



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 October 2008

by **A C Pickering** FRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State
for Communities and Local Government

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Decision date:
14 October 2008

Appeal Ref: APP/H0738/A/08/2075752

The Stables, Kirk Hill, Redmarshall, Stockton-on-Tees TS22 1FE

- 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 Mr David Holmes against the decision of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
- The application Ref 08/0298/OUT, dated 5 February 2008, was refused by notice dated 23 May 2008.
- The development proposed is an affordable housing scheme of ten residential units.

Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal.

Main issue

2. The main consideration in this case is whether there has been any material change in circumstances since the appeal for outline permission to erect affordable homes on the site was dismissed earlier this year. I note that the Council has not pursued a highway objection.

Reasons

3. The site, which is a bare field, lies outside the settlement area of Redmarshall defined by the Local Plan. It can be seen from the surrounding rural area and is plainly not part of the built-up area of the village. I agree with my colleague's view that development in this open location at the interface of the village and the countryside, even on a smaller scale than previously proposed, would be intrusive and harmful to the rural landscape.
 4. I saw that Redmarshall is a group of mainly modern dwellings and that its community facilities consist of a public house, the church, a telephone call box and a post box. I gather that there is also a nursing home, and that there is a bus service. The village is some miles from the urban centre of Stockton-on-Tees and in its present composition does not strike me as a sustainable situation where development other than the limited infilling mentioned in policy HO3 of the Local Plan might be appropriate. I think there is little doubt that the scheme proposed for the appeal site would be more reliant on Stockton and lead to additional car-borne transport. I am satisfied therefore that in the absence of special circumstances there is a strong objection to residential development in this position.
 5. The key to the appellant's argument is that because of the need for affordable homes the case should be regarded as a rural exception site of the kind
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referred to in PPG3. I accept that the assessment undertaken for the Council indicated a need for 10 affordable homes in the rural area that includes Redmarshall. But, as was concluded in the last appeal, there is no firm evidence to suggest a compelling and specific need for affordable housing in this village or others nearby, and the Taylor Review does not add significantly to the information provided by the Housing Needs Assessment. I consider that the intimated need for affordable accommodation does not outweigh the well defined planning objections, arising from the harm that would be caused to the rural character and appearance of the area and the countryside protection objectives of the rural settlement policy.

6. My conclusion is that the proposed development would be contrary to the purposes of policies GP1 and HO11 of the adopted Local Plan and should not be permitted. The unilateral undertaking provided by the appellant does not affect my conclusion on the planning merits of the appeal.

A C Pickering

Inspector