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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 March 2014

**by Mr Keri Williams BA MA MRTPI**

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

**Decision date: 23 April 2014**

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### **Appeal Ref: APP/D3505/A/13/2209058 Russettes, Hadleigh Road, Ipswich, IP2 0BT**

- 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 G Cook against the decision of Babergh District Council.
- The application Ref.B/13/00774/OUT, dated 3 July 2013, was refused by notice dated 13 September 2013.
- The development proposed is described in the application as 'Demolition of an existing dwelling. Erection of 12 dwellings with access from Ventriss Close and erection of 2 dwellings with access from Hadleigh Road.'

**Summary of Decision: The appeal is dismissed.**

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### **Preliminary Matters**

1. The application for costs made by the appellant against the Council is the subject of a separate Decision.

### **Background**

2. The appeal site comprises about 0.48 hectares of land to the north-west of Hadleigh Road. It is within the parish of Sproughton and on the fringe of Ipswich. The proposal is in outline. Approval is sought for the access but scale, layout, landscaping and appearance are reserved matters. The submitted drawings show 14 houses and provide an indicative layout. 12 of the houses would be served by an access off Ventriss Close and the remaining 2 by an access from Hadleigh Road.

### **Main Issue**

3. A number of the Council's reasons for refusing the planning application have been addressed. The appellant has submitted a Unilateral Undertaking which deals with contributions to education and public open space provision. The Council has not objected to the content of the Unilateral Undertaking. A Phase 1 Land Contamination Assessment has been undertaken. Subject to the carrying out of its recommendations prior to the commencement of development, which could be secured by condition, the Council does not maintain its objection on this issue. The outstanding matter, and the main issue in this appeal, is therefore the effect of the development on the provision of affordable housing in the area.

## Reasons

4. The development plan for the area has changed since planning application B/13/00774/OUT was determined in September 2013. The Babergh Local Plan 2011-2031 Core Strategy and Policies was adopted in February 2014. Policy CS19 deals with affordable homes. Amongst other things it requires all residential development to provide 35% affordable housing. Although the policy refers to the scope for the setting of individual targets in Area Action Plans or Site Allocations Development Plan Documents, nothing is submitted to show any such target relevant to this case. The policy explains that a commuted sum will be required if affordable homes cannot be provided on-site. It also provides a mechanism to determine an appropriate level of provision where development viability is an issue.
5. The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) is a material consideration and supports sustainable development. It seeks to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes and to boost significantly the supply of housing. Framework paragraph 50 refers to planning to meet the needs of different groups in the community. With regard to affordable housing, it advises Councils, where they have identified a need, to set policies for meeting the need on-site or by off-site provision. Policy CS19 is broadly consistent with this approach.
6. In this case the proposal does not make any provision for affordable housing on the site or by means of contribution to off-site provision. Nor is development viability evidence submitted which might support a level of provision lower than the 35% specified in policy CS19. The development therefore conflicts with policy CS19.
7. The appellant contends that the Council has not provided up-to-date evidence of a need for affordable housing in the area. The Council's evidence refers to a Housing Needs Survey of 2008 indicating that, in addition to those registered with the Council for affordable housing, the housing market excluded many other families and single person households. While the highest need for affordable housing was in the west of the District, there was a strong demand throughout its area. The Council says that, in September 2013, there were 1,349 households registered with it for affordable housing. Reference is also made to a September 2013 report alluding to 10 applicants for affordable housing identifying Sproughton as an area where they wish to live. A further 20 Ipswich applicants would consider bidding for accommodation in the Sproughton area.
8. I agree with the appellant that the Council's Housing Needs Survey is dated. On the other hand, policy CS19 is very recently adopted and is a development plan policy applying throughout the District. Its supporting text refers to affordable housing as a key priority and to a substantial need for it in the District. That need is expected to persist throughout the plan period and not to be addressed through predicted supply. No substantive evidence is submitted to suggest that there is unlikely to be a need for affordable housing. The Council's evidence shows a substantial number of households were registered for such housing in 2013. While the number of those expressing a wish for the Sproughton area is relatively small, the site is also well placed to contribute to meeting need arising in Ipswich. I conclude on this issue that the development would be materially harmful to the supply of affordable housing.

### **Overall Conclusion**

9. The development would generate economic activity and contribute to the supply of housing in a sustainable location. I have also found that, subject to appropriate conditions and taking into account the Unilateral Undertaking, it would be acceptable with regard to contaminated land and contributions to education and public open space provision. However, these conclusions are outweighed by my conclusion on affordable housing. Having regard to the above and to all other matters raised the appeal should therefore not succeed.

### **Formal Decision**

10. I dismiss the appeal.

*K Williams*

INSPECTOR

Richborough Estates