Appeal Decision

Inquiry held on 17 - 20 April 2018 Site visit made on 20 April 2018

by H Baugh-Jones BA(Hons) DipLA MA CMLI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 May 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/X1355/W/17/3180108 Land to the east of Woodham Burn and west of A167, Newton Aycliffe

- 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 Willmott Partnership Homes against the decision of Durham County Council.
- The application Ref DM/16/02709/OUT, dated 19 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 10 February 2017.
- The development proposed is erection of up to 430 dwellings (Use Class C3) and associated access, landscaping and engineering works.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

- 2. The application is in outline with only access to be considered at this stage and I have determined the appeal on that basis. Nevertheless the appellant has provided a concept masterplan that shows how the development might broadly be laid out and in particular the general ratio of built development to open space. I have treated this as indicative information only.
- 3. The application was originally for up to 450 dwellings but this was reduced to 430 following discussions between the appellant and the Council during the application process. I have reflected this in the description of development in the above heading.
- 4. Before the Inquiry, I received three separate Statements of Common Ground (SocG) on planning, housing and landscape.
- 5. The appellant has provided an executed Section 106 Agreement that includes a number of obligations to come into effect in the event that planning permission is granted. These obligations would secure on-site open market and affordable housing, financial contributions relating to open space and highways and provision for training and employment.
- 6. The appeal proposal was refused for one reason although this comprised the Council's response to both the effects on the area's character and appearance and to the function of the Green Wedge in which the appeal site is located. Through the appeal process, the Council has raised the matter of the connectivity of the appeal proposal to shops and services. In addition there is

dispute between the parties over whether or not the Council can demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites (the 5 year HLS).

Main Issues

7. Accordingly, from all that I have read, heard and seen, the main issues are (i) the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area having regard to whether the site is or forms part of a valued landscape for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework); (ii) the effect on the function of the Green Wedge; (iii) whether the Council can demonstrate a 5 year HLS; (iv) whether the proposal would provide satisfactory access to shops and services; and (v) the planning balance.

Reasons

Planning policy

- 8. The development plan includes the saved policies of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan (1996) (LP) and the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan (2017) (NP).
- 9. Saved LP policy E4 is the only policy cited in the reasons for refusal. It seeks to normally refuse proposals for built development in a number of designated Green Wedges which provide the setting of towns and villages. The justification for the policy sets out that built development in Green Wedges will be resisted unless it is essential in connection with certain open uses; none of which are applicable to the appeal scheme.
- 10. Whilst saved policy E4 or some other version of it was not taken forward in the now paused preparation of the County Durham Plan (CDP) and does not feature in the NP, it remains an extant development plan policy and is therefore relevant to my decision. The planning SoCG¹ and the appellant's oral evidence² to the Inquiry confirm the policy's centrality to my determination of the appeal.
- 11. Although the Council has previously considered that saved policy E4 attracts limited weight, including in the Officers Report³, that assessment was made on the basis of the 'wider definition' of policies for the supply of housing, i.e. pre-Suffolk Coastal⁴. On a straightforward reading of the policy and having regard to the narrow definition of policies relevant to the supply of housing in Suffolk Coastal, whilst it may affect the operation of housing policies in much the same way as other commonly found countryside policies in other LPs, it can be distinguished from policies concerned with the supply of housing. I do not therefore consider that saved policy E4 is a 'relevant policy' for the supply of housing.
- 12. The NP was made in June 2017 and includes amongst other things, a number of policies that seek to ensure the appropriate provision of affordable housing, the continuation and enhancement of Green Corridors and that development respects landscape and townscape character. The NP includes a number of designations including Local Green Open Spaces, Green Corridors and the Aycliffe Village Areas of Separation (between Aycliffe village and Newton

² Mr Bond under my questioning

¹ Core Document 8.3

³ Core Document 1.7

 $^{^4}$ Suffolk Coastal DC v Hopkins Homes Ltd & SSCLG and Richborough Estates Partnership LLP &SSCLG v Cheshire East BC [2017] UKSC 37

- Aycliffe). The NP does not allocate sites for development. It is common ground between the parties that the NP does not bear on the principle of the proposed development.
- 13. Framework paragraph 109 includes a requirement that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by amongst other things, protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils; recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services; and minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible. The Framework also includes in paragraph 17 that planning should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Furthermore in paragraph 7, it sets out that there are three dimensions to sustainable development that give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles including contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural environment.

Character and appearance

- 14. The appeal site comprises an area of around 21 hectares of land between Woodham and Newton Aycliffe. The site is in agricultural use although at my site visit, I observed that it appeared generally unmanaged. There is a distinct change in levels across the site as it rises to the east from Woodham Burn (the Burn) to the A167 which borders the site's eastern edge. The Burn is a meandering watercourse that forms the focus for a green corridor which runs between Woodham and Newton Aycliffe. The site is bisected by a number of hedgerows although these mainly feature in its southern part. There are also a number of trees within the site including some non-native mature Cypress.
- 15. Although the site does not have formal public access, it is evident that it is used by local people for informal recreation. The indicative masterplan shows housing spreading to the east away from a new area of public open space that would generally follow the alignment of the Burn. A new vehicular access would be formed directly off the A167.
- 16. A permissive path runs alongside the Burn and there are clear views into the site at a number of points along this path through gaps in vegetation and where tree cover is sparse. I observed at both my unaccompanied and accompanied site visits that the permissive path is a very well-used local route. From this path, because of the rising topography, there are no views beyond the A167. There are glimpsed views into the site from the A167 where there are gaps in the roadside vegetation. Notably, the road sits at a higher level than the site and this also allows for views into it over the lower growing sections of hedgerow both from the footpath along the road and from passing vehicles.
- 17. The topography provides a sense of containment of the site, which in combination with hedgerows and trees creates a smaller scale and more intimate character to this landscape compared to the much more open expanses of farmland to the east beyond the A167. Thus the area within which the site is located has a distinct character close to the built-up areas of Woodham and Newton Aycliffe.
- 18. There is no dispute between the parties that the proposed development would affect the site's current character and appearance by changing it from

- agricultural land to an area of housing. However, dispute remains on the level of any adverse effects.
- 19. I concur with the landscape evidence of both parties that the effects of the proposal on the landscape would be localised. However, the topographical containment of the land gives it a close relationship to the settlement edge and its open countryside character can be readily appreciated from the permissive path next to the Burn and from the A167. To my mind, this only serves to heighten the importance of the site's contribution to the openness between Woodham and Newton Aycliffe.
- 20. The formation of the new access from the A167 and the resultant loss of about 85 metres of hedgerow and a significant number of trees, would open up the site to greater extent than is currently the case. However, although the masterplan is indicative, it nonetheless shows that a substantial belt of planting could take place along the eastern edge of the site. Whilst this would take time to mature, it would eventually screen much of the development in these views and only direct views into the site from the point around the access would be possible.
- 21. However, a perception, of the existence of an extensive built development from around the local area would remain. Furthermore, the existing hedgerow field boundaries would be subsumed into a large area of housing and their perceptible qualities as part of this landscape would be very significantly diminished. Furthermore, views towards the line of vegetation along the Burn from the A167 would be lost.
- 22. The change from an area of attractive verdant countryside that contains elements of a historic field pattern and an unfettered meander of the Burn to one substantially covered with housing would in my view, cause serious harm to the area's character and appearance.
- 23. Dispute remains over whether the site is a valued landscape for the purposes of Framework paragraph 109. There was considerable reference made by the parties to Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3 (GLVIA 3) with both placing heavy reliance on the range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscapes as set out in Box 5.1 of those guidelines. Whilst this is useful guidance, it does not provide a standard approach or override the exercise of judgement. Indeed, this is reflected in the guidelines themselves.
- 24. The site lies within the Tees Lowlands Landscape Character Area (LCA) and within the Lowland Plain Broad Landscape Type (BCT) as defined in the Durham Landscape Character Assessment (2008) (LCA)⁵. The spatial landscape strategy for the area as set out in the County Durham Landscape Strategy (2008) (LS)⁶ is conserve and restore. Thus, the site falls within an area of landscape judged to have some valued attributes (as ascribed in the LS) but which are in poor condition. The site is not subject to any designations for its scenic value or landscape character although I acknowledge that this is not an indicator of the absence of value.
- 25. The course of the Burn, where it runs along the site's edge has not been subject to alteration, for example through canalising. Furthermore, the location

⁶ Core Document 4.5

⁵ Core Document 4.4

of hedgerows within the appeal site accords with those shown on the 1860 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map. Whilst they only feature in the southern part of the site, they are clearly perceptible from elsewhere within it and from the A167. Although other hedgerows shown on the historic map have been lost over time⁷, the remaining ones are a clear remnant of a historic field pattern that contribute to defining the character of the landscape between the built-up areas and the A167. This is reflected in the key characteristics of the Lowland Plain BCT. These features make a positive contribution to the site's qualitative value. I also heard evidence that the site is valued by local residents for its scenic qualities and recreational value.

- 26. Having said all of that, from both within and around the site, the urban edge is omnipresent even though it does not appear as a continuous line of built form when looking west across the site. The A167 also exerts its urbanising influence, particularly around the eastern part of the appeal site but it is also possible to see traffic passing along the road and hear the noise it generates from the permissive footpath next to the Burn.
- 27. Consequently, although the character of the site is markedly different to the agricultural areas to the east of the A167 and I am in no doubt that the landscape here is valued by local residents, the features within the site are not so strong that they set this landscape apart from mere 'countryside'. The landscape here does not demonstrate sufficient attributes to elevate its value above the norm such that it is a valued landscape for the purposes of Framework paragraph 109. However, this specific finding does not affect my overall finding of harm to the area's character and appearance.

Green Wedge

- 28. The justification for saved policy £4 explains that the role of Green Wedges is to maintain the distinction between the countryside and built-up areas, prevent the coalescence of adjacent places and provide a rural setting to development. It goes on to say that they also provide a link between the countryside and built-up areas and can be a valuable recreation and wildlife resource.
- 29. I see no overall conflict between these objectives and those set out in paragraphs 7 and 17 of the Framework. It was put to me that saved policy E4 was borne out of the extent of development envisaged in a LP with a time horizon only to 2006 and does not reflect the more flexible Framework approach to development outside settlements. In my view, the policy still performs a valuable role in safeguarding the attractive countryside setting of this part of Woodham and Newton Aycliffe and preventing the coalescence of these settlements. I therefore give it very significant weight.
- 30. The proposal provides for a green corridor along the Burn that would range between about 94m and 155m in width. The appellant contends that this would maintain the separation between Woodham and Newton Aycliffe and would thus perform the role of a Green Wedge.
- 31. In purely functional terms, it would maintain the physical separation between Woodham and the proposed development. However, it would not be of sufficient width to prevent the experience of travelling across and through that space being influenced to varying extents by built development on both sides.

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⁷ See Mr Day's Proof Document DCC/2/2 Figure 4 for a comparison

It would therefore be perceived more as a broad but linear green space running through a built-up area rather than maintaining the semblance of a much more expansive rural landscape interjecting between settlements.

- 32. For these reasons, I do not consider that the proposal would provide a rural setting to development or maintain a satisfactory rural link between the countryside and built-up areas.
- 33. In reaching this conclusion, I have had regard to the findings of the Inspector in 1995 in his report on the objections to the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan⁸. Although those findings were made in very different planning policy circumstances, having regard to the justification for saved policy E4 as I have already said, the role of Green Wedges remains valid and is broadly consistent with Framework paragraphs 7 and 17.
- 34. Whilst I accept that the amount of new planting along the proposed Burn corridor and the A167 could enhance biodiversity interest and that there would be formal public access through it, overall the proposal would not fulfil the role of a Green Wedge as couched in the justification for saved policy E4. The proposal would have a very significant adverse effect on the function of the Green Wedge and thus runs counter to that policy.

HLS

- 35. It is common ground that the Council can only demonstrate a 5 Year HLS if applying the Government's proposed standard methodology for calculating Objectively Assessed Housing Need (QANN)⁹. Using this method, the OAHN for County Durham would be 1,368 dwellings. The Council's own evidence and that of the Northern Housing Consortium identifies an aspiration of a 73% Economic Activity Rate (EAR). Notably the 1,368 figure is well below all of the values for OAHN put forward in the Council's Issues and Options consultation document as part of the CDP¹⁰.
- 36. If I were to agree with the Council on the method of calculating OAHN, the Housing SoCG¹¹ sets out that it would result in a 6.24 year HLS, whereas with an OAHN of 1,629 (based on the most up to date household projections), the HLS would be 4.75 years.
- 37. Evidence put to the Inquiry demonstrates that Council maintains its economic growth aspirations¹². This is borne out by its response¹³ to the consultation on *Planning for the right homes in the right places* wherein it argued for an approach that factored in the local circumstances in County Durham. It seems clear to me that housing numbers may well need to be uplifted above the OAHN figure of 1,368 in order to align with the EAR aspiration. To do otherwise could result in an imbalance between economic and housing growth.
- 38. At the Inquiry, the Council suggested that the standard methodology is the one very likely to be taken forward in forthcoming national policy and that (i) it will provide the context for the preparation of a new local plan; and (ii) it would be appropriate to adopt in the context of the appeal. I note that the Government's

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⁸ Core Document 3.5

⁹ Planning for the right homes in the right places (Core Document 6.6)

 $^{^{10}}$ See paragraph 33, Tab C of the Late Additions Folder

¹¹ Core Document 8.5

 $^{^{\}rm 12}$ Both Mr Bennett and Mr Harding in cross examination

¹³ ID 9

- response to the consultation clearly states that it expects the standard methodology to be used unless there are exceptional circumstances that justify an alternative approach.
- 39. The Council is yet to formally adopt a position on using the standard methodology. Draft Planning Practice Guidance (DPPG)¹⁴ says that there may be circumstances where it is justifiable to identify need above the need figure identified by the standard method and given the clearly evidenced economic growth aspirations in County Durham, I see no compelling reason to dismiss the possibility of the Council seeking an uplift in housing numbers to align with its envisaged EAR.
- 40. DPPG also goes on to say that the need figure generated by the standard methodology should be considered as the minimum starting point in establishing a need figure for the purposes of plan production. The method relies on past growth trends and therefore does not include specific uplift to account for factors that could affect those trends in the future. It seems to me that this is precisely the circumstance in County Durham and that the standard methodology figure of 1,368 does not account for the likely reality of the situation going forward.
- 41. However, irrespective of all this, whilst I accept that the Draft Framework and standard OAHN methodology are closer to coming into being than when considered by the Inspector in the Dalton Heights appeal¹⁵, it is important to bear in mind that this expression of emerging national policy has not yet come into force. Until such time as it has, it would be premature to apply it in my determination of this appeal.
- 42. Taking this into account together with my other findings on this third main issue and those of the Inspector in the Sedgefield Community Hospital appeal¹⁶ which reaffirmed those of the Dalton Heights Inspector, I conclude that the figure of 1,629 is the one that currently provides the best evidence of the OAHN for County Durham
- 43. The Council's assessment of supply indicates that 11,174 net new homes could be built within County. Durham over the next five years. The appellant challenged whether some of the sites included in this calculation would be deliverable. However, the evidence put forward to support this claim is not substantiated by any meaningful data informed by site specific circumstances. In contrast, the Council has undertaken a bespoke analysis of each individual site in the trajectory and has made deductions to allow for lapsed permissions and lower than anticipated development rates. The Council's supply calculation is confined to those with planning permission or at an advanced application stage. I therefore consider this to be the more robust approach out of the main parties, having also had regard to footnote 11 of the Framework and the Court of Appeal's judgement in the *St Modwen* case¹⁷.
- 44. On the basis of the appellant's calculations which are founded on the 1,629 figure, the overall 5 year housing requirement would be 11,768. This takes into account the backlog against the relevant Regional Spatial Strategy figure of 1,330, the shortfall between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2018 along with the

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¹⁴ Core Document 6.7, page 26

¹⁵ App/X1355/W/16/3165490 (Tab D of the late additions folder)

¹⁶ APP/X1355/W/16/3163598 (Core Document 9.3)

¹⁷ Core Document 10.15

agreed application of a 20% buffer. When assessed against the anticipated 11,174 net housing completions, there is a difference of minus 594 equating to a HLS 4.75 years as set out in the Housing SoCG.

Access to shops and services

- 45. It is accepted by the Council that the appeal site is located within convenient walking and/or cycling distance to shops and services and there are also bus stops nearby. The LP and the 2016 Issues and Options report¹⁸ state that Newton Aycliffe benefits from a wide range of shops and services. The very large Aycliffe Business Park lies immediately to the south of Newton Aycliffe and is reputed to be one of the largest in the north-east. I therefore accept that Woodham/Newton Aycliffe is a suitable location for housing growth.
- 46. However, the Council argues that the links between the proposed development and the town would be unattractive thus discouraging their use. At my site visit, I observed that there is good and level access to the permissive footpath alongside the Burn from the existing built-up area. Many of these routes are through green spaces. I have no compelling evidence to indicate that the proposed routes from the development to link with these other routes and thus allow for walking and cycling access into town would not be suitably surfaced or that they would be prohibitive because of adverse topography. They would also provide satisfactory access to frequent bus services for travelling to Newton Aycliffe town centre before onward journeys to Darlington, Spennymoor, Sunderland and Peterlee. This would provide a satisfactory alternative to the car for travelling further afield to work and to access services in the larger centres.
- 47. I took the opportunity at my unaccompanied site visit to walk to the Tesco Extra store, which is the closest large grocery store to the site. It is reasonable to conclude that it would provide the focus for day-to-day shopping for occupants of the proposed development. It would be a challenging walk because of the distance involved if laden with bags of shopping and although cycling would be an option, it would be an unattractive proposition during periods of inclement weather. Although the number 7 bus service operates along Woodham Way and provides a 15 minute frequency service into the town centre, it is a 600m walk from the site, which could be discouraging to some people. Nevertheless, whilst a number of the development's future occupants may elect to use the car for regular day-to-day shopping, such trips would be of relatively short duration.
- 48. Taking all of this in the round, I consider that the proposal would not result in an unsustainable pattern of travel and I find no conflict with the development plan or the Framework.

Planning obligations

49. At the Inquiry, the appellant submitted an executed Section 106 Agreement that includes a number of obligations to come into effect in the event that planning permission is granted. I have considered these in light of the Framework, Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (the CIL Regulations).

¹⁸ County Durham Issues and Options Stage Strategic Housing Market Assessment Part 1, Final Report June 2016

- 50. Saved policy H19 encourages developers to provide an appropriate variety of house types and sizes, including the provision of affordable housing. NP policy H8 requires proposals for 11 or more dwellings to provide an element of affordable housing to meet a defined local need. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2016) establishes that 10% affordable housing provision in the area within which the site sits is necessary. I am satisfied that the affordable housing obligation is necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, is directly related to the development and is fairly and reasonably related to it in scale and kind. It therefore meets the statutory tests set out in paragraph 204 of the Framework.
- 51. The open space contribution would provide for the improvement, enhancement and provision of off-site play, allotment and sporting facilities. This is supported by saved policies D8, L1 and L2 along with NP policy H9. The financial contribution that the planning obligation would provide is based on the targets within the Council's Open Space Needs Assessment (2010) taking into account the number of people a development of 430 dwellings would generate.
- 52. The off-site highways contribution would provide for capacity improvements to Rushyford Roundabout in accordance with saved policy D3 and Framework paragraph 32. The need for these works has been established in the appellant's Transport Assessment and the financial contribution would mitigate the impact of the development on Rushyford Roundabout
- 53. I am satisfied on the basis of the evidence that the open space and highways contributions sought would not be prohibited by the pooling restrictions in CIL Regulation 123. These obligations are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, are directly related to the development and are fairly and reasonably related to it in scale and kind. Thus they accord with the Framework paragraph 204 tests and with CIL Regulation 122.
- 54. The obligations also include provision for training and it is agreed by the parties that this is a voluntary contribution outside of any development plan policy requirement. As such, even if I were allowing the appeal, it would not form part of my reasoning for the grant of permission. As I am dismissing the appeal, with the exception of affordable housing and open space, I do not consider the obligations further.

Other Matters

- 55. Framework paragraph 215 says that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the Framework. My findings in relation to the consistency of saved policy E4 with the Framework accord with those of the Inspector in the Beacon Lane, Sedgefield appeal¹⁹. Moreover, the Inspector examining the Cheshire East Local Plan found consistency with a number of Framework policies in relation to Strategic Green Gaps²⁰. I do not see any clear difference between the objectives of the Strategic Green Gaps policy considered by that Inspector and the intentions of the Council's Green Wedge policy at play in this appeal.
- 56. The appeal scheme would provide market and affordable housing in an area of housing shortfall. These are individually capable of attracting significant weight in favour of the proposal. However, the Council has identified a number of 'in

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¹⁹ Tab C of the Late Additions folder

²⁰ Core Document 7.4

the pipeline' housing schemes and can demonstrate that the average number of dwellings granted permission across the last 5 years is around 3,920 (including those subject to Section 106 Agreements). This demonstrates that the Council is putting considerable effort into taking steps to ensure that homes are built. That said, the HLS shortfall nonetheless carries significant weight.

- 57. In terms of economic benefits, the proposal would provide jobs during construction and a residual benefit to the vitality of the local economy following the development's occupation. The appellant quantifies the number of jobs as 250 directly and indirectly supported for a period of 7 years. Whilst these benefits are not unique to the appeal scheme as they would flow from any housing development on the same scale in County Durham, the location of the proposed new homes would relate well to the nearby employment area in contributing to the employee base from which to draw. Overall, these are real benefits that attract significant weight.
- 58. The Framework summarises the social role of sustainable development as supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being. The appellant highlighted a letter from the head teacher of a local school outlining that it would benefit from increased pupil numbers. However, there is no hard evidence to demonstrate that the school would actually suffer without the appeal scheme and I give such benefits limited weight. Nevertheless, the proposal would deliver a wider choice of homes in an area where there are a good range of shops and services and I consider that the proposal would meet the social role of sustainable development such that it attracts significant weight.
- 59. There would be environmental benefits in relation to formal public access and a modest enhancement to biodiversity and they can be given moderate weight. I also give moderate weight to the enhancement of open space provided for by the off-site financial contribution. It was also put to me that the proposal would improve the drainage of the site. However, it is unclear whether poor drainage is such an issue that it warrants anything more than limited weight.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 60. The absence of a 5 year HLS is enough to trigger the operation of Framework paragraph 14. Given that I have not found the site to comprise a valued landscape, I do not need to address the parties' respective arguments over whether Framework paragraph 109 is a 'restrictive policy' for the purposes of footnote 9. There are no specific policies in the Framework that indicate development should be restricted and accordingly, the tilted balance in Framework paragraph 14 is the one I have applied.
- 61. The proposal would result in serious landscape harm that would adversely affect the area's character and appearance. The proposal would not contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural environment and would thus be at odds with these aspects of Framework paragraphs 7 and 17. It would also have a very significant adverse effect on the function of the Green Wedge. I give very substantial weight to the proposal's conflict with saved policy E4.

62. Although many other policies of the LP and NP are referenced in the SoCG, the fact that they may not be offended by the proposal does not mean significant conflict with one development plan policy is not sufficient to prevent the grant of planning permission. I consider that the adverse effects of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits. The development plan and the Framework taken as a whole march together in leading me to conclude that the appeal scheme would not be sustainable development. Consequently, the appeal does not succeed.

Hayden Baugh-Jones

Inspector



APPEARANCES

FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:

John Barrett of Counsel Instructed by Clare Cuskin,

Solicitor, Legal and Democratic

Services, Durham County

Council

He called

John Day MLA Senior Landscape Officer,

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Thomas Bennett MRTPI Principal Policy Officer,

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Instructed by Emma O'Gorman,

FOR THE APPELLANT:

Sasha White of Queens Counsel

He called

Jeremy Smith CMLI Director, SLR Consulting Ltd

Douglas Bond MRTPI Partner, Woolf Bond

Planning LLP

Pinsent Masons

INTERESTED PERSONS:

Cheryl Blakey Local resident

Councillor John D Clare Member, Durham County

Council

Christine Walton Great Aycliffe Town Council

Councillor Arun Chandran Great Aycliffe Town Council

Lee Patrick Local resident

DOCUMENTS

- ID1 Rebuttal Note by Mr Bond in response to the evidence and rebuttal notes from Mr Bennett and Mr Harding (appellant)
- ID2 Full copy of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan 1996 (appellant)
- ID3 Saved and expired policies from the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan 1996 (LPA)
- ID4 Regional Planning Guidance for the Northern Region, September 1993 (appellant)
- ID5 Un-executed copy of the Section 106 Agreement (appellant and LPA)
- ID6 Site Location Plan Drawing No 21505 AL(0)001 Revision B and Proposed Site Access Intervisibility and Forward visibility Drawing No A095513 91 C P003 Revision C (appellant)
- ID7 Application of proposed formula for assessing housing need, with contextual data (appellant)
- ID8 Extract from Proof of Evidence of Ian Henry Lyle BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI in relation to appeal reference APP/X1355/W/16/3150609 (appellant)
- ID9 Durham County Council response to Question 1 of Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places (appellant)
- ID10 Comparison of projections for Durham from 2012 and 2014 (appellant)
- ID11 Area Planning Committee (Central and East) Agenda Tuesday 10 April 2018 (LPA)
- ID12 National Planning Policy Framework Draft text for consultation (MHCLG March 2018) (LPA)
- ID13 National Planning Policy Framework consultation proposals (MHCLG March 2018) (LPA)
- ID14 Newton Aycliffe Worthern Area Study Proposals Map (Councillor Arun Chandran)
- ID15 Presentation from Councillor John D Clare
- ID16 Newton Aycliffe and Woodham Proposals Map extract (LPA)
- ID17 Executed copy of the Section 106 Agreement (appellant)
- ID18 Closing submission on behalf of the local planning authority
- ID19 Closing submissions of the appellant