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[redacted]

Appeal by Mr J Partridge

Site address:

Gennetts Farmhouse, Gay Street Lane, North Heath, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 2HN

Ref: APP/Z3825/W/24/3342546

Applicants final comments:

Local Objections:

It is clear that several local residents are fundamentally against this proposal and thus are we believe over-emphasising the effect on their lives. They are fortunate to live in a quiet rural location, but then to try and restrict it for others is we think unreasonable.

Five houses are still only five houses and as such negligible compared to what most people have to put up with, with new estates.

The increase in traffic is also negligible and the effect on safety minimal. Even at 80 vehicle movements a day this does not compare with most rural roads. The adjacent A29 would have 80 journeys a minute at times.

The effect on nature is again negligible there being no trees in the site and numerous trees/bushes in the general area. The bat survey found no evidence of a colony.

There is the mention of the one five bedroom house, but this is at the at the far end of the site and will not be seen.

Re: the letter 'Guy Everest to [redacted]' 22nd July 2024.

NB: I will follow the order of this letter to avoid producing more paper than is necessary.

I do not understand the first paragraph where it says they were not in a position to refuse the application. They had months to do that if they really wanted to.

There is a bland comment to the effect that the site is "outside of any defined built-up area boundary"

I do not see how this can be stated when there is no boundary.

The buildings are redundant in general terms and are only used for storage because they are there. There is nothing by way of stored items that cannot be re-sited or removed altogether without affecting my client's life.

Page 2, paragraph 2; there is no defined boundary to this village and no reason to believe that Gennetts Farmhouse itself is not the edge. These houses are between the farm house and the rest of the houses.

Indeed policy 4 of the HDPF says that such a development could be supported where it adjoins an existing settlement edge.

As there is currently no neighbourhood plan this comes with Policy 4.

As to whether this is a brown field site, it does not matter, it would still be a considerable improvement on what is there.

The last paragraph on page 2 suggests that it could be acceptable under Regulation 19 and thus if there is doubt, the presumption should, we believe, be to approve.

Page 3, paragraph 6 agrees that this proposal sits on the edge of the settlement.

Re page 4 paragraphs 3 & 4; the whole point is that the houses in the settlement are all different and which is reflected in the proposal. If we put in an applications of matching houses this would be considered an estate and thus unacceptable.

Re paragraph 6; if there is no substantial harm, there should be a presumption to approve.

Highways; clearly this is the first we have seen of comments from the Local Highways Authority and as such have not had the opportunity to amend the plans. However, the suggested changes appear minimal and could be easily dealt with by a condition.

Water Neutrality; a report has been provided. It is in our opinion unreasonable to expect my client to pay the substantial cost for a bore hole at this time, for such a small development. This could easily be covered by a condition, to the effect that planning consent is subject to the satisfactory outcome of such a bore hole/testing.

Page 7 paragraph 2; the council have not identified any specific harm of consequence and this should "we think" again be an assumption to approve.

Page 7, numbered paragraph 2; seems to be at odds with "impact on neighbouring amenity" {page 6} They say poor quality design without any back up to this comment.

These are all individually designed houses appropriate to the area.

Statement of Case of West Sussex Council as Highways Authority

On several occasions they suggest that I/my client were asked to provide further information/amendments. The report was never sent to us and thus we had no opportunity to undertaken amendments. However, the suggestions and information required are relatively minor and could be subject to a condition. Indeed the Highways have suggested suitable conditions which could easily be accepted.

West Sussex County Council Consultation

Page 49, paragraph 4.14; recognises that unclassified settlements have potential for limited development.

This site complies with Page 50, 4.17 and page 64 4.18.

We now turn to the Horsham District Council Planning Framework

Sustainable Development Policy

This suggests a presumption in favour of the development.

The council made no attempt to be pro-active or jointly provide a solution. We have had to take this action to refer the application to the Planning Inspectorate because of a lack of action from Horsham District Council.

They have not shown any impacts which "would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits"

The area is within the "development hierarchy" (policy 3) and substantially complies with Policy 4 and Policy 25 and Policies 32, 33 & 34.

The properties include features from Gennetts Farmhouse.

It would appear that the majority of the owners in North Heath are not against the development and the majority of the consultations would be happy subject to minor further details or alterations, all of which could be covered by conditions.

Conclusion:

We were forced to take this action by the inability of Horsham Council to push this forward, come to a conclusion or even negotiate the situation.

We can only assume therefore that they are not entirely against the proposal. It would have been easy just to say no.

They obtained consultations, but did not progress them and the majority just require some further information.

The application appears to comply with much of the Horsham Planning Framework.

The objections from neighbours have no real basis and are just, not in my back yard.

Finally it is the government's intention to increase housing stock and this is a good place to start.

We hope therefore that the Inspector can allow this application "subject to conditions"

Stephen Bromley BSc FRICS
08/08/2024