

APPLICATION NO	PA/2019/250
APPLICANT	Mr G Farmer
DEVELOPMENT	Planning permission to erect a farm manager's dwelling and associated outbuildings
LOCATION	Croft Bank Farm, Langholme Lane, Westwoodside, DN9 4EX
PARISH	Haxey
WARD	Axholme South
CASE OFFICER	Scott Jackson
SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION	Refuse permission
REASONS FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE	Member 'call in' (Cllr David Rose – significant public interest)

POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework: Sections 2, 5, 12, 14 and 16 apply.

North Lincolnshire Local Plan: Policies H5, H8, DS1, DS16, RD2, T2, T19 and LC14 apply.

North Lincolnshire Core Strategy: Policies CS1, CS2, CS3, CS5, CS6, CS7 and CS19 apply.

CONSULTATIONS

Highways: No objection, but recommend a condition stipulating that the dwelling shall not be occupied until the vehicular access and parking spaces have been completed.

Historic Environment Record: The application site lies within the Area of Special Historic Landscape Interest of the Isle of Axholme (local plan policy LC14), outside the development boundary. This area is designated for its unique historic landscape retaining the pattern of ancient open strip fields and enclosures surrounding the villages on the Isle of Axholme.

The scale of the proposed dwelling is considered to be excessive and the appearance is not in keeping with the vernacular building character of this part of the historic landscape. Because of this it would adversely affect the character, appearance and setting of the historic landscape, contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), LC14 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan and Core Strategy policy CS6. It is recommended that planning permission be refused as the application is outside the development area and would adversely affect the character, appearance and setting of the historic landscape contrary to the NPPF, local planning policies LC14, LC7 and RD2, and Core Strategy policy CS6.

Environmental Health: The application for residential development is a sensitive end use. In addition, the historical agricultural use provides reason to believe that contamination at the site may be an issue. Agricultural sites have the potential to be impacted upon by contaminants such as PAHs, Metals, Petroleum Hydrocarbons, and Asbestos which are harmful to human health. It is the developer's responsibility to assess and address any potential contamination risks; however, no supporting information has been provided that demonstrates potential risks can be reduced to an acceptable level. Recommend conditions in respect of contaminated land investigation and an agricultural occupancy condition for the dwelling.

Environment Agency: No objection subject to a condition to ensure that the development takes place in accordance with the submitted flood risk assessment and the mitigation measure set out therein.

PARISH COUNCIL

No objection, but observations were made that whilst a large building set in the open countryside, welcome the design, which appears to have taken into account a more traditional look of a North Lincolnshire country house and the inclusion of screening, which will mitigate its impact on the open countryside. Conforms to relevant policies of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan (CS5 and RD1).

PUBLICITY

The application has been advertised by site notice. No comments have been received.

ASSESSMENT

Site

The application site consists of a farm shop located in the open countryside, approximately 360 metres to the south-east of Westwoodside. The site is located within flood zone 2/3a and within the Isle of Axholme Area of Special Historic Landscape. The farm shop is constructed from timber and is located towards the northern boundary; the site also contains cattle sheds, metal storage containers and a large area of car parking to the front of the site (to the west). The site is accessed via Langholme Lane which, in turn, is accessed via Akeferry Road in Westwoodside. Within the vicinity of Langholme Lane there is an existing farmstead and other agricultural buildings within open fields. Langholme Lane is bounded by open fields with mature hedgerow boundaries. The application site itself is bounded by mature hedgerows to fields within the open countryside and to Langholme Lane itself.

History

Outline planning permission was granted for a dwelling on this land (PA/2016/1036) but the subsequent reserved matters application (PA/2018/866) was refused on the grounds that the dwelling was disproportionate in scale to the agricultural business established at the site and would result in a visually dominant form of development to the detriment of the character and appearance of the Isle of Axholme Area of Special Historic Landscape Interest. The applicant subsequently appealed against the refusal of PA/2018/866 and this appeal was determined on 20 May 2019, with the inspector dismissing the appeal and upholding the refusal of planning permission.

Proposal

Planning permission is being sought to erect a detached dwelling with a detached garage block and kennels. The proposed dwelling and outbuildings are the same as those that were proposed under the previous (refused) reserved matters application PA/2018/866, with no significant alterations in respect of the design or scale of the development.

The main issues in the determination of this planning application are the principle of development (essential need), impact on the character and appearance of the historic landscape/countryside, and flood risk.

Principle

Due to its location outside of any defined development boundary, the application site is considered to be in the open countryside for the purpose of planning. Planning permission was granted for the retention of a farm shop and associated buildings/structures in 2016 (PA/2014/0006). Outline planning permission was granted on 19 October 2016 for the erection of a farm manager's dwelling; the principle of residential development for an agricultural worker's dwelling has therefore been established on this site.

The main issue to consider is whether the proposal to erect a dwelling measuring 30.5 metres by 9.6 metres, with a ridge height of 11 metres, is proportionate to the needs of the agricultural business established at the site. A supporting statement has been submitted with the application. At paragraph 3.6 it states that the dwelling has been carefully designed to meet the needs of a busy working farm and the floor plan has been designed to cater for the working needs of the farm, while providing a good level of accommodation. Within the supporting statement the applicant has reiterated the justification put forward for the outline application for a farm worker's dwelling granted in 2016. It is acknowledged that some of the accommodation proposed within the western section of the dwelling is commensurate to the nature of the business in that it houses offices for the business. In addition, it is noted that any built development arising from the proposed dwelling will be located within close proximity of existing built development on the site. However, the proposal is for a dwelling which is 30.5 metres by 9.6 metres, with a ridge height of 11 metres. On the basis of the plans submitted with the application it is considered that neither the scale/size of the dwelling nor the level of accommodation proposed within are commensurate with the scale of the farm enterprise, which consists of a farm shop and a herd of 105 cattle. Whilst it is acknowledged that some of the ground floor accommodation encompasses rooms which could be associated with existing farm operations at the site, it is considered that the scale and size of this dwelling is not proportionate to the applicant's existing farm enterprise.

Further to the above, when determining this application the very recent appeal decision in respect of an identical proposal on the same site is a material consideration and should be afforded significant weight. In his appeal decision the inspector considered both whether the dwelling was proportionate to the agricultural business and whether the development would have an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area. In this regard the inspector made the following comments:

"While I do not doubt that a four-bedroom property is required for the farm manager and family, no compelling evidence has been provided to show that the needs of the business require two ground-floor living rooms in addition to the dining area of the kitchen/dining room, or why first-floor bedrooms require large dressing rooms and large en suite

bathrooms. There is also no compelling evidence to show why a large entrance hall and gallery landing are required, yet these elements together require a significantly larger building to accommodate them.”

The inspector goes on to state that:

“in terms of its scale in such a prominent location the building would dominate the area and would be incongruous with the surrounding open countryside. The sheer mass of the property would also detract from the historically important character of the ASHL and would not be in keeping with the size and scale of other buildings in the vicinity.”

Giving due consideration to the information submitted in support of the application and the recent appeal decision referenced above it is considered that the proposed dwelling, when considered cumulatively with the stable block and kennels, would result in a visually dominant form of built development in the open countryside, exacerbated by its ridge height of 11 metres. Furthermore, it is considered that the scale and size of the dwelling is derived from the needs of the applicant and their family rather than it being proportionate to the needs of the rural enterprise established at the site. Therefore the adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the countryside is considered to be unjustified and unacceptable.

Historic landscape

Another key matter to consider is that this dwelling would be located on land which is classed as the Isle of Axholme Area of Special Historic Landscape; this land is designated under policy LC14 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan. It is designated for its significant areas of medieval open strip fields and Turbaries, both of which are of considerable national importance. The proposed dwelling would be situated just within the former marshland on the edge of the early enclosed land surrounding Westwoodside and the ancient open strip fields lying between Haxey and Westwoodside. The marshes were drained and enclosed for farmland at the end of the 18th century, and a few scattered farms were established within this new landscape.

Policy LC14 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan states:

Within this area, development will not be permitted which would destroy, damage or adversely affect the character, appearance or setting of the historic landscape, or any of its features.

Development required to meet the social and economic needs of rural communities....will be permitted provided such development is related to the historic landscape and its features.

A high standard of design and siting in new development will be required reflecting the traditional character of buildings in the area and the character of the historic landscape, and using materials sympathetic to the locality.

The proposed dwelling, with dimensions of 30.5 metres by 9.6 metres and a ridge height of 11 metres, and its main bulk facing north and south, will result in a visually prominent and dominant form of built development in the rural landscape which is low-lying and flat in this area. In addition, it is also proposed to erect a stable block measuring 15.254 metres by 7.19 metres, with a ridge height of 4.74 metres, and a kennel measuring 9 metres by

6.5 metres, with a ridge height of 2.971 metres, to the north-west and north-east of the proposed dwelling.

The dwelling is considered to be excessive in terms of its height and scale and not consistent with the scale of rural buildings in this part of the rural landscape, and is considered to adversely affect the character, appearance and setting of the historic landscape and its features, particularly as this part of the landscape has buildings of modest scale and height. The applicant has submitted further information in support of their application; this document makes reference to a number of dwellings located within a 3.5 kilometre radius of the site which are considered by the applicant to be reflective of larger dwellings within the countryside. It is acknowledged that the supporting images are representative of larger homes in the countryside; however, each planning application is considered on its own merits, including the needs of the business, and the potential impact on the character, appearance and setting of the LC14 designated landscape.

It is considered that it has not been demonstrated (through the submission of a supporting statement) how the scale and size of this dwelling, and its accompanying stable block and kennels, reflect the traditional character of buildings in this part of the historic landscape or that the development does not adversely affect its character, appearance or setting. It is considered that the proposal, taking into account its scale, bulk, height and siting, has the potential to adversely affect the historic landscape and its features, made worse by the fact that it would be readily viewed from Langholme Lane, the site access lane to the west, which is public footpath HAXE112. As stated previously the need for such a large dwelling has not been justified.

Flood risk

The site is located within Flood Zones 2 and 3a in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. A Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted with the planning application, which demonstrates that the land level at the site is below the critical flood level established for this area and that finished floor levels would be set at 4.4 metres above Ordnance Datum (AOD). The Environment Agency has raised no objection to the proposed development on flood risk grounds. The proposal is for 'more vulnerable' development in a high flood risk zone; therefore the proposed development needs to be assessed against the sequential and the exceptions test. Given the principle of residential development for a farm worker's dwelling has been established (through the granting of outline planning permission in 2016), it is considered that the sequential and exceptions test have been passed. The Environment Agency recommends a condition, if permission is granted, to ensure the development takes place in accordance with the mitigation measures set out in the submitted flood risk assessment; in addition, no sleeping accommodation is proposed on the ground floor of the dwelling. On this basis it is considered that the proposed dwelling would be safe from flooding without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

RECOMMENDATION: Refuse permission for the following reasons:

1.

The proposed dwelling and associated outbuildings, by virtue of its scale, height, bulk, size and siting, is considered to represent a form of residential development which is disproportionate to the scale of the existing agricultural enterprise established at the site and which results in a visually dominant and excessive form of built development that is not consistent with the traditional character of buildings in this part of the historic landscape and which adversely affects the character, appearance and setting of the Isle of Axholme

Area of Special Historic Landscape Interest. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to be contrary to policies RD2, DS1 and LC14 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan, and CS2, CS3, CS5 and CS6 of the adopted Core Strategy.

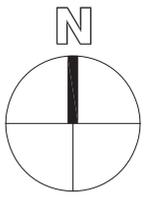


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PA/2019/250 Block plan (not to scale)



Project:	Proposed New Dwelling		Client:	Croftbank Farm		
Title:	Proposed Block Plan		Scale:	1:500	Date:	October 2017
			Drawing No.:	0005 Proposed Block Plan		