



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 September 2007

by **David Richards** BSocSci, Dip TP, MRTPI

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

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Decision date:
4 October 2007

Appeal Ref: APP/V2635/A/07/2045131

10 Taylor's Row, Barroway Drove, Downham Market, PE38 0AW

- 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 Mrs M J Jakings against the decision of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council.
- The application Ref 06/02135/O, dated 2 September 2006, was refused by notice dated 28 November 2006.
- The development proposed is the construction of a dwelling.

Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal

Reasons

2. The application was made in outline, with all matters of detail reserved for subsequent approval.
3. The appeal site lies between two existing dwellings, and is separated from "Midway" by a track leading to agricultural land. Taylor's Row was originally a row of houses along Barroway Drove, each with its own small-holding at the rear. While the form and appearance of the dwellings has changed over the years, the surroundings still have a strongly agricultural character. The flat, open landscape is highly characteristic of the area, and is identified as an area of "Open Important Landscape Quality" in Policy 4/6 of the adopted King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan (LP).
4. I accept that the site lies in a row of existing dwellings. However Taylor's Row is an isolated strip of development in the countryside, detached from the settlement of Barroway Drove. It lies well outside of the area covered by the Barroway Drove inset of the LP, and therefore forms part of the countryside. Adopted planning policies for the area resist housing development in the countryside unless it is essential for agriculture, forestry, organised recreation or the operation of an existing business. No justification on these grounds has been made for a dwelling in this location. I conclude that the proposal would conflict with development plan policies which aim to restrict new housing in the countryside.
5. An old map showing Taylor's Row indicates there was once a dwelling on part of the site. However it has blended into the landscape and no trace remains now above ground level. While I acknowledge that the effect of the proposal

on the wider area of Open Important Landscape Quality would be mitigated by the dwellings on either side, it would nevertheless consolidate existing development and lead to the loss of an established gap. To my mind this would be harmful to the countryside character of the area.

6. I accept that the quality of the site as agricultural land has been impaired by the earlier removal of peat, and the deposit of hard core and other materials on the site, which may include rubble from a previous building. Accordingly I do not consider that the loss of good quality agricultural land would itself justify refusal.
7. Nevertheless, these matters do not outweigh the strong policy objections to allowing further development in the countryside.
8. I have noted the example of more recent development at No 1 Taylor's Row which the appellant has drawn to my attention, and the suggestion that the Council may have applied policy in an inconsistent manner. However I have no information about the circumstances of this case, or what factors were considered when decisions were made. I find that the relevant policies of the development plan give clear guidance in this instance that the appeal proposal would be unacceptable.
9. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Richards

INSPECTOR