or more to provide safe doorstep play space for young children. Whilst the application is only in outline form there appears to be scope to provide ample safe play space and space for clothes drying, refuse storage and storage facilities. The application does not propose boundary treatment at this stage but the erection of a means of enclosure, such as wall or fence, to provide a safe doorstep play space would result in further loss of openness within the site. Likewise the addition of bin storage and clothes drying facilities together with the domestication of the site would further introduce structures within the site resulting in the loss of open landscape.

In terms of the living conditions of the future occupiers of the proposed dwellings, Policy QD03 of the Draft Thanet Local Plan requires new development to be of an appropriate size and layout, with sufficient usable space to facilitate comfortable living conditions and meet the standards set out in Policy QD04, which are the National Described Space Standards (March 2015). Policy D1 of the Thanet Local Plan requires development to provide a high quality layout and paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires development to provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, with all windows serving primary habitable rooms required to provide an acceptable level of outlook, natural light and ventilation for the rooms. The proposed dwelling meets all of these criteria in terms of the overall floor space and window provision to habitable rooms.

Highway Issues

The application is for a single dwelling and the proposal has indicated off street parking to the front of the property and there is room within the site for the safe storage of bicycles. Given the size of the site and its boundary onto Down Barton Road it is reasonable to assume that Kent Highway Parking Standards could be met, along with adequate visibility

splays to achieve a safe access, and as such it is not considered that the proposal would adversely impact upon highway safety.

Concerns are raised with the lack of footpath provision, and the resulting lack of connectivity with the village and the services and facilities it offers. The application site is separated from the settlement by a narrow section of road, which contains no footpaths or public lighting, and would be unlikely to be attractive for pedestrians and unlikely to encourage cycling, particularly in winter months. The linkage between the site and the services and facilities in St Nicholas-at-Wade, including bus stops, is generally poor and occupiers of the proposed dwelling would in practice be very reliant on a private car.

Whilst the proposal would not be served by safe footpath links, Members have approved a dwelling on the adjacent site, which is further from the village with again no footpath link, and as such it would seem unreasonable to refuse the application on the lack of footpath links given this recent decision.

Biodiversity

No ecological information was submitted with the application, and therefore KCC Biodiversity requested the submission of a preliminary ecological appraisal. This was submitted during the application, and found that the potential for reptiles, bats or other protected species within the site was low, and as such no further survey work was required.

Ecological enhancements within the site have been recommended, including new hedgerow planting, and bird and hedgehog boxes, but these could be provided as part of the landscaping submission through the reserved matters application.

The impact upon biodiversity is therefore considered to be acceptable, and in accordance with the NPPF.

Other Matters

We haven't received consultee responses in relation to drainage or archaeology; however, we have received comments from the necessary consultees on the previous applications, and therefore their comments are still considered relevant for this application which offers the same proposal within the same site area.

Drainage

Southern Water has advised that no conditions are necessary, only an informative relating to a request for the connection to the public sewerage system being necessary.

No foul drainage details were submitted with the application, and the Environment Agency has advised that the site overlies a principal aquifer, but due to the scale, nature and setting of the proposal they have no objections to the proposal in principle, subject to a condition relating to foul water drainage and an informative relating to the discharge of domestic sewage.

Subject to this condition and informative, the impact upon the source protection zone is considered to be acceptable, and in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF.

Archaeology

The proposal is sited within an area of significant archaeological potential. The fields to the west and north contain evidence of ancient landscapes visible as crop marks on aerial photographs. These include clear evidence of prehistoric funerary monuments, enclosure, trackways and fields of unknown date, pit groups and alignments and evidence for structures. Finds in the surrounding fields include artefacts of Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and Medieval date. The main focus of activity is to the north west of Huckleberry Farm but there is still potential in this area. To the north and east the remains of WW2 defence systems are also on aerial photographs though not evident on the present area of the site. KCC Archaeology have therefore advised that a condition requiring an archaeological assessment and evaluation be carried out, followed by appropriate mitigation measures, be attached to any approval for planning permission. Subject to this safeguarding condition the impact upon archaeology is considered to be acceptable, and in accordance with the NPPF.

Contributions:

Natural England has previously advised that the level of population increase predicted in Thanet should be considered likely to have a significant effect on the interest features for which the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Special Protection Area (SPA) and RAMSAR have been identified.

Thanet District Council produced the 'The Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Plan (SAMM)' to deal with these matters, which focuses on the impacts of recreational activities on the Thanet section of the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Special Protection Area (SPA). The studies indicate that recreational disturbance is a potential cause of the decline in bird numbers in the SPA. To enable the Council to be satisfied that proposed residential development will avoid a likely significant effect on the designated sites (due to an increase in recreation) a financial contribution is required for all housing developments to contribute to the district wide mitigation strategy. This mitigation has meant that the Council accords with the Habitat Regulations.

This application does not include a Unilateral Undertaking (UU) to provide the required financial contribution for the four bedroom residential unit to mitigate the additional recreational pressure on the SPA area, as required through the appropriate assessment, and therefore in the absence of an acceptable form of mitigation to relieve the pressure, the proposed development is contrary to paragraph 177 of the NPPF and the Habitats Directive.

Conclusion

An application for the erection of a single dwelling on this site has previously been refused. Since this decision the Draft Thanet Local Plan has gained weight, and can now be given substantial weight in decision making. Based upon the information contained within the Draft Local Plan, and supported by the Inspectors' report, the Council are of the view that they

have a five years housing supply. The social and economic benefits offered through the provision of a single dwelling are therefore considered to be extremely limited.

The site is located within the countryside, outside of the village confines, and within a Landscape Character Area, which is characterised by its openness and rural appearance. The erection of a dwelling within this prominent location, which would be visible in long views along Down Barton Road and in wider views across the open countryside opposite, is considered to cause severe harm to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the valued Landscape Character Area, contrary to Policies CC1, CC2 and D1 of the Thanet Local Plan, Policies SP24, SP26 and QD02 of the Draft Thanet Local Plan, and paragraph 170 of the NPPF.

The environmental harm caused through the development is considered to significantly outweigh the extremely modest economic and social benefits provided, and is therefore not considered to be sustainable development.

The application has also failed to provide an acceptable form of mitigation to relieve the pressure on the SPA, contrary to paragraph 177 of the NPPF and the Habitats Directive.

It is therefore recommended that members refuse the application.

Case Officer

Emma Fibbens

TITLE:

OL/TH/20/0466

Project

Land North West Of Down Barton Road BIRCHINGTON Kent

