



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 December 2020

by S M Holden BSc(Hons) MSc CEng MICE CTPP FCIHT MRTPI

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

Decision date: 1 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/X0360/W/19/3240232

Land to rear of Diana Close, Spencers Wood RG7 1HP

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Bewley Homes PLC & HP Carter Settlement against the decision of Wokingham Borough Council.
- The application Ref 171004, dated 31 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 30 April 2019.
- The development proposed is erection of 24 dwellings with associated access, landscaping and parking.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. During the period that the Council was assessing the application, revised plans were submitted and accepted. I have therefore determined the appeal on the basis of the plans referred to in the Council's decision notice.
3. Three of the Council's reasons for refusal related to matters which could be addressed by planning obligations, namely provision of affordable housing, contributions towards employment skills development and mitigation measures in respect of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBHSPA). The latter would include contributions towards the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring programme (SAMM) and provision of the Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) at Langley Mead. A completed S106 agreement was submitted on 11 December 2020 which had been endorsed by the owners of the appeal site, the appellants, the Council and the University of Reading as landowners of the SANG. The agreement has therefore addressed the Council's objections in relation to those issues. I have taken the agreement into account in reaching my decision.
4. Since the application was determined the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) associated with the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) at Burghfield has been expanded. The application site lies within the redefined DEPZ area. The Council indicated that it would also have refused the application on the grounds of the increased risk to the safety of additional residents living within the enlarged DEPZ. Consequently, I gave the parties an opportunity to comment on the implications of this change and have taken their responses into account in my determination of the appeal.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are:

- a) the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, including protected trees;
- b) the suitability of the site for residential development having regard to local and national planning policy for the delivery of housing;
- c) the suitability of the site having regard to its location in relation to the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) associated with the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) at Burghfield.

Reasons

Character and appearance

6. The appeal site is approximately half of an open, flat field that lies beyond the settlement boundary of Spencers Wood. Immediately to the north of the site is Kiln Lane; a footpath/bridleway that connects the village to the countryside and woodland to the west. To the east is Diana Close a small cul-de-sac of 8 detached dwellings from which it is proposed to provide access to the development. To the south is a recently completed development of 120 dwellings which was granted on appeal¹ in 2015, referred to within the evidence as Beech Hill and Langford Park. For consistency I will refer to it as Langford Park.
7. The site is part of a character area identified by the Council's adopted Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) as Spencers Wood Settled and Farmed Clay. This area is characterised by an irregular field pattern primarily used for grazing, enclosed by hedges and including rural lanes, bridleways and footpaths. It is not subject to any local or national designation that affords it special protection. Nevertheless, it has intrinsic character and beauty that forms part of the countryside outside Spencers Wood and is part of the rural setting of the village.
8. The northern boundary of the appeal site is enclosed by vegetation and trees, including several veteran ones, alongside Kiln Lane. There is a line of ash trees immediately to the east of the boundary within the rear gardens of houses in Diana Close. These distinctive bands of trees, which include several oaks and ash, have a significant amenity value and some are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).
9. As far as the entrance to Oak Tree Cottage, Kiln Lane takes the form of an unmetalled track between rear gardens enclosed by fences and other vegetation. Beyond Oak Tree Cottage and the small play area to the north, it takes on a more rural character. The line of trees along the appeal site's boundary continues beyond it and along the footpath/bridleway with gaps in the lower vegetation that provide glimpses of the open undeveloped field. Sunlight currently penetrates onto the track so that it does not feel completely enclosed. The undeveloped field therefore provides an important physical and visual buffer between the established part of Spencers Wood and the development at Langford Park.

¹ APP/X0360/2209286

10. The proposal would bring domestic gardens and parking areas close to the footpath/bridleway and the existing vegetation. Additional vegetation along the boundary with Kiln Lane is proposed as part of the landscaping scheme to screen the development site from the footpath/bridleway. However, the proximity of the houses and the extra landscaping would significantly erode the existing character of the bridleway by reducing its connectedness with the open countryside, making it feel more enclosed as well as introducing residential activities adjacent to it. It would also significantly diminish the field's role as a buffer between the edge of the existing settlement and the recently completed development at Langford Park.
11. The proposed dwellings would be beyond the crowns of most of the large and mature trees along Kiln Lane but the small gardens, particularly those on Plots 22-24 would still feel enclosed by them. This would increase the risk of requests for the trees to be pruned or even removed, eroding the amenity value of this attractive feature on the edge of the village. The proposal would therefore fail to respect the important role that Kiln Lane fulfils in providing a transition between the built-up area and the open countryside.
12. The western boundary of the proposal would be a new, straight field boundary in the form of a buffer zone between the development and the remainder of the field. The intention is that this would be planted with native species to provide a green edge to the development and habitat for reptiles. However, it would appear artificially straight when compared with the other boundaries and would be too narrow to enable it to be maintained easily. I was not persuaded that it would deliver significant environmental benefits or habitat enhancement.
13. The tree belt immediately to the west of Diana Close comprises a single row of ash trees which screen the edge of the existing settlement from the open countryside. Although these trees are not especially large, one would be lost to provide access to the site and two of the remainder would be cut back. The reduction in the number and spread of the trees along this boundary would diminish their positive contribution to the area's appearance. It would also reduce the role that they would play in providing effective landscaping between the very different patterns of development on the site and within Diana Close. Moreover, the proximity of the row of terraced houses on Plots 1-3 to these trees means they would have an overbearing and enclosing effect on the small gardens of these dwellings. This would increase the risk that there would be long-term pressure to prune or remove them to the detriment of the character and appearance of the wider area.
14. The site is not visible from Beech Hill Road as it is separated from it by Diana Close. This existing cul-de-sac is a small development of good-sized detached houses in well-proportioned plots with mature front gardens. They are set out in an informal layout around a narrow street with no footpath. Access to the appeal site would be through the cul-de-sac and would result in the loss of one of the protected ash trees. Unlike Diana Close the development would have a mix of terraced, semi-detached and detached houses in small plots. Most would be set immediately behind the footpaths fronting the proposed streets. The space for landscaping would be limited resulting in a sterile, urban form of development, where the public realm would be dominated by hard surfacing. Indeed, another protected tree would be lost in order to provide a parking area for 5 vehicles between Plots 22 and 23.

15. Several of the gaps between the dwellings would be required almost exclusively for parking spaces, some of which would be set out in a tandem arrangement. The limited space available for vehicles to manoeuvre would reduce opportunities for softening the area's appearance with landscaping, thereby adding to the visibility and prominence of hard surfacing within this constrained layout. In other places fences to provide privacy for rear gardens would be adjacent to the footway. This would increase the sense of enclosure within the street scene and reinforce the development's bland appearance, with landscaping largely confined to areas near the site's boundaries.
16. The layout would predominantly reflect that which has been adopted within the much larger Langford Park development but without any shared open space. The small plots, particularly those that adjoin the rear gardens of Nos 8-10 Diana Close would appear cramped. This would be incongruous and awkward given their proximity to the existing, more open and spacious pattern of development in Diana Close. Furthermore, the green margin on the edge Diana Close would be lost in order to construct a footpath. This is needed to provide an adequate pedestrian link into the development. However, it would be detrimental the character of this small self-contained development.
17. The harm to the open countryside would primarily arise from the transformation of a grassed field to a residential estate of 2-storey dwellings. The appellant's Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) acknowledges that the magnitude of change at the construction stage would be High. However, it is suggested that as this would be for only a limited period, the significance of this effect would be Substantial to Moderate Adverse. In the longer term the appellant contends that as the site would be visually contained, a new settlement edge would be established on the site's western edge. The LVIA therefore considers that the impacts on the wider landscape would be Low, even during construction and Very Low post completion, leading to a Negligible effect 10 years later.
18. Even if I was to accept that the effects on the wider landscape are limited due to the site's partial enclosure by existing development, I consider that the character of Kiln Lane would be fundamentally altered. It would appear more enclosed, due to the need to introduce additional vegetation and landscaping. Views from it towards the open countryside would be significantly reduced and it would be adversely affected by the proximity of the dwellings with their physical bulk, the presence of domestic gardens and the associated comings and goings of future residents. Added to this would be the risk that trees along Kiln Lane and to the rear of the Diana Close gardens would be pruned. This would be to the detriment of their contribution to the setting of the village.
19. In addition, the proposal would introduce a pattern of development that would be finer grained and more intense than that within Langford Park and significantly at odds with that within Diana Close. The proportion of land used for built form, hard surfacing and landscaping would result in an unimaginative form of suburban development that would fail to integrate appropriately with the existing adjacent development or fully take account of the sensitivity of the site's location on the edge of Spencers Wood.
20. For all these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area, including protected trees contrary to Policies CP1, CP3 and CP11 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy, adopted 2010 (Core

Strategy), Policies CC02, CC03 and TB21 of the Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Local Plan, adopted 2014, (MDDLDP), and Policy 1 of the Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan (SNP). These policies, amongst other things, require developments to be high quality, to maintain or enhance the quality of the environment, to contribute to a sense of place, to protect and retain existing trees, hedges, to integrate with existing dwellings and take account of the character of the adjacent countryside.

Suitability of location

21. In order to understand the Council's overall spatial strategy, it is necessary to consider Policies CP9, CP11 and CP17 Core Strategy. Policy CP17 sets out the overall housing numbers, which it is accepted are out-of-date. However, the distribution of housing is relevant in so far as the strategy is primarily reliant on a series of Strategic Development Locations combined with commitments at the time the plan was adopted. Elsewhere residential development was anticipated to be smaller in scale and within settlement boundaries.
22. Policy CP9 set out a settlement hierarchy (major, modest and limited) which requires the scale of development in those three categories of settlement to reflect the level of services and their accessibility. It identifies Spencers Wood as a 'modest development location' and is supportive of development within its boundaries based on its own services and good links to other centres using public transport.
23. Although the appeal site lies beyond the settlement boundary of Spencers Wood, it is not far from its centre and the services and facilities that it provides. Future residents would therefore have access to them without being overly reliant on a car. There are also good connections to Reading. These are the reasons the Inspector concluded that the scheme on the Langford Park site, and a little further from the centre, would be in keeping with the level and accessibility of the existing facilities of the village. It therefore follows that the same applies for the appeal site; the conflict with Policy CP9 therefore solely relates to the site's location beyond the defined settlement limits.
24. Policy CP11 sets out a series of criteria that should be met for proposals outside settlement boundaries, most of which are expected to be small scale. The proposal would not meet any of the exceptions listed for permitting a development in the countryside. The two underlying aims of this policy are firstly, to protect the separate identity of settlements and secondly, to maintain the quality of the environment. As the site lies between the settlement boundary and the Langford Park development, it will not have any adverse effect on the separate identity of Spencers Wood. In this respect there is no conflict with the first aim of Policy CP11. However, I have already identified significant conflict with its second aim of maintaining the quality of the local environment.
25. Policy CC02 of the MDDLDP reinforces the definition of the development limits and requires proposals on the edge of settlements (not beyond them) to respect the transition between the built-up area and the open countryside. Policy 1 of the SNP supports development adjacent to the settlement boundary, but within it, subject to its benefits outweighing any adverse impacts. Neither of these policies are supportive of development beyond the boundaries, rather they emphasise the importance of only permitting development on the edge of

existing settlements where there are significant benefits and careful attention is paid to its environmental impact.

26. Drawing this together, I conclude that due to its location beyond the settlement boundary of Spencers Wood, the site is not a suitable location for housing. The proposal would conflict with Policies CP9 and CP11 of the Core Strategy, Policy CC02 of the MDDL P and Policy 1 of the SNP. However, in relation to its location, I find no conflict with Policies CP1, CP2, CP3 of the Core Strategy or TB21 of the MDDL P as these policies are primarily concerned with the design quality of the development and its effects on the local environment.

The AWE at Burghfield

27. Local authorities are responsible for developing off-site emergency planning procedures to protect residents in the event of an accident involving the escape of radiation from the AWE at Burghfield. The Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations (REPPiR) were updated in 2019 and gave the responsibility for defining the DEPZ to the lead Local Authority, which in this case is West Berkshire District Council. Emergency planning was previously undertaken by defining a zone based on a 'reasonably foreseeable accident' and a dose contour of 5mSv².
28. The updated REPPiR amended the way in which the DEPZ was determined, changing the limiting dose contour and requiring considerations of other factors including a range of weather conditions. The 7.5mSv dose in adverse weather results in a contour some 3160m from the centre of the Burghfield AWE site. The size of the DEPZ has therefore significantly increased from that which was defined under the previous REPPiR in 2001. Furthermore, the revised DEPZ has not been defined as a circle as in the past. Instead it is a larger and irregularly shaped area that takes account of the settlement pattern and the roads connecting them. Consequently, the whole of Spencers Wood has been included within the DEPZ, even though much of the village lies beyond 3160m from the AWE.
29. The definition of the DEPZ is not a matter that can be addressed in the context of this appeal. I am aware that the principle of its extension is the subject of a judicial review and that other development proposals, some of which are on sites allocated for housing within the development plan, may be affected by the Court's ruling. Whether or not it was necessary for Spencers Wood to be included within the DEPZ, the fact remains that the appeal site lies a minimum distance from the AWE of 3300m and within DEPZ as now defined. I have therefore assessed the proposal accordingly.
30. The greatest danger from dispersion of any radiation plume following an incident is through inhalation. If any evacuation was required, it would be concentrated on the area closest to the AWE and priority would be given to care homes, schools and vulnerable people. However, sheltering, by staying indoors with windows and doors closed, is the most effective form of mitigation. This is what residents in most of the area within the DEPZ would be asked to do in the event of an emergency. The danger posed would be short-lived. Based on the type of accident for which any emergency planning is prepared, sheltering would typically be required for a few hours and not for more than 2 days.

² A defined measure of radiation

31. A development of 24 dwellings is likely to accommodate approximately 57 residents. The risk of accident at the AWE is extremely small and sheltering for a relatively short period of time is likely to be the most effective course of action to protect most of these residents. The need for evacuation from the appeal site is likely to be remote. Nevertheless, there is a very small risk that a medical or other personal emergency could occur that would put additional pressure on the emergency services. This would take place in an already expanded DEPZ in which more residents would be subject to mitigation measures and might require additional support from the emergency services.
32. Policy TB04 of the MDDL P sets out how development in the vicinity of the AWE will be assessed. At the time the policy was adopted the DEPZ was the inner zone of up to 1.5km where development was required to demonstrate that any increase in the number of residents could be safely accommodated, having regard to the needs of 'blue light' services. The requirements for sites that were further away were significantly less onerous as they only applied to developments with 50 (middle zone) or 500 (outer zone) more residents.
33. The amendment to the DEPZ effectively renders the policy out-of-date. However, the supporting text acknowledges that the zones may change during the plan period. The implications of the enlargement of the zones therefore needs to be addressed as part of any development proposal and the principles set out in Policy TB04 remain highly relevant to this case.
34. The appellant has responded to the enlargement of the DEPZ by presenting a report assessing the risks to all future residents within the proposed development in accordance with its location within the inner zone. The report concludes that given the size of the proposal, its distance from the AWE, the effectiveness of sheltering in the event of an incident and the general reduction in movement of people during any period of sheltering, any additional demand on the blue light services would be minimal. I consider this to be a reasonable conclusion when considering the effects of this development on its own.
35. However, the extension of the DEPZ will affect residents and the emergency services in a much wider area. I have no evidence about the increased numbers of people who now live in this defined area. Neither do I have details of the emergency services' capacity to deal with this increase and any further addition to the population in the expanded DEPZ arising from development that has already been permitted or may be expected to take place on allocated sites which are included with the Council's spatial strategy.
36. In these circumstances, I consider it necessary to adopt a precautionary approach. I conclude that I cannot be certain that the additional residents associated with the proposal could be accommodated safely having regard to the needs of the 'blue light' services. The proposal would therefore conflict with the principles and requirements set out Policy TB04 of the MDDL P.

Other Matters

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBHSPA)

37. The appeal site is located within 5km of the TBHSPA which has been designated as a European Site because of its populations of three heathland species of ground nesting birds, namely the Dartford warbler, nightjar and woodlark. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) requires

the decision maker to undertake an Appropriate Assessment (AA) where there are likely significant effects from the proposal, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

38. Natural England has advised that net additional dwellings within 5km of the protected area would be likely to have significant effects due to the additional pressure from recreational visits from residents. Saved Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan states that priority should be given to directing development to those areas where potential adverse effects can be avoided without the need for mitigation. This is consistent with the Framework's approach to the mitigation hierarchy set out in paragraph 175.
39. The Council's stated preference is for housing to be built on sites that do not require mitigation measures. Nevertheless, it has identified that contributions towards the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMM) and the Langley Mead Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) would provide adequate mitigation for the appeal proposal. These contributions have been secured through the S106 agreement submitted during the appeal process and signed by all parties. I have had regard to the Council's approach and taken the Section 106 agreement into account in the planning balance.

Living conditions of neighbours

40. The flank wall of the house on Plot 1 would be close to the rear boundary fence of 10 Diana Close. The occupiers of No 10 do not have a right to a view over the field towards the woods that lie beyond. The separation distance between the two buildings would comply with the Borough Design Guide SPD, so the Council did not raise any objection to this aspect of the layout.
41. However, the proximity of the proposed dwelling to the shallow garden of No 10 would introduce a significant sense of enclosure in the garden, making it a much less pleasant place to be. I consider this would adversely affect the living conditions of the occupants, adding to my concerns about the layout of the proposal.

Policy considerations

42. It is common ground that the Council can demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites (5YHLS). The 'tilted balance' within paragraph 11 d) of the National Planning Policy Framework is therefore not automatically engaged.
43. However, the appellant contends that the policies on which the Council has relied to refuse the scheme are out-of-date. It is therefore necessary for me to consider the weight to be given to the most important policies that are relevant for determining the appeal. This is not a matter that relates to the age of those policies but requires an assessment of their consistency with the Framework, as set out in paragraph 213, and any other relevant factors, such as changes in circumstances since their adoption.
44. Conflict with policies relating to the third, fourth and fifth reasons for refusing this application has been addressed through the planning obligation, so there is no need for me to consider them in detail. I will therefore confine my consideration to the policies referred to in relation to the outstanding matters in dispute set out in the main issues.

45. It is apparent from the raft of appeal decisions to which both parties have referred me that a significant amount of development has already taken place around Spencers Wood. Of the other sites within the Borough that have been considered for housing development, some have been allowed on appeal, others dismissed. Some permissions were granted when the Council was unable to demonstrate a 5YHLS. The Inspectors' reasoning in relation to policy matters in those instances is of less relevance to this case. From what I have read relating to the schemes both within the borough and elsewhere, none was directly comparable with the appeal proposal. Whilst I have had regard to these decisions, each was determined on the basis of its own specific evidence and circumstances. I have assessed this one in the same manner.
46. The Framework seeks to significantly boost housing supply. The evidence stated that permissions for some 6,933 dwellings have been granted since 2006 and there are allocations where a further 1,840 dwellings are expected to be delivered. Housing is being delivered in the Strategic Development Locations identified in the Core Strategy, some of which have accommodated more homes than originally intended. This has been achieved through masterplans. Furthermore, the recently published Housing Delivery Test shows a steady improvement in the Council's performance from 157% in 2018, to 175% in 2019 and 200% in 2020. This demonstrates that the Council's strategy is delivering more homes than the minimum required and is significantly contributing to boosting the supply of housing in the area.
47. As the Framework advocates a plan-led approach, there is therefore nothing to indicate that the overall spatial strategy set out in the Core Strategy should be set aside, even though it is acknowledged that the specific housing numbers set out in Policy CP17 are out-of-date. Neither is there any reason to suggest that the Policies CP9 and CP11 of the Core Strategy, Policy CC02 of the Local Plan and Policy 1 of the SNP should be considered out-of-date. Whilst they seek to confine new housing development to areas within defined settlement boundaries in accordance with a hierarchical approach, they are not impeding the delivery of housing to meet identified local need. Conflict with these policies therefore carries significant weight in the assessment.
48. The Framework states that policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, paragraph 170 b). Although the appeal site is not a valued landscape, insofar as it is not subject to any national or local designation, it is countryside which contributes to the rural setting of Spencers Wood. The Framework also advocates good design as a key component of sustainable development, creating better places in which to live and work. Developments should, amongst other things, be sympathetic to local character, be attractively laid out with appropriate and effective landscaping and establish a strong sense of place, paragraphs 124-127. I have identified deficiencies with the layout which demonstrate that the development falls short of the Framework's requirements in these respects.
49. Policies CP1, CP3 and CP11 of the Core Strategy which seek sustainable development, set out general design principles and restrict development outside settlement boundaries in order to protect the countryside are therefore broadly consistent with the Framework's approach. As Policy CC02 only applies to development within settlement boundaries, proposals for development beyond those boundaries conflicts with it. However, one of its aims is to

recognise the importance of respecting the transition between the settlement and the surrounding countryside. If any development beyond such a boundary was to be found acceptable, it would be equally important to manage that transition sensitively. Policy TB21 of the MDDLDP requires attention to be given to landscape quality and sensitivity ensuring the retention and enhancement of features that contribute to it. In my view there is a high level of consistency between all these development plan policies and the Framework. Conflict with them therefore also attracts significant weight.

50. Paragraph 95 of the Framework requires planning decisions to promote public safety and take account of wider security and defence requirements. Policy TB04 of the MDDLDP specifically addresses the public safety issues that arise from the AWE site at Burghfield and is therefore an appropriate policy for addressing those issues at local level. The principles set out in the policy remain robust following the extension of the DEPZ. However, given the minimal nature of the risk, I give the conflict with this policy limited weight in my assessment of the scheme.
51. I therefore find that the most relevant policies for determining the appeal are not out-of-date and have concluded that there are varying degrees of conflict with all of them.

Other considerations

52. The proposal would provide an additional 24 homes with associated social and economic benefits. It would do so in a location where future residents would have reasonable access to a variety of services and facilities. These are factors in the scheme's favour. However, as the borough is not an area in need of regeneration or where levels of unemployment are high, the associated benefits would be limited.
53. Ten of the proposed homes would be affordable and these would be secured through the planning agreement. The proposal would meet the requirements of Policy CP5. Whilst it is recognised that there is a continuing need for provision of affordable homes, the number of people on the housing register has fallen since 2012. I consider the provision of affordable homes would be a benefit of the scheme but, as the number is small and the proposal no more than policy compliant, the benefits associated with the scheme would be modest.
54. Contributions towards employment skills are required to comply with the development plan and are therefore a neutral factor. I also acknowledge that the proposal would comply with other development plan requirements, through the provision of satisfactory living conditions for future occupants, adequate highway and parking standards and appropriate drainage to mitigate flood risk.
55. The Council has accepted that adverse effects on the TBHSPA could be mitigated and appropriate contributions have been secured through a S106 agreement. However, I have not found it necessary to undertake an AA to satisfy myself that these measures would be effective as I have found the scheme to be unacceptable for other reasons.

Planning Balance and Conclusions

56. As the Council can demonstrate a 5YHLS and I have found the most important policies for determining the appeal are not out-of-date, the tilted balance of the Framework is not engaged in this case.

57. I have concluded that the appeal site is not suitable for additional housing due to its location outside the settlement boundary of Spencers Wood and therefore contrary to the Council's spatial strategy. I have also found the proposal to be an unsatisfactory layout that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and protected trees. These are matters of significant weight against the scheme. Furthermore, although the risk would be small, I cannot be certain that future residents would be safe in the event of an incident at the AWE at Burghfield. This is a matter which attracts limited weight.
58. Taking all these factors into consideration, I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and that benefits associated with the provision of the additional homes would not outweigh this conflict.
59. For this reason, the proposal is unacceptable, and the appeal should be dismissed.

Sheila Holden

INSPECTOR