

Planning Application DC/20/03665 Application for Outline Planning Permission. (Access to be considered) Erection of 1no detached single storey and garage. Construction of new vehicular access. Ivy Cottage Rattlesden Road Drinkstone

1. The proposed development is outside the settlement boundary as defined in the MSDC local plan, which whilst 20 years old has now been reviewed by the Neighbourhood Plan which has been approved by MSDC and now carries significant weight in determining planning applications.

The proposed Planning Statement says 'The application site lies outside of the two settlement boundaries for Drinkstone as designated by the MSLP. As the site is outside of the settlement boundary, for planning purposes, it is considered to be in the countryside. However, whilst the site may be in the countryside, it is not in an isolated location. Policy H3 of the MSLP concerns housing in villages and states that development within villages will take the form of infilling within the settlement boundary. Policy H7 states that there will be a strict control over new housing in the countryside and that new housing will normally form part of existing settlements. Policies H3 and H7 are now more than 20 years old. They do not reflect the balanced approach towards sustainable development and the provision of rural housing as prescribed by the NPPF and the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Policies H3 and H7 are out of date'.

The proposal does not comply with the Neighbourhood Plan NP DRN1 – Spatial Strategy 'Proposals for development located outside the Settlement Boundary will only be permitted for that which is essential for the operation of agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other exceptional uses, where i) it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that there is an identified local need for the proposal'

Whilst NP Housing objectives (7) consider development outside the boundary this is regarding conversion of redundant or disused agricultural buildings. Policy DRN2 – Housing development states 'Proposals for the conversion of redundant or disused agricultural barns into dwellings outside the Settlement Boundaries will be permitted'.

The NP has identified planning consents for eight additional homes that have been granted within Drinkstone and has therefore exceeded the housing requirement for the village as required by Mid Suffolk's Emerging Local Plan.

2. The proposed development is adjacent to Ivy Cottage which is identified within the Neighbourhood Plan (Appendix B) as a Building of Local Significance.

NP Policy DRN10 states 'The retention and protection of local heritage assets and buildings of local significance, including buildings, structures, features and gardens of local interest must be appropriately secured. Proposals for any works that would lead to the loss of, or substantial harm to, a building of local significance should be supported by an appropriate analysis of the significance of the asset to enable a balanced judgement to be made having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset'.

3. Access

The proposed planning statement with reference to access states

‘The proposed dwelling will be served by a new access from Rattlesden Road. The access would be located where the carriageway is of straight alignment enabling good visibility in either direction. This section of Rattlesden Road is a 30mph zone. The new access will have no material impact on highway safety’.

The proposed development sits within approximately 20 metres of the change of speed limit from the national speed limit to the 30mph limit, therefore it is unlikely that a vehicle will have adjusted its speed to 30mph within that distance. The proposed development is located on a bend where there have been road accidents.

4. Biodiversity

The proposed development falls within the Drinkstone Area of Local Landscape sensitivity, the proposed new access would appear to require the removal of ancient roadside hedges as well as impacting upon a veteran willow tree. The hedge and tree are outside the applicant’s ownership and if there were agreement between the two parties it would be impossible for MSDC to impose a condition on a 3rd party for its replacement.

NP DRN9 – Biodiversity states Development proposals should avoid the loss of, or substantial harm to, important trees, hedgerows and other natural features such as ponds and watercourses. Where such losses or harm are unavoidable i) the benefits of the proposal must be demonstrated clearly to outweigh any impact.

‘Where new access is created, or an existing access is widened, through an existing hedgerow, a new hedgerow of native species shall be planted on the splay returns into the site to maintain the appearance and continuity of hedgerows in the vicinity.

5. Sustainability

This application represents an unsustainable form of residential development in the countryside. The proposed development will be located in a private residential garden NPPF para. 70 states ‘Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area’.

Drinkstone has no amenities in the village. The nearest amenities are in Woolpit, 4 km away and Rattlesden around 3 km away, along unlit country roads with no pavements. There is no bus service in Drinkstone, thus access to work, educational, leisure and entertainment facilities in nearby towns is only possible by private car. The proposed application shows a double garage facility in addition to the dwelling.

This development does not constitute a sustainable development, Drinkstone Parish Council references an appeal decision by the Planning Inspectorate APP/W3520/W/16/3162070 dated 8 February 2017 against the development of a single dwelling in Drinkstone. In it the inspector concluded that on balance the proposed development does not constitute a sustainable development “...the harm caused from conflict with the development plan, reliance on the private motor car,...are capable of significantly and demonstrably outweighing the benefits of the provision of a dwelling...I find that the proposed development would therefore not amount to sustainable

development when applying the Framework as a whole, and as such the balance lies against the scheme.”

The inspector also pointed out that the road conditions “...rural in character and largely unlit along much of its length, are such that it is highly unlikely that anything other than use of the private motor car would be the desirable means of transport, particularly having regard to those persons carrying shopping or taking and collecting children from school,...particularly at time of inclement weather or dark conditions.”

The proposed development will, like these, inevitably involve a heavy reliance on the private car.

Paragraph 3 of the proposed development Planning Statement says ‘*It is intended that the dwelling will be a single-storey property in order to ensure that there is no overlooking of Ivy Cottage*’. The point here being the word intended, this would allow for future changes to the outline plan.

The planning statement regarding Planning Policy makes no reference to the Drinkstone Neighbourhood Plan which has been approved by MSDC and now carries significant weight in determining planning applications.