
2017/1174

Mr Doug Shelley

Development of 4 eco dwellings including 2 affordable housing units (Outline with all matters reserved apart from the means of access)

Bluebell Farm, Hermit Hill Lane, Wortley, Sheffield, S35 7DF

Site Description

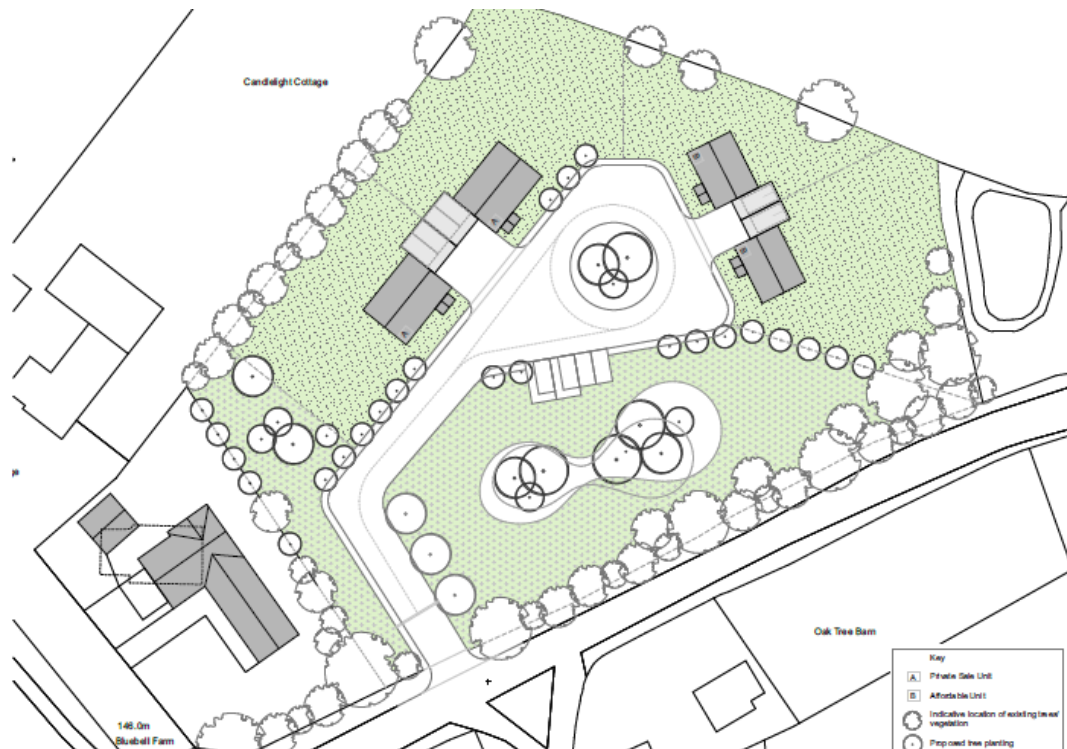
The application site is located to the North of Hermit Hill Lane and consists of a vacant field, measuring approximately 0.68Ha, mainly laid to grass. There is a small structure/field shelter adjacent to the Northern boundary of the site. Access to the site is via an existing field gate in the South West corner.

The site is bounded by open timber fencing with mature trees to the West and Southern boundaries and hedging to the North. To the West of the site is Bluebell Farm, a detached dormer bungalow set in generous gardens and to the North West is a row of terrace cottages that share the same access as Bluebell Farm. To the North East is farmland and to the East is a large residential property. To the South is Hermit Hill Lane with a farm complex beyond.



Proposed Development

The applicant seeks outline permission, with all matters except access reserved, for 4no. eco dwellings including 2no. affordable units. The following indicative plans have been provided with the application;



Policy Context

Planning decision should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. The development plan consists of the Core Strategy, saved Unitary Development Plan policies and Waste Plan. The Council has also adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes, which are other material considerations.

The Council has submitted our emerging Local Plan to the Secretary of State but we are at an early stage in the examination process. It establishes policies and proposals for the development and use of land up to the year 2033. The document is a material consideration and represents a further stage forward in the progression towards adoption of the Local Plan. As such increasing weight can be given to the policies contained within the document although, in accordance with paragraph 216 of the NPPF, the extent of this will depend on:

- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given) and;
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

Saved UDP Policies

UDP notation: Green Belt

Core Strategy

CSP 4 'Flood Risk' The extent and impact of flooding will be reduced by expecting all development proposals on brownfield sites to reduce surface water run-off by at least 30%.

CSP 16 – Affordable Housing Rural Exception Policy - We will allow affordable housing in the Green Belt in, or on the edge of, the rural settlements of Cawthorne, Dunford Bridge, Gunthwaite and Ingbirchworth, High Hoyland, Hunshelf, Largest, Oxspring, Silkstone, Stainborough, Tankersley, Troland, Wortley, Billingley, Great Houghton and Little Houghton provided that: there is a proven local need for affordable housing; and it is necessary to provide affordable housing within the specific settlement identified A sequential assessment may be required to show that there are no sites available in a more sustainable location. The developer must show that arrangements have been put in place to keep the new homes affordable.

We recognise the importance of providing affordable homes in rural settlements. However because they do not always have sites for residential development, affordable homes cannot always be secured as part of housing developments under policy CSP15. Policy CSP16 allows sites to be released specifically for affordable housing where market value homes would not be allowed. These may in some instances be on the edge of the settlement. We will require a planning obligation to make sure the homes remain affordable.

CSP 26 – New Development and Highway Improvement – New development will be expected to be designed and built to provide safe, secure and convenient access for all road users.

CSP29 – Design – High quality development will be expected, that respects, takes advantage of and enhances the distinctive features of Barnsley. Development should enable people to gain access safely and conveniently.

CSP 34 - 'Protection of Green Belt' in order to protect the countryside and open land around built up areas the extent of the Green Belt will be safeguarded and remain unchanged.

SPDs/SPGs

SPD 'Designing New Housing Development'

SPD 'Parking' provides parking requirements for all types of development.

Other material considerations

South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide - 2011

NPPF

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole; or where specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted or unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In respect of this application, the policies above are considered to reflect the 4th Core Principle in the NPPF, which relates to high quality design and good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. They also reflect the advice in paragraph 58 (general design considerations) and paragraph 64, which states that 'permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions'.

Chapter 9 of the Framework seeks to ensure that Green Belt land is protected. It sets out that the Green Belt serves the following five purposes:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Paragraphs 87, 88 & 89 go on to state 'As with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.⁸⁸ When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.⁸⁹ A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions to this include 'limited infilling in villages'.

Consultations

Wortley Parish Council – No comments

Highways – No objections subject to conditions

Policy – object – contrary to Policy

SYMAS – No objection subject to condition

Coal Authority – No objection subject to conditions

Affordable Housing – object – agree with Policy comments

Ecology – No comments

Drainage – No objection subject to conditions

Ward Councillors – no comments

Representations

The application was advertised by way of a site notice to the front of the site and letters to neighbouring properties within the immediate area. As a result of the consultation 1 letter of objection has been received, however, several neighbours have stated that they did not receive the letters despite them being posted out. The main points of concern are;

- Departure from the Development Plan
- Intrusion into the Green Belt
- Boundaries wrong on plan
- Drainage issues
- Reduced highway safety

Assessment

Principle of development

The site is within the Green Belt as allocated in the UDP proposals Maps and is also proposed to be Green Belt in the submission draft of the Local Plan.

NPPF Paragraph 89 states that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate development. Exceptions to this are:

- buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan; or
- limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

The applicant contends that the proposal complies with the exceptions set out in the final two bullet points of Paragraph 89.

Limited infill in Villages

As the proposal site lies outside the Wortley village envelope delineated on the UDP Proposals Maps (or any village defined in the Core Strategy settlement hierarchy) the proposal cannot be classified as limited infilling in a village.

Furthermore, Core Strategy Policy CSP 16 Affordable Housing Rural Exception Policy provides the local plan policy for local community needs for affordable housing. It states:

“We will allow affordable housing in the Green Belt in, or on the edge of, the rural settlements of Cawthorne, Dunford Bridge, Gunthwaite and Ingbirchworth, High Hoyland, Hunshelf, Langsett, Oxspring, Silkstone, Stainborough, Tankersley, Thurgoland, Wortley, Billingley, Great Houghton and Little Houghton provided that:

- *there is a proven local need for affordable housing; and*

- *it is necessary to provide affordable housing within the specific settlement identified*

A sequential assessment may be required to show that there are no sites available in a more sustainable location.

The developer must show that arrangements have been put in place to keep the new homes affordable.”

As the proposal site is not in or on the edge of any of the villages identified in policy CSP 16, the policy does not promote affordable housing in locations such as the proposal site. In addition, only 50% of the proposed dwellings would be affordable leaving 50% for sale on the open market. Therefore, it is not considered that the exceptions set out in penultimate bullet point of NPPF Paragraph 89 are applicable to this proposal.

Brownfield Land

With regards to the final bullet of Paragraph 89, the building identified as a stable block in the image in the applicants planning statement was of limited scale and positioned to the North West of the site. From recent site visits there is only a very small structure remaining on the site and the field is currently vacant.

The submitted indicative site plan and renderings clearly show that the 4no. eco dwellings would have a combined greater footprint and height than the previous or existing structures that have occupied the site. In addition, the stables/shelter were/are in the North West corner of the site viewed against a substantial hedge. The dwellings would be positioned across the field in areas which are currently undeveloped and open. As such, it is considered that the development of 4 eco dwellings would have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and thereby, the exceptions of the final bullet are not applicable.

Given the reason set out above, the development would be contrary to paragraph 89 of the NPPF and policies CSP 16 and CSP 34 set out in the Core Strategy, as such, the principle of the development cannot be supported.

Summary

Given the reasons set out above, the development would be contrary to paragraph 89 of the NPPF and policies CSP 16 and CSP 34 set out in the Core Strategy, as such, the principle of the development cannot be supported.

Recommendation - Refuse